

PRESS RELEASE – 22/04/2022

Paintings in Hospitals Brings Art to Better Libraries

Paintings in Hospitals and charitable social enterprise Better announce *Art Meets Book*, a collaborative project bringing art exhibitions and workshops to communities in London and the West Midlands via local libraries. The project is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Launching in April 2022, the *Art Meets Book* project will offer community groups based at Eltham and Woolwich Libraries, London, and Gornal and Dudley Libraries, West Midlands, the opportunity to learn about art and to co-curate a public exhibition of artworks from the Paintings in Hospitals collection, while taking part in a series of facilitated art workshops.

By bringing art into the heart of these communities, the Art Meets Book project is designed to improve the health and wellbeing of local people adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Art Meets Book aims to increase equity of access to art and to use art therapeutically to maximise wellbeing, provide new experiences, and stimulate open discussions.

Research has shown that accessing the arts and utilising our creativity can improve our general health and wellbeing, as well as improve the health of our communities and society.¹ Over the past two years, Covid-19 has shown us all the real value of connection with creativity, with culture, and with other people. For many, the arts have been a lifeline through the lockdowns. The Art Meets Book project will provide an entry to the arts to those who have yet to explore their benefits while providing deeper engagement for those who have.

Diana Edmonds, National Libraries Director for Better said:

“Libraries are at the heart of every local community and our staff have seen first-hand the impact that the pandemic has had on social isolation and feelings of loneliness amongst people from across the social spectrum.

“This innovative new project provides the ideal opportunity for individuals and groups to re-engage with their friends and neighbours in a creative and positive environment. For many, it will be an opportunity to learn about and explore new cultural avenues and enhance their knowledge and understanding of art in all its forms.”

Sandra Bruce-Gordon FRSA, Director & Chief Executive for Paintings in Hospitals, said:

“We are delighted to receive support for Art Meets Book through an Arts Council National Lottery Project Grant. Over the next year, our project will provide art displays and creative activities for those visiting Better libraries in London and the West Midlands. Participants will work with our team to explore art and the Paintings in Hospitals collection before curating public exhibitions for the benefit of their communities.

“Art and creativity are proven to help us stay well and to lead happy, fulfilling lives. After the isolation brought about by the pandemic, we feel that art is the perfect way to reconnect with each other. We would like to give huge thanks to Arts Council England and National Lottery players who have made this project possible.”

1. <https://www.paintingsinhospitals.org.uk/Pages/Category/key-studies>

ENDS

PRESS ENQUIRIES

For all enquiries, please contact:

- **Paintings in Hospitals:**
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RESOURCES

Paintings in Hospitals: general images available via Dropbox: <https://bit.ly/37goC3Y>

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT PAINTINGS IN HOSPITALS

[Paintings in Hospitals](#) is the first and only national charity of its kind. Founded in 1959, the charity uses art to transform care spaces and inspire better health and wellbeing. Paintings in Hospitals is partnered with 315 care organisations across the UK, lending its artworks and facilitating creative workshops for patients and carers. The Paintings in Hospitals collection holds over 3,600 artworks, including pieces by Bridget Riley, Antony Gormley, Maggi Hambling, Yinka Shonibare, Helen Chadwick, Anish Kapoor, Elizabeth Blackadder, Anni Albers, Ben Rivers, Catherine Yass, Alexander Calder, Dame Elisabeth Frink, and many more. In 2020 Paintings in Hospitals partnered with Google Arts & Culture and artist Tom Croft for the global [Healthcare Heroes](#) virtual exhibition. The charity has previously partnered with the National Gallery, V&A, Arts Council Collection, Wallace Collection, and Hayward Gallery. Paintings in Hospitals is a Registered Charity (1065963).

Website: www.paintingsinhospitals.org.uk

Twitter: @artinhospitals

Instagram: @PaintingsinHospitals

ABOUT GLL/BETTER

Established in 1993, GLL is the largest UK-based charitable social enterprise delivering leisure, health and community services. Operating under the Better brand, we manage 258 public sport and leisure centres, 113 libraries and 10 children’s centres in partnership with 50 local councils, public agencies and sporting organisations. GLL has 850,000 members and welcomes 52 million customer visits per year.

Website: www.gll.org