



## Know Your Neighbourhood Barrel Organ Theatre Company

### Creative Writing in Nature

The Barrel Organ Theatre is a national touring theatre, working with individuals and groups including those who feel isolated and ostracised from society to tell new and contemporary stories. By building relationships with these people it give them some creative space to empower them and give a voice to the stories they want to tell. We believe participation in arts helps improved mental wellbeing.

In the last 5 years we've reached an audience of over 4,000 with 500+ workshops and working with 50+ artists.

The funding from the TPT office as part of their Know Your Neighbourhood funding programme enabled us to offer some creative writing sessions surrounded by nature at RSPB Old Moor.

Our participants were service users from Doncaster Mind and our sessions involved a walk around RSPB with a talk about bird watching and identification and the TPT which runs right by the site. Our creative writing sessions asked participants to write down what the natural world made them think about, memories they had of being outside in nature and how they felt about different seasons.

All the writing that was produced by the participants will contribute to text for a future performance to celebrate the natural world and the positive impact it can have on mental health and well being.

*"Just having the chance to take part and be outside was great!"*

*"It feels so good to actually get outside and not just talk about it."*

*"I didn't have the confidence to do this on my own – I didn't think I could manage with my disability but actually it's not that daunting at all. I have surprised myself how well I've managed".*

*“I used to get outside a lot to walk, bird watch and volunteer – I thought I’d lost all that until I came to these sessions.”*

Would we do this again – absolutely!

We’ve also had so much fun as tutors that we’re hoping to run future trips and similar sessions. This funding has been very valuable to enable us to give this opportunity to people who otherwise wouldn’t have been able to get out and about for many differing reasons. We were a little daunted with the timescale to deliver the events but it was certainly worth the effort.

### **Ali Pidsley – Barrel Organ Theatre**



<b>The Barrel Organ Theatre Company - Doncaster</b>	
Aim of the Organisation:	Barrel Organ is a national touring theatre company that makes collaborative work with individuals and groups including those isolated or ostracised from society to tell new and vital contemporary stories. By building long-term and meaningful relationships they support individuals and groups to shape creative processes that empower them to give voice to stories they want to tell. The Organ Theatre Company believe there is a direct parallel between participation in arts activity and improved mental wellbeing. Barrel Organ also delivers participation programmes with communities they work with and artistic development programmes with young artists. In the last 5 years, they have reached 4,000+ audience, 500+ workshop participants & 50+ artists.
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