

# Art in Site

**What does creative  
work for people  
with dementia look  
like?**

# Slide 1

I'm going to talk about two objects we've run for Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust last year and this year.

Both units care for people with severe dementia and have about 20 beds for men and women.

In these case studies we want to show how artists can think together with the nursing and OT teams, users and families to create work that has a meaningful purpose for the community, and which supports the care team in creating environments that users and their families can engage with.

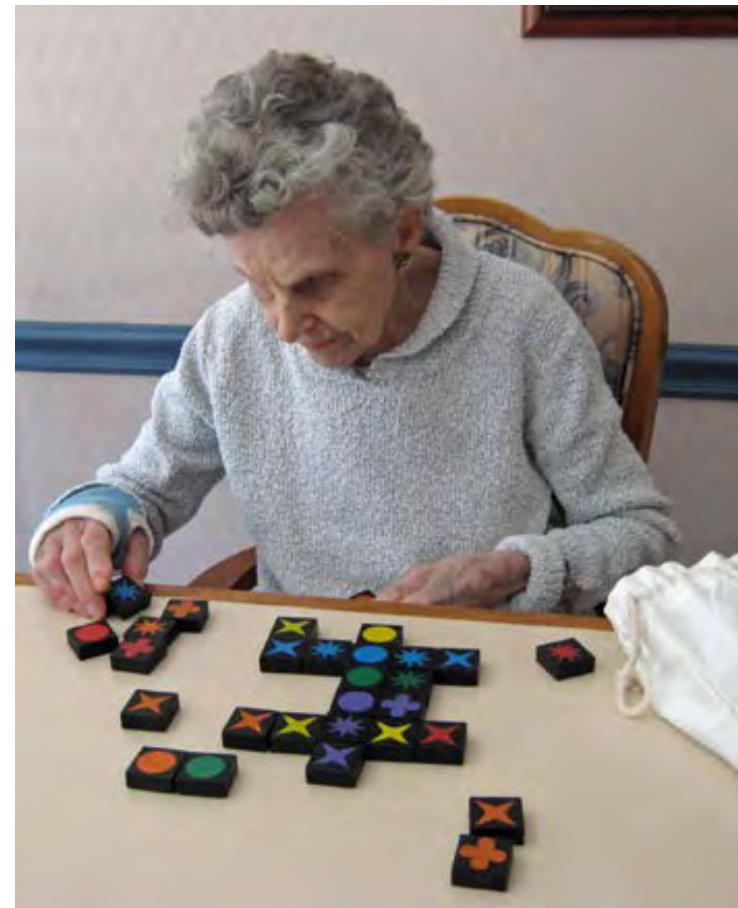
We start all our projects with this question:

How can we use our creativity to help you with your challenges?



# Creativity for people with Dementia

## Some conventions





## Slide 2

We wanted to rethink the conventions of the mural or photographs on the wall.

Instead we wanted to make something more interactive, like these activities here, possibly more interesting that users can engage with, but somehow keep it on the wall so that it is always accessible and open.

**These  
interventions are  
all focused on the  
individual**

**How can we make  
something more  
focused on community?**



## Slide 4

We invited sculptor and educator Maryrose Sinn to devise four workshops with us to bring everyone together to investigate how we can communicate something of ourselves to each other through the language of art.

Maryrose was head of sculpture at Brighton University where she helps to nurture young artists and encourage them to find their own visual language.

She also had experience of Alzheimer's through caring for her mother in law, trying to find ways to reach her through the barriers of the disease.



## **Our creative process at Lambourn Grove**

Leading workshops in which everyone is participating together





## Slide 5

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**Workshop 1**  
Colour Combinations





**Workshop 2**  
Colour & Form





**Workshop 2**  
Colour & Form



## Slide 6-8

We found we all created something that had structure and composition with no discernible barriers between well and not well.





Workshop 3  
Objects & Materials



## Slide 9

We looked at how we, as people, love to arrange things and order objects – creating little assemblages of forms and colour.





Workshop 4  
Images





Workshop 4  
Images



## **Slide 10**

We looked at image choices and how even with such advanced Dementia, the choices we make reflect our interests.

## **Slide 11**

Patrick has chosen three images that are visually connected – two by the same author. It is no surprise to learn he was a craftsman in his working life.

# Outcomes at Lambourn Grove

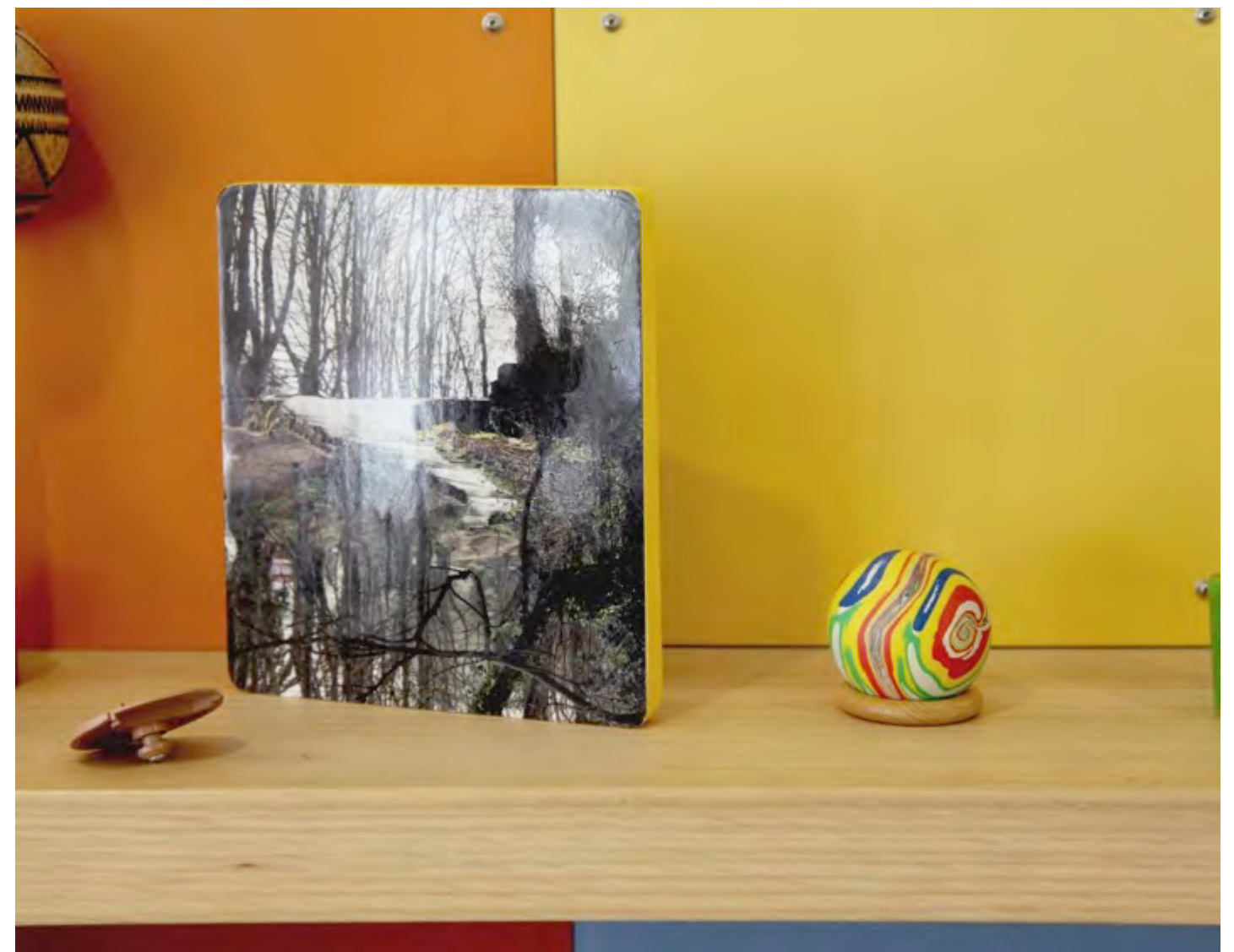
## Shelf Work



## Slide 12

Our project resulted in two pieces: a mantelshelf in which we have created a focal point for the community to assemble conversations of texture, colour, image, and object.







## Slide 13

The shelf invites activity, squeezing, touching, spinning, handling

It also invites staff and carers to introduce new things they think will capture interest

Things that are just seasonal, tropical or just witty arrangements that they know a certain user might enjoy. Softness.



# Outcomes at Lambourn Grove

## Hoops



## Slide 14

Our second piece for Lambourn Grove is floating disks - embodying hoops set with both sides that hang in communal corridors and spaces.



# Coming back to understand how the work is being used

## Some unexpected uses



## Slide 15

Here we found that it is the families who engaged and nurtured their uses. That there is a joy in exploring the images together with a user was the mutual discovering of the reverse image. As genuine shared surprise that puts you both on the same level again.



# Coming back to understand how the work is being used

Working with staff to find new ways of using the shelf







A new direction

**Activate vestibular  
and proprioceptive  
senses, and keep  
to communal  
spaces**

## Slide 18

This year we took the work a step further in the new Logandene Healthcare assessment unit.

This group of patients still have many cognitive functions intact. They like to investigate things and take them apart.

In our early discussions we learnt that staff are focused on activating these key senses to keep users engaging with their world around them and therefore open to therapy.



# Logandene Elderly Healthcare Unit

## Building on learnings from Lambourn Grove





## Slide 19

Our outcomes at Logandene focus on things that are rewarding to play with.

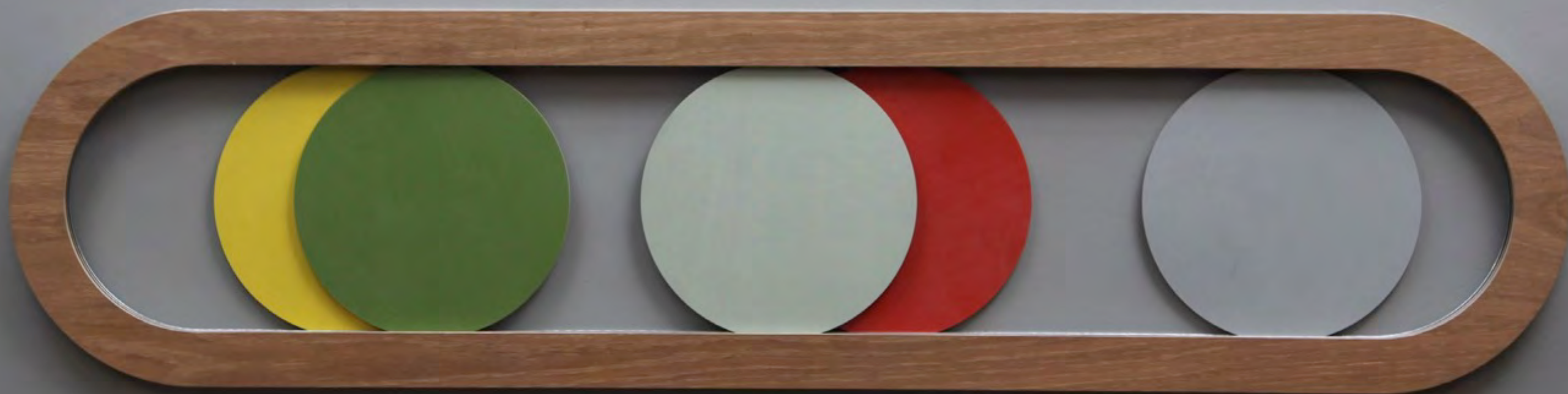
On the left we have spinning pear drops.

The shape of the pears fits your hand grasp perfectly.

You can turn them and some change colour if you press on them.

On the right we have images and sliding disks. The colours below the images can be rearranged into different compositions.





## Slide 20

The images are of local places and taken by one of the community user groups.







## Slide 21

And printed on wood to give a rewarding texture





## Slide 22

We also made spinning avocados. Shapes that are satisfying to hold and which you can turn and rearrange.













# Slide 25

We made the pieces large scale so that they fill the wall. We wanted to compositions that create a focus

## Engagement

Engagement – familiar to mental health practitioners, and familiar in art: if people don't engage in something it's useless.

In the best workshops everyone engages on the same level.

Physically touching and engaging things is still active in this group.

In the pieces we've made everybody is equal, because we are sharing the same pleasure.

We hope this will mean everyone engages with the work.

Our approach is to create work that is practical and meets all the standards, but which will also connect with the community on an emotional level.



# Learnings

## Running design and culture questions in parallel

### DESIGN QUESTIONS

What should we make?

Does it require technical support?

What should it look like?

What are the budget implications?

### Design outcomes

- Artwork that is fully tested and practically “doable”
- Art that meets all budgetary considerations
- Art that is the result of co-creation with all stakeholders

### CULTURE QUESTIONS

What are the emotional needs of the community?

Are patients and staff able to use this?

Do staff enjoy using this?

Do we need to train existing new people to use this design?

Could occupational therapists use it as part of their care programmes?

Could this help them to develop new skills?

### Culture outcomes

- Artwork that is “useable” by all
- Art that is considerate of the broad needs of the community
- Art that supports staff in delivering better care
- Art that is enjoyable to use
- Art that helps to foster community and a sense of belonging

## Slide 25

### Learnings

There are two strands of a project in it's creation.

The design questions – process that lead to a successful design that meets all the requirements and is on time and on budget, and the result of everyone being involved.

And then there are the cultural questions where the art can cross into becoming an expression of the community.

We see the role for art to support everyone and that it can cross into a therapeutic role.



## Slide 25

### The Trust

HPFT has an impressive leadership team who have set out to become excellent against an initial 2013 score of 'satisfactory'.

Their strategy is to listen to everyone, staff users, families, and take these learnings into each new iteration of the service.

It was a real pleasure to work with a team that was empowered to think together about ways that art can help their practice and create work that is new and innovative and we which we hope makes a difference to the patients and families on the wards.

# Art in Site

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