

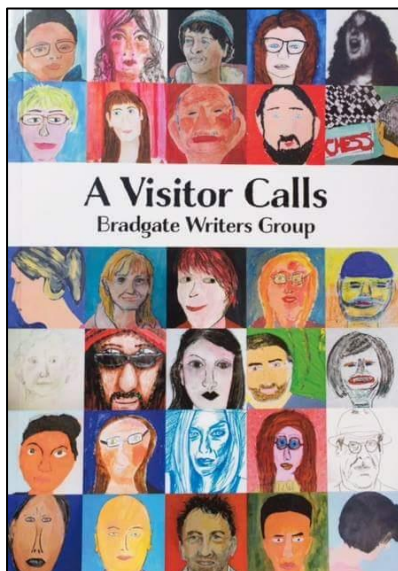
MEDIA RELEASE

24 July 2017

AMH.LD_23_17

A Visitor Calls.... and inspires a poetry anthology

A new illustrated anthology of poetry by writers from Leicestershire, supported by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) has been launched at Leicester's Attenborough Arts Centre.



“A Visitor Calls” is the culmination of a year’s work by members of the Glenfield Hospital-based Bradgate Writers group and Artscafe, which are both supported by LPT’s arts in health programme.

They were partnered by WORD! voluntary group and spoken word night and Brightsparks arts in mental health voluntary organisation.

The anthology was unveiled with an ensemble reading from it by the authors, directed by acclaimed writer, director and performer Nick Field.

Funded through an Arts Council England grant and facilitated by Peter Buckley and LPT arts in health co-ordinator Lydia Towsey, the project was supported by

volunteers and a host of visiting writers and performers including Nasser Hussain, John Gallas, Francesca Beard, Will Horspool, Mark Pajak, Maria Taylor and Malika Booker.

Lydia Towsey explained: “The anthology was illustrated with the help of another visitor, artist/facilitator, Jo Sheppard, delivering sessions at our afternoon ‘Artscafe’ project, supported by volunteer artist facilitator, Sue Jordan.

“ *A Visitor Calls* nods to the attendance of our many visiting artists, writers and facilitators – and reflects on such themes as travel, love, memory, the environment, health, home and of course, visitations

“The book itself is packed with fantastic material and everyone involved is extremely proud of it.”

John Gallas was impressed with the quality of the work produced. He said: “This group surprised and delighted with poems of quality and adventurous type, done with a kind of open willingness and invention that seems to be inexhaustible.”



The title of the anthology was inspired by a visit by Helen Thompson, director of adult mental health, learning disability and families, children's and

young people's services at LPT who joined the authors and a capacity audience for the launch.

She said: "During my first visit to the Bradgate Writers group in January this year I was impressed with the ideas and energy of the writers and artists. I was delighted to subsequently asked to be part of launching their beautiful and inspiring creation into the world. It was great fun spending a bit more time with these artists who, in addition to their fabulous book, have established a very strong and supportive network and sense of community.'

New members are always welcomed by Brightsparks and Artscafe. Lydia Towsey said: "We are very much looking for and keen to involve new people with both Bradgate Writers and Artscafe. Anyone experiencing or with experience of mental issues can self-refer, or be referred by a worker.

Contact Lydia Towsey via lydia.towsey@leicspart.nhs.uk or 07766205689 for more information.

A Visitor Calls is available, priced at £5 or what you afford, from the Involvement Centre at the Bradgate Unit on the Glenfield Hospital site or from Attenborough Arts Centre, Lancaster Road, Leicester.

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Extracts:

A Visitor Calls

My visitor calls and they
stay over.

They are my best friend, Heather
and daughter, Mia.

Alongside them is a fluffy chocolate
cookapoo called Hettie.

We talk,
watch Little Miss Sunshine
and laugh.

A midnight walk through the graveyard
freaks us all out

and we stand in the trunk of a
500 year old old tree and feel free.
This tree has grown through so
many eras.

If I didn't have my visitors today
I would have stayed inside and
hidden away but instead it has
been an adventure.

When my visitors call, the world
is much better and I feel calm.
From the tree we found a cone
and from this cone there will
be seeds.

I will grow these seeds
and grow more 500 year old oak
trees. And new visitors will see
what we saw and felt.

Eleanor Rowell

L.C.F.C – O.K!

I have loved them since the
age of eight.
Sixty years later, Claudio
arrived and hope blossomed
into certainty.
Championés, championés!
The roar was heard in
Julie's living room.
I sat in a bubble for 3
days – content, elated
returning to that boy
who bought the realised dream.

Martin

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. **Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)** provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: www.leicspart.nhs.uk

2. **Raising Health** is our registered charity (number 1057361) which raises funds to support LPT's excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision, to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff. www.raisinghealth.org.uk

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