

# Living Dementia Differently: What We've Learnt Together So Far



Founded in 2009, Bright Shadow is a community of artists and people living with and affected by dementia who make ambitious art together.

## The Bright Shadow approach

- **Creative equality:** everybody creates quality art together, collaborating with the very best artists across art forms
- **Raising expectations:** we love trying new things, challenging ourselves and being ambitious
- **Reducing loneliness:** 100% of people said Zest, our flagship creative programme, helps people with dementia feel less lonely
- **Inclusivity:** we reach and welcome people from many different backgrounds, at different points of their journey with dementia
- **Supportive spaces:** we make it easy for people to thrive by being consistent, adaptable and building real relationships

**"No one else is doing what Bright Shadow does... this is so different!"**  
– Medway Zest participant

## What we heard at our Open Forums

We gathered nearly 700 responses about what our community needs.

- **Connection and community** "The antidote to people-less tills" Creativity actively builds community, helping people continue to have a stake in society, to have pride and be resilient.
- **Making culture** "Important for life – like medicine" From dance to music, drawing to textiles, movement and making were the top themes from our Open Forums, making up almost half of responses
- **Culture at home and away** The home is a creative space full of possibility, while travel and cultural outings bring nourishment, though they are not always accessible
- **Identity, advocacy and finding meaning** "Involving people with dementia to enrich communities." Creativity can foster a sense of much-needed purpose, confidence and growth

Together we found that culture connects us, different art forms enrich us and making art together transforms our daily lives.