MAKING HERITAGE ACCESSIBLE

The MADHOUSE, My House?
History of Learning Disability Project Guide

A practical resource to exploring the history of institutionalisation with people with learning disabilities and inclusive groups

Created by
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How to use this pack

The pack is intended for staff, carers, advocates and volunteers working with people with learning disabilities across a wide range of settings including schools and colleges, community arts, theatre, museums and archives and health and social care settings.

In this pack we are sharing sessions that have been valuable to our process, providing:

• Title, aims, timings and resources
• Detailed session plan
• Photographic worked examples to see what the activities look like in action
• Feedback from our participants and co-evaluators

The funding received from Heritage Lottery enabled us to go on site trips as well as run workshop sessions and interview former patients. We recommend that you start by watching our playlist of films we made for this project.¹

¹ MADHOUSE Residents’ Films by Access All Areas:
Background to MADHOUSE, My House?

INTRODUCTION

“You could just hear it outside, the screaming and what have you, you’d think you were going into a MADHOUSE.” Mabel Cooper, 1997.

This was how learning disability campaigner, Mabel Cooper (1944 – 2013) described her initial thoughts on admission, at the age of 13, to St Lawrence’s Hospital (Surrey), a large institution for people with learning disabilities. But Mabel was by no means alone in this experience. As recently as 1970, over 55,000 children and adults with learning disabilities across England and Wales were living in long-stay hospitals. These large institutions, each accommodating up to 2000 residents, were usually built in the countryside or on the edge of cities, resulting in people living at considerable distance from family, friends and familiar community.2 The institutions admitted children as young as three years old.3

Once admitted, people were often unable to leave for many years.4 Many remained in hospital until they died, buried in unmarked graves within the grounds of the institutions.5 Yet, in the early 21st century, this important area of UK social history remains largely hidden, under-reported and all too often overlooked. It is still not included in the school curriculum.

Children and adults with learning disabilities and/or autism with more complex support needs continue to be moved from their families and local communities to receive services.6 The 2011 Winterbourne View Hospital scandal, uncovered by the BBC Panorama team highlighted the continuing use of such institutions and the appalling treatment of people with learning disabilities placed there to receive specialist care.7

Research findings from the MADHOUSE project,8 and elsewhere,9 indicate that a younger generation of people with learning disabilities are unaware of this aspect of their collective cultural heritage and that the wider general public also has very little knowledge of the former institutionalisation of people with learning disabilities.

2 Jarrett, S (2015)
4 Welshman and Walmsley, (2006)
6 Lenehan, (2017)
8 Arnold et al., (2018)
9 Barker et al., (2015)
THE MADHOUSE PROGRAMME

In 2013 Access All Areas, a London-based theatre company, received a grant from Heritage Lottery Fund to develop a creative learning programme that would enable a new generation of people with learning disabilities to re-connect with the history of the former institutions. Access All Areas commissioned Jan Walmsley and Sue Ledger, Members of the Social History of Learning Disability Research Group at The Open University, to work with their participants with learning disabilities to develop and deliver an inclusive programme of learning disability history. Activities in this project guide include site visits to the grounds of a former institution, history workshops with performance development, visiting a public archive and arranging for learning disabled artists to interview former residents of institutions.

Over its three-year duration, the project reached around 10,000 beneficiaries. 427 people with learning disabilities directly benefitted from workshops to become more connected to their own heritage. 8 core participants received training in research, oral history, presenting skills and workshop facilitating, leading directly to paid employment. The production, MADHOUSE re:exit, was seen by a total of 1,341 audience members.

The voices of people with learning disabilities who directly experienced institutional care are often overlooked in the telling of social history. The resources in this pack have been carefully selected to redress this balance.

TIME PERIOD COVERED BY THE PACK

The time period we cover is 1840 to 2011. This is the period during which institutions for people with learning disabilities began, flourished and, eventually, declined as a preferred policy solution.

USING HISTORY AS A PLATFORM FOR CREATIVE RESPONSE

Learning disabled artists who participated in the workshops collaborated with academics and technicians from University of Reading to create a range of sensory objects to support the sharing of history as part of the Sensory Objects Project. As artists, MADHOUSE participants developed their own creative interpretations and responses to learning about the former institutions. This resulted in a museum exhibition, an online wiki, a rap video, performance pieces, conference presentations, educational materials for primary and secondary schools, and a highly acclaimed touring immersive theatre production, MADHOUSE re:exit. Evaluation of the museum exhibition, history workshops and immersive theatre performances has demonstrated the MADHOUSE project to be effective in sharing the history of institutionalisation with people with learning disabilities and wider general public audiences.

10 www.accessallareastheatre.org
11 www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/research/shld/
12 www.sensoryobjects.com
13 All available on www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/research/shld/education-resources
14 Watch the trailer here: https://youtu.be/uAf1QQ7r7ic
TEAM

Our team includes evaluators, researchers, workshop leaders and wiki-masters.

Paul Christian  Zara Jayne Arnold  Sue Ledger  Jan Walmsley

Graham Evans  Jolene Sampson  Lee Phillips  Charlene Salter

Rufaro Asuquo  Emma Selwyn  Terry Huggett  Adam Smith

MADHOUSE re:exit actors (L-R): Dayo Koleosho, Imogen Roberts, Cian Binchy, Housni (DJ) Hassan and David Munns.

Access All Areas staff and freelancers have included Nick Llewellyn, Ciara Brennan, Helen Jackson-Lyall, Alex Covell, Katie Yohe and Rachel Southern
CURATING YOUR OWN CULTURAL HERITAGE

Activities in this pack have been used by Access All Areas to train people with learning disabilities as history workshop leaders. These activities have been a platform which have since seen the individuals lead sessions in schools, community groups and heritage settings to share institutional history more widely - giving more people access to what has remained a hidden history.

Emma

“Having a disabled person facilitate a workshop and provide training is important for those having the training and the disabled person themselves. With the right support, the facilitator can provide their personal expertise to those being trained and those being trained can learn from the most direct resource available. This training also provides work for the facilitators, creates new connections and raises awareness of access needs that those being trained may not have previously been aware of.”

Terry

“I feel proud. Having this knowledge means I can pass it on and teach others about it. This is important because there is not enough known about disability and learning difficulties and peoples experience, this has to change.”

These activities can support people with learning disabilities to move from a starting point where they ‘know little or nothing’ about institutional history to co-researching and co-curating exhibitions and accessible websites. Access All Areas artists have since co-curated a touring exhibition and have become website developers.15

Lee

“The most memorable moment of the project was being a tour guide for the MADHOUSE exhibition at Hackney Museum and also getting to know a little more about Mabel Cooper’s story. Being a wiki master I learned how to make history accessible, learn about how to do CVs, business, personal goals and projects.”

15 http://MADHOUSEwiki.org/
Evaluation of the work in collaboration with people with learning disabilities has provided further opportunities. Zara and Paul gained skills as evaluators by working alongside academic researchers from the Open University SHLD team.

Paul
“Working as an evaluator, I met people who were passionate and serious about ensuring that this process was done well and that everyone was taught about the history properly.”

Zara
“It made me realise that this history isn’t being taught in schools. I’ve seen people expand their minds through being an evaluator.”
Session 1 Visit to the site of a former long stay hospital

Visiting a former long-stay hospital was one of the most valuable activities for our group. The experience of visiting a place where people lived and called home created a connection to the importance of this history and how people with learning disabilities should be treated today.

AIM

• To show what a long stay hospital looked and felt like
• To connect the ‘history’ to a time in living memory and to ground this in reality
• To begin to question the treatment of people with learning disabilities in long-stay hospitals

TIME REQUIRED

Half day, plus travel time

RESOURCES

• Map of long stay hospitals in England, Scotland and Wales to help you find nearby sites
• Contact the site first to see if there is a guide or historical expert
• Cameras and audio recorders

ACTIVITY

This activity involves a site visit to a former long stay hospital. You can use the UKDHM map to find one local to you. It’s worth contacting a local guide for support: they can show you around the site and let you know about the specific history. The visit will depend heavily on what you can find locally.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Our group visited Harperbury Hospital, Hertfordshire in 2015. The site is accessible using public footpaths, so no permissions were needed. This was a memorable visit for participants, and probably had the greatest impact of all the activities we used.

The questions came thick and fast from the group:

“How come we didn’t know about this stuff?”
“How did they go there?”
“What did people wear?”
“What was there to buy in the shop?”
“Could they go out?”

Perhaps the most chilling moment was walking past the old mortuary. People were expected not only to live, but also to die there.

You may find that many of the hospitals have been demolished. There is still value in visiting the site and discussing its significance.

**TIPS FOR YOUR VISIT**

- Use the internet to find photos or other records
- Use your visit to a local Archive to find documents about the hospital
- Prepare questions before your visit
- Encourage the group to think about all the different senses (taste, sight, touch, smell, and sound)
- Allow people to spend time exploring on their own as well as with the group (if possible)
- Record all of the reactions and responses
- Watch Access All Areas’ video before your visit: [MADHOUSE My House? Visit to Harperbury Hospital](http://bit.ly/Myhouseharperbury)

**PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK**

Lee

“Whilst visiting Harperbury Hospital, I felt shocked and a little terrified. I picture myself there, it’s like hell, felt like I kinda lose control.”

Terry

“It was emotional because we were told stories about patients. I felt a real connection towards the patients.”

Zara

“It was atmospheric and interesting seeing a beautiful place that held horror and abuse”

Paul

“It helped us to pass on this information to the next generation. Going to Harperbury Hospital it made us get into the minds of how people must have felt living there. I noticed how the men and women were separated which made me feel so alone and isolated. There was a graveyard there that was really shocking. The fact that death doesn’t really apply to them, how it was just covered up like it was nothing.”

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17 MADHOUSE My House? Visit to Harperbury Hospital Video:
Session 2 Institutional history workshop

In our history workshop programme (see Appendix 1) the following activity sessions were combined as a one-day workshop. Sessions can be delivered all together or separately. Session 2 is a day plan of 8 activities.18

AIMS FOR THE WORKSHOP

• To provide an accessible overview of the history of institutions for people with learning disabilities (1840s-2011)
• To share life story and oral history accounts from an earlier generation of people with learning disabilities who lived in long stay hospitals
• To increase understanding of what it was like to live in an institution
• To use objects, sound and photos to provide an accessible foundation from which participants could improvise and create their own stories of institutional life
• To use discussion of the old institutions to consider what has changed for people with learning disabilities and what has stayed the same

TIME REQUIRED

One day. Activities can be carried out in smaller sessions over a longer time period if required.

RESOURCES

See each activity section

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18 The workshop was held at the Barbican Pit theatre on 29.9.2014 led by Jan Walmsley and Sue Ledger, Social History of Learning Disability Research Group at The Open University with participants and creative enablers from Access All Areas.
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Activity 2a
Imagining a long stay learning disability hospital

In this activity the two session leaders were in-role as hospital staff.

AIMS

• To introduce aspects of what it was like to enter an institution by introducing physical aspects of hospital space
• To share issues of choice and freedom and how it might feel to have these removed
• To record and reflect on participant’s initial responses, questions and ideas

TIME REQUIRED

Set up and preparation of resources: 60 minutes plus time to source objects
Activity: 20 minutes

ROOM LAYOUT

• Project a large picture of hospital ward onto screen as backdrop
• Hospital sound effects (keys and locks turning, footsteps in corridors) ready to play
• Masking tape on floor to simulate hospital beds shapes (one for each participant – close together, actual size)
• Flip chart paper on one wall
• Check sound is working

RESOURCES

• Prepare tea, milk and sugar for morning break – pre-mixed so people cannot choose
• Workshop leaders wear white coats and attach large bunch of keys
• Suitcases: (preferably old fashioned – we sourced ours from charity shops)
  • Photo/Biographical account given by a former learning disability hospital patient (provided in toolkit resources)
  • Medical Record (provided in toolkit resources)
  • Set of pyjamas (plain and institutional as possible – we sourced these from charity shops)
• Suitcases then coded with roughly equal numbers of red, green or blue stickers and one object is then added to each suitcase according to the colour of sticker
  • Blue stickers: hospital hygiene
    Toilet paper, carbolic soap, Dettol, nit comb, toothbrushes (shared so presented in a communal mug with 15 toothbrushes), picture of bath time (see resources section), thermometer
  • Red stickers: punishment
    Plastic/toy syringe, scrubbing brush, 1 straightjacket19
  • Green stickers: hospital food and shopping
    Tin mug, hospital token currency (toy money is good), bag of sweets, photo of hospital trolley

19 We used the National Theatre costume hire:
+ 44 (0)20 7452 3970, costume_hire@nationaltheatre.org.uk
Activity

Play hospital soundtrack. Picture of ward projected onto back wall of space.

Workshop leaders in role as hospital staff. Stand at the entrance to the hospital space and greet each participant.

As they enter the ‘hospital’ space each new ‘patient’ receives a colour coded suitcase. They are shown to their bed space where they are instructed to leave it unopened and sit down. They are told that they will be allowed to open it later.

Workshop leaders encourage participants to sit on their bed spaces and then ask them to comment on the surroundings:

- Space - being close together
- How might it have felt to come into such a space

Workshop leaders then encourage people to walk about the bed spaces and see how narrow the spaces are in between.

Explain that most of the clothing and shoes were shared.

Workshop leaders and participants record responses/thoughts and ideas on graphic wall sheet.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Access All Areas followed the directions in the above activity plan as part of a learning disability history workshop at The Barbican Pit Theatre, London.

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK

Paul

“The workshop was inspirational and eye opening. I learnt how to not only work with people that have the same goals, but also to be a part of something bigger. My favourite activity was putting the pieces together in small groups and performing back to each other. It was poetic, using the stories, it made me feel equal.

It made me sad and upset that there were people, as patients, who couldn’t see their families again. All their lives were contained in just one suitcase. It’s really heart-breaking. It gets people thinking about how precious our lives are and how we shouldn’t take them for granted. It makes me realise I need to be an advocate to have a better understanding of how people should be treated.”
Activity 2b Overview of learning disability history

AIMS
• To promote understanding of what it meant to live with the label of learning disability at different times in the past
• To provide an overview of the history of institutions and community care for people with learning disabilities (1840s-2011)
• To stimulate discussion of learning disability history
• To introduce the chronology of learning disability history

TIME REQUIRED
45 minutes

RESOURCES
• Internet access and projector
• Present in My Past - Purple Patch Arts: a short animation which brings to life the social history of people with learning disabilities and how they have been treated by society
• Bournemouth People First Timeline
• Flip Chart paper

Activity
Workshop leaders introduce the Purple Patch film. Ask people to look out for some of the labels and language used to describe people with learning disabilities in the past.

Watch Present in My Past: uncovering our social history

Discussion and Feedback
1. What stood out to you from the film?
2. What labels do the research team talk about? How were people with learning disabilities treated and described?
3. What has changed?
4. When did it change?
5. Have such changes been a good thing and why?
Record responses and ideas from participants on flip chart.

Workshop leaders present an illustrated timeline providing an overview of learning disability history from 1840-2011.

Workshop leaders introduce Bournemouth People First Timeline
Discussion of the main changes to the lives of people with learning disabilities.
Record responses and ideas from participants.

20 Present in My Past Video: https://vimeo.com/130333304
21 Bournemouth Peoples First Timeline can be downloaded here: http://www.struggleforequality.co.uk/page12.html
WORKED EXAMPLE

Participants from Access All Areas followed the above session plan as part of MADHOUSE History and Performance workshops.

The Purple Patch film inspired a range of responses from the participants.

Comments in response to the animated history

22 http://www.struggleforequality.co.uk/page12.html
**Activity 2c Timeline**

**AIMS**
- To help group leaders to understand if participants had followed the sequencing of history introduced in the earlier history presentations
- To enable participants to work together to expand their understanding of learning disability history
- To make links between learning disability history and more general cultural history landmarks.
- To stimulate discussion of learning disability history

**TIME REQUIRED**
20 minutes

**RESOURCES**
- A set of timeline floor jigsaw pieces (see Project Guide Resources) for each team
- Camera/video/audio recorders

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### Activity

**Activity**
Choose to work with the full group or divide participants into teams.

Give each team a set of timeline pictures to sort.

Ask participants to work as a team to lay out timeline photos on the floor in correct chronological order.

Time the task completion as a challenge.

Note: This draws upon learning from Activity 2b: Overview of Learning Disability History.

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**Duration**
10 minutes

### Activity

Participants review and discuss their team’s completed timeline.

Sort out any queries about the order.

Recap and expand on areas where more clarification or information is needed.

Think about people’s lives today - what has changed and what hasn’t.

Record responses (use flip chart and audio recorders)
PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK

Paul

“We put different events in a timeline to see what happened at different times. I was surprised by how far we had come from the different periods of time. I didn’t know this history before, I don’t know why I wasn’t taught it before, I was shocked that I didn’t know it sooner. It shows that in the past, things changed, getting better or worse for people, so it can change in the future. It’s really important to know about the facts and what happened.”
Activity 2d No-choice tea break

AIMS
- To demonstrate to participants that in learning disability institutions patients would often all receive the same food and drink
- To explain that food was often delivered to the ward from a trolley and the staff would serve it out
- To show participants how it might feel to have no choice over what you drink
- To use this experience to broaden discussion of what it was like to have no choice

TIME REQUIRED
20 minutes

RESOURCES
- Premixed tea with milk and sugar already added
- Trolley or table
- Choice of refreshments to follow the activity as a ‘real’ break if required

Activity
Workshop leaders explain how drinks and food were usually prepared and served in hospitals.

Serve each participant pre-mixed tea. Use tasting the drink as a focus for discussion about how it must have felt to have no choice.

Broaden this to discussion of choice about hospital food – usually delivered by trolley and often cold.

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK
Paul
“It makes me feel appreciative that I get to have a choice, instead of someone assuming something. It’s not nice having someone make decisions for me. It’s intimidating and manipulative. People in the past got used to not having any power. I don’t want that to happen to me.”
Activity 2e Institutional life

AIMS

• To show what the buildings looked like outside and inside
• To introduce accounts from people with learning disabilities of what it was like to live in a long stay hospital
• To stimulate discussion of learning disability history

TIME REQUIRED

45 minutes

RESOURCES

• Leaders to prepare for session by reviewing resources on institutions and selecting the clips of their choice
  • Silent minority (1981)23
  • Lancashire Learning24
  • Clips from Lennox Castle website – interviews with former residents25
  • Interactive map of learning disability institutions in UK26
• Flip chart paper
• A quiet space (if possible) for participants who may become emotional

Activity

Prepare the participants to watch the film clips.

Ask residents to think about the buildings outside and inside and how it must have felt to live in an institution.

Explain that we will draw on this content in a later session when we will create performance pieces that build on what we have seen in the films about institutional living.

Explain that some people may find the content upsetting and reassure that if at any time people wish to leave and take time out that is absolutely fine. Explain the support arrangements you have put in place if anyone wishes to do this.

Duration

5 minutes

23 Silent Minority Film: https://youtu.be/7Qb424HvKSQ
24 Lancashire institutions: http://www.lancslearningdisabilityinstitutions.org.uk/
25 Lennox Castle interviews: www.lennoxcastlestories.co.uk
26 Interactive map of learning disability institutions in UK: https://ukdhm.org/long-stay-mental-deficiency-hospitals-in-england-scotland-and-wales

Continued overleaf >
**Watch selected clip 1**  
*Silent Minority*  
Discuss and record responses  
10 minutes

**Watch selected clip 2**  
*Lancashire Institutions*  
Discuss and record responses  
10 minutes

**Watch selected clip 3**  
*Lennox Castle*  
Discuss and record responses  
10 minutes

**Plenary**  
Discussion that brings key ideas together.  
Ask participants to each name one thing that really sticks in their mind.  
10 minutes
**Activity 2f Suitcase stories**

**AIMS**
- To introduce accounts of hospital life written by people with learning disabilities
- To understand the differences between lived experience and medical records
- To use objects to give insight into institutional life

**TIME REQUIRED**
45 minutes

**ROOM LAYOUT**
- Bed spaces marked out on floor with masking tape
- Circle with chairs

**RESOURCES**
- A colour coded suitcase for every participant (set up as described in Activity 2a)
- Large bag of assorted clothing
- One-on-one support if required for reading and individual work

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**Activity**

Workshop leaders (in role with white coats and keys) ask participants to change into hospital clothing.

Put a large bag in the centre of the group and ask them to help themselves. Bag contains range of clothes in various sizes.

Explain that clothing was often communal and may not fit or suit the person.

Instruct participants go to their respective bed spaces and open their own suitcase.

Look at what is in the individual suitcase. Look at the photograph and read the story written by a person with learning disabilities who lived in a long stay hospital. Read the medical report about that person, and examine the object. Handle it and think about what it might have been used for.

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Continued overleaf >
Activity
Together in a circle, participants share the stories, medical records, photos, and objects they have found in their suitcases.

Pass the objects around to handle and promote discussion.

- How do they feel?
- What are they for?
- How would they have been used in a long stay hospital?

Use flip chart to record responses.

WORKED EXAMPLE
Access All Areas participants open suitcases and start to share the objects, stories and medical records they find inside.

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK
We asked the group to describe what it was like living in an institution in response to this workshop.

Zara
“There are a mix of good and bad experiences from different hospitals and patients.”

Lee
“Living in an institution was a living nightmare, feeling trapped and isolated.”

Emma
“Living in an institution is something that I couldn’t possibly truly imagine, but what I know from first-hand ex-patients it was traumatic, and yet people believe that this was genuinely the best way of supporting disabled people and others considered immoral and humiliating reasons people were sent there.”

Charlene
“It wasn’t very nice living in an institution, it was shut in. They had no freedom.”

Katy
“I think it would have been very restricting living in an institution. I don’t think it would be a nice way to live. You don’t really have anything of your own. You wouldn’t have your own space.”
Activity 2g  Hygiene, punishment and food

AIMS
• To increase understanding of aspects of hospital life around three themes (Hygiene, Punishment and Food)
• To work in small groups to explore these themes in more depth
• To use objects, autobiographical and medical records to inform the development of new performance pieces to share history

TIME REQUIRED
90 minutes including a 15 minute break

RESOURCES
• A suitcase for every participant. Set up as described in Activity 2a
• Camera or iPad to record performances

Activity
Workshop leaders separate participants into three groups (blue, red and green) using coloured coding on outside of suitcases.
Each colour represents a theme of hospital life.

- Blue – hospital hygiene
- Red - punishment
- Green - food

Working in groups, participants share objects and stories. Participants create a short scene or story using the objects ready to perform to other two groups of participants.

Participants perform to each other.

Cian, Dayo, Graham and Ciara improvising ‘Punishment’
Paul, David, DJ and Jolene improvising ‘Food’
Zara improvising ‘Hygiene’
**Activity 2h  Songs of resistance**

**AIMS**
- To share recordings of songs composed by patients
- To think about what the songs mean
- To write songs of resistance

**TIME REQUIRED**
50 minutes

**RESOURCES**
- Songs of Resistance PowerPoint
- Audio recordings of songs
- Tin mug and tin of cocoa powder
- Picture of Barlow Ward at the Royal Albert Hospital in Lancaster to go with the words of ‘The Barlow Song’
- Information about the resistance songs and the people who sang them (Ledger and Shufflebotham, 2006)
- Speaker and a projector
- Paper and pens

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**Activity**

Workshop leaders introduce research that has been done to record songs from the former learning disability hospitals.

Introduce objects relating to the songs (tin mug, jar of cocoa powder, picture of Barlow Ward, Royal Lancaster Hospital).

Project the song lyrics on screen.

Ask participants to listen to the songs.

Sing the songs together.

Get in groups to make up four lines of your own songs.

Participants could also use spoken word or rap.

Sing the songs to each other.
WORKED EXAMPLE

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK

Paul
“The Cocoa Song demonstrated that we won’t go quietly, we won’t shut up and we have the right to speak up. We made the song Trapped Rhythms, we brought the Cocoa Song into the current time and will help people also get a better understanding of what we want, and what must to be changed for us to have a better, more equal life.”

Access All Areas’ Black Cab theatre company worked with film makers and musicians over 10 weeks to create Trapped Rhythms in response to the Cocoa Song.27

TRAPPED RHYTHMS LYRICS

Defective, broken, better stick them in there
Lumpy tapioca. Toothbrushes they had to share,
Not again, I swear
Doctors on a mission,
watching every move
Romance at the dance? Only if you were real smooth
They’re trapped, no use
Because I’m going home (yes man. Listen now!)
I can choose to go home
We got our own rhythms
You can take them or leave them
We got our own rhythms
You’re playing with our freedom

Try to escape they wanted something more
Take a pill for punishment. Get down and scrub that floor.
I swear... No more
Little hidden shames you had them labelled
Too harsh to get. We’re all fully abled
Listen now - We’re showing you how
Because I’m going home (Yes man. Listen to me)
I can choose to go home

27 Trapped Rhythms: https://youtu.be/Unk1Mst7Lxw
**Session 3 Visiting a public archive**

The session was held at the London Metropolitan Archive (LMA)

**AIMS**

- To explain what an archive is and how archives can help in finding out about the history of learning disability
- To learn how to search an archive catalogue
- To understand what an archive contains and how things are carefully stored to preserve them
- To view documents relating to an earlier generation of people with learning disabilities

**TIME REQUIRED**

2 hours 30 minutes

**RESOURCES**

- A Public Archive
- Archivist or archive outreach worker
- Permission to tour archive collection and search catalogues
- Roughly one member of staff to each six participants, depending on the reading levels of the group
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain that the group are researching institutional history and ask if resources in relation to this can be searched and viewed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Introduction: Learning Disability history and public archives**

Archive Officer begins by outlining role of archives in understanding and researching learning disability history.

The LMA Archive Information Officer explained what an archive is and how people with learning disabilities could use the archive and get help from archivists to find out more about learning disability history.

The Archivist used the example of Mabel Cooper and her friend Gloria Ferris – the records from St Lawrence’s hospital where they both lived are stored at the archive. You may wish to consider former long stay hospitals and any former residents in your area.

**Tour of the archive**

Participants are taken on a tour of the building. They are shown the store room and document handling rooms.

Question and Answer session.

**How to search an archive catalogue**

Archivist demonstrates how to search the catalogue and the terms that might be useful in researching learning disability history.

Group members practice searching the electronic catalogue with support from archivist.

**Looking at records from the long stay hospitals**

Members of the groups are given the opportunity to handle and discuss a range of records and photographs from a long stay hospital.

Members of the group ask the archivist questions about the exhibits and how they can find out further information.
**WORKED EXAMPLE**

**11.12.2015 Access All Areas visit the London Metropolitan Archive**

**Paul**
“Visiting the archives was really enlightening to find the books and online resources that were there. We found a connection with those who came before us and found that our lives were similar and also different. It felt professional, learning how to do research and finding other information about the past.”

**Tour of the archive**

**Terry**
“We saw the store room and visited a document handling room. Visiting the archive was exciting as we got to see original pictures. You see the real people who were there and this is different to just talking about it.”

**Rufaro**
“It was amazing to find so many records”

**Learning how to search the catalogues**

Tom Furber from the LMA demonstrated how to find the records about St Lawrence’s by putting in the name of the hospital to find the records.

**Tour of the archive**

**Graham**
“It was really interesting to read what was written in the hospital supervisor’s book”

**Lee**
“At the archive we learnt about the history and details and places in the past (dates), registers of people, students, patients.”

**Graham**
“It was like being a detective- putting the bits of the story together”

**Charlene**
“It was interesting to see a lot of detail. We used this detail to make the pill bottles and the mattress with the history and dates for our accessible exhibition.”
Session 4  Oral history
Recording people’s memories of the past

Activity 4a  Learning about oral history

AIM
To learn how to be an effective interviewer

TIME REQUIRED
2 hours

ROOM LAYOUT
Students in groups of 3

RESOURCES
• 1 tutor for every 6 students
• Internet connection
• Interview with James Lappin28
• Interview with Margaret Scally28
• One iPad (with internet access) for each group

Activity  Introduction
Explain that the session is about learning from people about the past. We call this ‘oral history’.
Participants will learn how to be good interviewers.

View video extracts
The videos, made in 1996, show interviews with residents of Lennox Castle, a Scottish institution, both conducted by Howard Mitchell. Select short extracts from the two video interviews to show.

Discuss video extracts
Ask participants to comment upon Howard’s questioning style.
• What did he do well?
• What did he do less well?
• Did he use different techniques in the two interviews?
• What sort of questions worked best?

28 Interviews with James Lappin and Margaret Scally: http://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/social-care/lennox-castle-hospital/content-section-1.1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum up and record discussion</strong></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a list of Do’s and Don’ts for interviewing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generate questions for practice interview session</strong></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In preparation for interview practice, encourage the group to think of questions to ask if you want to find out about where a person lived as a child. Record the questions the group suggest. Prompt with photos if the conversation is stilted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice interviewing in groups of 3</strong></td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One person should ask questions, one should answer, and another should observe and (if available) use the iPad to record the interview. Conduct the interview. The interviewee and the observer then say what the interviewer did well, and what they might have done to make it even better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice interviewing</strong></td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group members change roles, repeat the exercise above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice interviewing</strong></td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group members change roles, repeat the exercise above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plenary</strong></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look again at Dos and Don’ts list, and amend in light of the practice interviewing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 4b Oral history

This session depends upon your finding one or more people with experience of life in an institution – long stay hospital, secure unit, Assessment and Treatment Unit, YOI, prison or similar - who is willing to be interviewed. It can be as a resident or as a member of staff. It is important that the person is prepared as it can be distressing to recall an incarcerated life.

AIMS

- To develop the skill of asking good questions
- To find out about life in institutions through interviews with people who have lived or worked in them

TIME REQUIRED

40 minutes preparation
Allow 1 hour per person being interviewed.

RESOURCES

- One or two interviewees
- Internet connection to access:
  - Interview with James Lappin29
  - Interview with Margaret Scally29
  - Access All Areas’ interview film30
  - Silent Minority film31
- Video camera, iPad or similar for recording

Activity Duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell participants that today they will use the skills of interviewing that they rehearsed in the previous session. Recap the dos and don’ts list. Introduce the interviewees.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw up a list of questions for the interviewers to ask.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look again at extracts of the Lennox Castle interviews, or an extract from Silent Minority. Then make a list of good questions to ask to find out about life in an institution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share out the questions.</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree who will ask which questions. Practice if necessary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued overleaf >

29 Interviews with James Lappin and Margaret Scally: http://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/social-care/lennox-castle-hospital/content-section-1.1
30 Access All Areas’ Interviews with ex-patients: https://youtu.be/tWxV_QKO6Ks
31 Silent Minority Film: https://youtu.be/7Qb424HvKSQ
Interviews

Do the interview, with interviewers taking turns in asking the questions you have agreed.
Record it.

Review

Invite the interviewees to reflect on how it felt.
Watch the recordings you have made.
Discuss what people have learnt.

Paul
“I liked interviewing people, as I found out how people really felt, what they saw and what went on. It made me realise their point of view and outlook. It gave me a personal experience on how it was like to live in a hospital. It was an honour for them to share their stories with us.

My advice is to make sure that the questions go in depth and can draw out more answers, you can ask more questions from their answers to really learn about their stories in detail.”

Zara
“The ex-patients had positive and negative stories from the institutions.”

Terry
“It was emotional hearing from the ex-patients, it was honest and thoughtful.”

Lee
“Interviewing the ex-patients, I heard good and bad stories. It was emotional hearing about isolation.”

Charlene
“It was very interesting interviewing the ex-patients, but sad as well. I asked them if they celebrated Christmas in the hospital, some of them didn’t.”
Session 5 Being an archivist

AIMS
- To introduce students to historic films about learning disability
- To encourage students to develop critical thinking
- To help students understand change over time
- To teach basic tools of archiving e.g. tagging

TIME REQUIRED
1 hour 30 minutes

Note: the exercise can be repeated as often as you like with different films/videos. Films can be found on the Living Archive website.

ROOM LAYOUT
- Small groups (3 or 4) around a computer

RESOURCES
- Computers with internet connection
- Video camera, mobile phone or tablet for filming
- Inclusive Archive films

WORKED EXAMPLE
Three members of Access All Areas met 6 times in the summer of 2017 to help The Rix Centre at the University of East London to archive Lord Rix’s collection of historic films.

On each occasion they followed the routine described in the session plan.

What the group learned is to be found here where the four archivists talk about their learning.

Note: the exercise can be repeated as often as you like with different films/videos. Films can be found on the Living Archive website.

32 Inclusive Archive films: https://inclusivearchive.org/stories/me
We suggest starting with one about Gwen’s placement in a restaurant kitchen (1985)
https://inclusivearchive.org/story/6/patterns-for-living-work/#/305

33 Living Archive website: http://www.livingarchive.org.uk

34 The Rix Centre: http://rixresearchandmedia.org

35 https://inclusivearchive.org/story/6/what-we-have-learned-brian-rix-archive-project
### Activity
Explain that students will be watching old films about people with a learning disability, and asking some questions about them. You could show some very short clips of one or two films to spark interest.

### Duration
10 minutes

### Watching
Show a short extract from one of the Inclusive Archive films.

### Duration
10 minutes

### Talking
Now encourage people to talk about the film. Introduce the questions:
- What was the film about?
- What did you like about the film?
- What did you not like about the film?
- Why is the film important?
- How does the person’s life compare to your life today? What has changed? What has stayed the same?

Watch the film extract again. Then discuss the group’s responses to the questions.

### Duration
30 minutes

### Tagging
Ask the group members to think of Tags for this film, to help people looking at an index to know what is in there.
We suggest tags for this film might be:
- Learning disabilities
- Work
- Training

### Duration
15 minutes

### Recording
To complete the session, ask people to talk about the film, using the questions if you need to, and make a recording.

### Duration
20 minutes
### MADHOUSE TIMETABLE

This is the timetable of the MADHOUSE film, history workshops, visits and events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Longer Shut Up</strong></td>
<td>Making of a film about the life of former long stay hospital resident Mabel Cooper: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZAgOs4Nqn4">www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZAgOs4Nqn4</a></td>
<td>Jan - June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1: Harperbury hospital site visit</strong></td>
<td>Access All Areas artists visit the site of a former learning disability hospital: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MG1hBn2LSoc">www.youtube.com/watch?v=MG1hBn2LSoc</a></td>
<td>23.09.2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2: Living in an institution</strong></td>
<td>Learning disability history workshop at the Barbican Pit Theatre, London.</td>
<td>29.09.2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building on the history workshop: Access All Areas perform a piece that explores labelling in Institutions. First performed at The Rix Centre, University of East London, to inform design of an inclusive archive of learning disability history.</td>
<td>12.11.2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Launch of the film ‘No Longer Shut Up’ at The Barbican.</td>
<td>20.11.2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Launch of educational resource pack at Portcullis House as part of Disability History Month: <a href="https://www.youtu.be/J5-MfeL-uOE">www.youtu.be/J5-MfeL-uOE</a></td>
<td>22.11.2015</td>
</tr>
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Session 4a: Oral history
Preparing for interviewing former hospital patients.
Oral history training.
Interview training.
11.12.2015

Session 4b: Panel interview with
former hospital residents.
16.12.2015

OU and Access All Areas work together to produce
educational resource to teach the history of the
institutions to primary and secondary school pupils:
www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/research/
shld/education-resources
March-June 2016

Making of ‘Trapped Rhythms’ music
video: https://youtu.be/Unk1Mst7Lxw
March 2016

Work on developing the MADHOUSE
Wiki: http://madhousewiki.org
Summer 2016 – present

Access All Areas and Hackney Museum
work together to co-curate an exhibition
on the History of Learning Disability.
January 2017

12 Access All Areas learning disabled facilitators
 gained level 2 qualifications in workshop leading.
February 2017

Launch of MADHOUSE, My House? exhibition
at Hackney Museum, East London.
2.2.2017

Continued overleaf >
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation on the MADHOUSE research methods at the launch of the inclusive archive.</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of museum exhibition by Access All Areas inclusive evaluation team.</td>
<td>April 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation at SHLD International Conference – Access All Areas talk about researching the hidden history of the institutions and share the history games they have developed.</td>
<td>21.7.2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersive theatre training week with MADHOUSE, My House? group.</td>
<td>January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersive theatre production ‘MADHOUSE re:exit’ at Shoreditch Town Hall, London.</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our evaluation team interviewed audiences after the show and held post-show discussions.</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre and Post-show workshops with community groups in London.</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the post-show workshops, we also provided space to evaluate the MADHOUSE re:exit performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MADHOUSE response week with MADHOUSE, My House? group.</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACCESS ALL AREAS

Access All Areas Website: www.accessallareaastheatre.org
Access All Areas YouTube channel: http://bit.ly/AccessAllAreasYT
MADHOUSE Wiki: http://MADHOUSEwiki.org
MADHOUSE Trailer: https://youtu.be/uAf1QQ7r7ic

OPEN UNIVERSITY

www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/research/shld
OU Education Resources: http://www.open.ac.uk/health-and-social-care/research/shld/education-resources
Interviews with James Lappin and Margaret Scally: http://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/social-care/lennox-castle-hospital/content-section-1.1

INCLUSIVE ARCHIVE

https://inclusivearchive.org/story/6/what-we-have-learned-brian-rix-archive-project/
https://inclusivearchive.org/stories/me

UK DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH HOSPITAL LOCATIONS


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Sensory Objects: www.sensoryobjects.com
Present in My Past Video: https://vimeo.com/130333304
Bournemouth Peoples First Timeline: http://www.struggleforequality.co.uk/page12.html
Silent Minority Film: https://youtu.be/7Qb424HvKSQ
Lancashire institutions: http://www.lancslearningdisabilityinstitutions.org.uk
Lennox Castle interviews: www.lennoxcastlesstories.co.uk
References


Lenehan, C (2017) These are our children, DH/Council for Disabled children: London


Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of our project partners and funders for your support on MADHOUSE, My House? project:
Heritage Lottery Fund, Open University, Rix Centre, London Metropolitan Archives, Hackney Museum, Barbican Centre, Shoreditch Town Hall, David O’Driscoll, Books Beyond Words, Nigel Ingham, Nicola Grove, Jane Abraham, Nathan Theys (film maker) and Helen Monaghan (designer).

Contact

Access All Areas run weekly workshops in Hackney for adults with learning disabilities and autism as well as offering bespoke training and opportunities for a variety of groups and individuals.
If you would be interested in any of our services, please contact:

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E-mail: hello@accessallareastheatre.org
twitter.com/Access All AreasTheatre
facebook.com/AccessAllAreasTheatre