

Maudsley research

Table of Contents

Overview	1
Feedback on the Process.....	1
Positive	1
To improve.....	1
The Artworks.....	2
Outcome – view of the artworks	5
Outcome - the Environment.....	7
Other	7
Lessons Learned.....	8
Requested next steps.....	8

Overview

There is a great deal of enthusiasm from young people, staff and other users of the building for this project which shifted Snowsfields from a “*grotty, hospital feel*”¹ to a brighter, more welcoming environment where “*the fact that they care for the space makes me feel they are more likely to care for me*”

Feedback on the Process

Positive

- I liked the workshops
- “*It was interesting to wait and see what would happen next when they were installing the art. We saw the patches of paint first so we knew something was going to happen*”
- “*Enjoyable to be involved in this project – lots of exciting ideas and creativity.*”

To improve

Team meetings

- “*Would have been better to have more than one consultant on the team so the views could be challenged by peers and therefore less affected by hierarchy*”
- “*I would have preferred to have a clearer understanding of the process from the start*”

Workshops – mixed views

- Some staff saw an imbalance of YP (lot) and staff (too little) input: “*Would work better to have more senior staff engagement with workshop activity with young people*” while others felt “*the YP view matters more than ours so it didn't matter that we weren't involved*”
- “*the YP workshops would be better with more focus on what exactly each one was for. They were a bit too exploratory*”

¹ All statements in italics are verbatim quotes from staff or young people

- Staff: *I feel sad for the ideas that didn't make it eg messages in bottles*
YP: *I understand why things we made in the workshops aren't in the final artworks, it's not a problem*
- *"It would have been good to start by discussing and setting a direction for the workshops with the staff beforehand – we lost too much time with art therapy type approach that we couldn't use later on"*
- *"They were my favourite sessions, I looked forward to them"* (YP)
- *"I really liked how we had time to think on our own before we shared ideas. And then going round the room was good"* (YP)

Timing

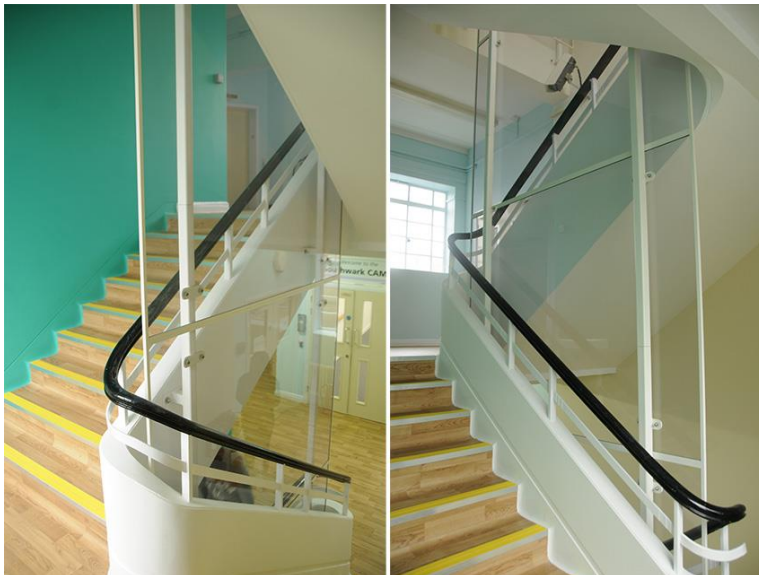
- YP thought the YP workshops should have been closer together so the same people were involved all the way through
- *"The workshops were too time consuming and we missed the budget window"*
- *"We should have been more disciplined about the team meetings and just stuck to same time every two weeks with whoever could make it. Waiting for everyone to answer emails and be available slowed us down"*
- Urgency helps. A faster turnover of ideas
- *"It was a bit of a shame about the relatively slow completion rate. If we managed to finalize some ideas before the end of the financial year there would have been far greater opportunity to access Trust funds – e.g. to help get the interview room refurnished and to get all of the basic painting completed"*
- *"The urgent changes to scheduled workshops and work onsite didn't help to hit deadlines and has to be taken into account"*

Other

- It may be worthwhile to explain the art now to the less involved staff. *"We heard there was a boat theme but we don't really see it"* Maybe a short talk / tour for any staff or young people who are interested?

The Artworks

Colour scheme



Coast on Fence



Up and Down and Up again



Serenity Lounge



Clouds



Entrance



Outcome – view of the artworks

Aspect	Positive	To improve
General colour scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So much better • I love the teal • I like the natural sea and sand and sky colours, so soothing • Especially good on the staircase. Feels a more comfortable space to be in. • <i>I didn't think it made any difference what colour the walls were but now it's done I like it</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dark colours feel too heavy for me
Coast on Fence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You feel less enclosed • <i>Before you just saw the fence and the wire, now you can step into the view</i> • <i>I notice different things on different days</i> • <i>The YP like the garden one. They spend more time out there</i> • <i>I generally like it</i> • <i>You've improved the view from my room!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Obviously they should finish it. It's niggling at me</i> • <i>There's a bit they forgot to do</i> • <i>One day we'll just do it, get a pot of paint and finish it</i> • <i>Would be nice if they could paint that part brown</i> • <i>I don't get the bare fence bit. It's like he missed that bit. I worry about durability</i> • <i>I'd like more detail but maybe that's just me</i>
Up and down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good that it's all one piece so we don't pick at it 	

and up again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the bubbles. Fabs! • I like the complexity, the way it changes • Good colours • Makes it a bit easier to get the YP up the stairs to activities. <i>"You can have a conversation with them about it"</i> • I like the transparency • It feels cosier • It livens up the staircase • Really good. The most successful piece • <i>Linked. Gives a sense of cohesion between ward and top floor</i> • <i>It has the most impact on the whole building including other users</i> 	
Serenity Lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that it's not too obvious • I prefer it to the garden painting. Very nice. • Nicely painted • I like it because is serene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're watching TV you can't see it (shame) • The other walls look dated now • It drops off on the other two walls • Cream walls pull it down and look grubby • I didn't notice it • Could it be brighter? Warmer? • It feels a bit limp and wishy washy to me. Flat. Like it needs a focal point
Pieces of clouds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intriguing. Much better than curtains. • Gives privacy without being cut off • I like the bird, it catches your eye • Interesting, make you think "I wonder what..." • Sweet, I like them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Entrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good colours • I like the bubbles • Better line of sight from the front door • New flooring is much better • Bubbles on door make it seem more inviting • Good link to staircase artwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could do with something more • I didn't notice the bubbles • The floor change when you get to the nursery

Outcome - the Environment

(numbers in brackets indicate that this comment was repeated this number of times by different respondents)

Characteristics Before	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloomy • Neglected, uncared for, run down, tired • Clinical (2), institutional, hospital-like • Stigma / shame, <i>"Entrance was awful. Especially when you first arrive"</i>, old fashioned • <i>Hospitals generally are pretty awful. Especially when you're not physically ill and you're basically living here. It's very important to improve the environment</i> • <i>We want to ease their time here</i> • Bit basic • Enclosed • <i>Space is the result of various incongruent decisions which fail to create a sense on place, with all parts working together for a positive effect</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformed, looks and feels better, massive improvement, stark difference • Symbolic: <i>"The environment needs to mirror the care you get here Now it does"</i> • Bigger, more modern, fresher (3) • Inviting (3), welcoming (4), friendlier, • Homely (3), comfortable, gentler, kinder, relaxing <i>"I feel more at ease. So it's easier to be here. After all it's like my home for a while"</i> • Brilliant, colourful (4), glowing, beautiful, brighter (2) • <i>I haven't heard any negative comments from the young people (2)</i> • <i>Good that it's not so cool as to be off-putting</i> • Child friendly <i>"We hear the parents on the intercom talking about the art with the children"</i> • <i>YP acknowledge it and ask to go to the Long Gallery to see stuff about it</i> • <i>It's good that you avoided a dislocation with reality. It's not a fantasy land or a theme park. It's about looking outward not inward.</i> • <i>It keeps them [YP] thinking. I'm sure it's helped</i>

Other

Not "too nice"

We tested the concern that improving the environment might make young people less inclined to leave (a concern raised during workshops). All staff interviewed disagreed that this was a problem *"that's a rubbish attitude"* and the YP thought the idea downright hilarious.

Integrated

Several (appreciative) comments were made about the way the art is part of the space not added to the space.

- Part of the building (not art stuck on walls) so blends in. *"A natural feel of home. Not too in your face. Subtle. Not too obvious. If you want to look at it you can and if you don't it is subtle enough"*
- *"Even if you are too unwell to notice it it's still relaxing, calming"*
- *The assessments go better when you're in comfortable surroundings. It helps put the patients at ease.*

On the DPG connection:

The explanation of the tripartite concept needs to be improved as it was not widely understood: *"Would have been useful to have clearer understanding of the nature of the funding and intended purpose from the outset "*

“Not sure that the emphasis on direct inclusion of DPG material was always the best way to go. I fully appreciate the point about promoting public engagement with DPG – but that would be best achieved by promoting the opportunities for contact and learning alongside the labelling of the contemporary art work on the ward as something that DPG supported. By way of example, the stair bubbles are easily the most successful part of the project and will help to promote public links with DPG, but don’t rely on depiction of actual DPG pieces in any way.”

“Having two agendas – one from Snowfields, one from DPG made it very difficult to see what the best option where and for who”

“At points it felt like the project was done to Snowfields rather than with it”

Lessons Learned

- Clarify process to everybody from the start to manage expectations
 - What can be done with the funding *“The need for DPG artworks to be prominent in the finished works was introduced very late in the development process”*
 - That more ideas will be developed than eventually used
- Clarity on the roles of young people, staff, Artmongers and DPG *“This was a little confusing on the progress blog – the way some of the material was presented made it seem like it was produced by Artmongers in response to ideas from YPs, rather than directly created by the YP. Making that distinction clearer would have been helpful.”*
- Have an agreed schedule for progress meetings and stick to it. This would have improved understanding and communication.
- Have a shared view of the necessity, purpose and schedule of workshops
- Where there is a deadline (eg financial year, inspection visit) then all parties need to have the discipline to stick to the schedule or accept that deadlines may not be met – make consequences of postponement clear
- Process based projects like this take a lot more time than initially planned for. Buffer time to extend into in case of unforeseen delays, such as ‘we have an emergency situation with a patient’ or ‘we are understaffed today’ also have to be considered in the final assessment.

Requested next steps

- Furniture looks old fashioned, especially in interview rooms
- The interview room (“cockpit”) is awful, I try not to go in there. They should get rid of all that furniture and have a bench round the edge. Maybe you could paint windows on the walls?
- Paint downstairs corridor (2)
- Something in entrance area / ramp
- Lift. *“We have to take a lot of them up in the lift and it’s awful. It just feels like an ugly box. Would be great to have some art in there so we had something to look at and talk about”*
- Apply the same colour scheme upstairs so that when for example they leave the education room they are in a calming space and therefore ready to come back in quicker.
- Something at the end of the upstairs corridor *“feels a bit forgotten about”*
- Would be great to change the lighting to something softer – and maybe changeable eg LED lights
- Boats artwork on downstairs corridor walls
- Sideways glimpses on window frames (2)
- The de-escalation room would be a perfect place to use the calming effect of colour combinations and lighting.

Evaluation research and report carried out by Catherine Shovlin on behalf of Artmongers

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