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### Social pedagogy pilot project evaluation

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# Social Pedagogy

pilot project evaluation



**June** 2015

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THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
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& Political Science

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## TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this report people with learning disabilities who are residents of Camphill or attend the day services are referred to as service users, members or residents. The term 'resident' usually refers to service users who live in one of the communities, while 'members' may also be residents or may only attend the day service.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All the names and identifying details of staff and service users have been anonymised to protect the privacy of participants.







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**Ailie Robertson**, Day Service Manager, Tiphereth

**Sandra Sabiston**, Assistant Director, Blair Drummond

**Elaine Munt**, Learning and Development Leader, Blair Drummond

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**Dr Steve Kirkwood** is lecturer in Social Work at the University of Edinburgh and was a co-author of this report. Steve was also directly involved with collecting and analysing the data presented here.



# Executive summary

The section numbers below correspond to the sections in the main body of the report.

## 1: Introduction

From July to September 2014, a social pedagogy training programme was provided for 15 staff from across two Camphill communities (Tiphereth and Blair Drummond) in Scotland. A further three days of Social Pedagogy Leadership training were provided in December 2014 for a further 14 staff from both communities. The project was funded by the Scottish Government and was directly linked to recommendations made in the *Keys to Life*, a ten year strategy for improving the quality of life for people with learning disabilities in Scotland. In the course of their evaluation the project team sought evidence of the development of seven core social pedagogical values: valuing relationships; valuing equality; valuing the self as a practitioner and person; valuing good communication; valuing teams and communities; valuing the everyday; valuing practical activities.



## 2. Objectives and methods of evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to test the potential, processes and implications of using social pedagogy as a framework for developing the quality of care services for adults with learning disabilities in two Camphill communities (Blair Drummond and Tiphereth). The evaluation was conducted using an 'action research' methodology. In so doing it sought to support and inform the development of the pilot by providing communities with support to reflect and evaluate developments through a series of feedback loops.

Information was collected at three intervals and emerging analysis shared with participants. Data collection methods included:

- baseline questionnaires, observations, focus groups and interviews at the beginning of the project, culminating in the production of a baseline report;
- interviews, observations, direct work with service users, review of outcomes data and focus groups at the mid-point;
- final questionnaires, focus groups, review of outcomes data and reflective diaries, and interviews at the end of the project.

Drafts of the baseline and final report were shared with both communities and feedback and further reflections discussed and incorporated into the final report.

## 3. Baseline findings

The baseline findings suggested that social pedagogy was already familiar to many staff before the pilot commenced. There was a feeling among many staff that it was 'already what we do' but that the pilot would be an opportunity to deepen understanding and further embed the approach throughout the communities. It was also identified that staff could benefit from having a common language to discuss their practice and to more consistently articulate the approach being used to outside agencies and families.

Building on the existing strengths of the two Communities, we noted at the baseline stage a number of areas for potential further development, particularly in terms of embedding an approach that

was more in line with social pedagogy. These included:

- Exploring new approaches to assist Community members to realise their potential;
- Being clearer about the outcomes staff are working towards in relation to the people they support;
- Improving communication and joint-working between staff based in different parts of each Community and between Communities;
- Greater involvement of families and carers;
- Ensuring choice for people supported in the Communities, given the existing structures and rituals;
- Embedding a partnership approach to decision-making with residents/ members and staff and volunteers.

## 4. Impacts from the Pilot

All of those who participated in the social pedagogy training felt that it had increased their knowledge and understanding of how to use social pedagogy in practice. Upon completion of the course, participants were involved with developing action plans to take forward their learning from the training and share it with their wider Camphill community. Both communities were successful in implementing most aspects of these action plans which included: increasing opportunities for reflection in team meetings and supervision; organising community training days to disseminate learning; producing quick-guides to theory for other staff; developing and using a new outcomes recording sheets.

The course participants reported a number of ways that they used social pedagogy to support the people they work with, including:

- Creating a comfortable, friendly and fun atmosphere;
- Emphasising people's individual needs;
- Developing a common language and framework for the way they work;
- Referencing social pedagogy in documentation to share with other professionals and family members;
- Empowering people and creating choice;
- Applying specific theories to practice;
- Applying a holistic approach to their work;
- Emphasising the importance of relationships;
- Using social pedagogy in interactions with other staff.

Staff also reported using a range of social pedagogical theories in their day-to-day practice and the evaluation was able to collect evidence of this through what staff said in questionnaires, focus groups and reflective diaries and through our analysis of outcomes sheets. Those theories most commonly mentioned by respondents were: the diamond model; the learning zone model; the three Ps; the common third; non-violent communication.

The evaluation found evidence that staff who participated in the pilot developed in their use of the seven pedagogical values identified as important at the baseline report. By developing and better utilising opportunities for reflecting on the 'what' and 'why' of practice, staff began to value themselves as practitioners in new ways. By the end of the pilot staff felt more confident in making use of themselves in their work and more confident in explaining the aims and methods of their work to others, including family and other services. The course re-energised and inspired staff to try new

activities and structure activities in different ways, evidencing that they valued practical activities.

Community is at the heart of the Camphill model, however, the pilot inspired participants to further value relationships, teams and communities. In particular, staff felt that social pedagogy re-affirmed the importance of a relationship based way of working and inspired them to experiment with new ways of using the transformative power of relationships to move things on for service users.

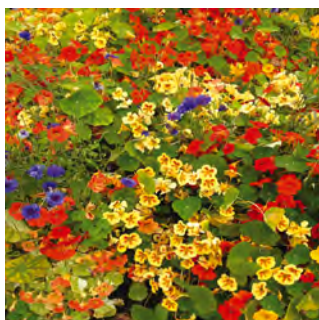
There were many examples from the beginning of the project of how staff worked to promote equality, choice and interdependence in their work with service users. As the pilot developed we saw many examples of staff taking forward principles of equality by being more willing to 'step back' and give service users the space to try new things out. Many of these opportunities came through valuing the everyday and reflecting in the moment about how to maximise opportunities for growth and wellbeing.

At the beginning of the pilot communicating with non-verbal residents was acknowledged by both communities as an area for further development. The social pedagogy pilot has encouraged participants to look at the nuances and subtleties of behaviour in order to develop potential and manage risk. When asked what it was about the course that made him rethink his strategy, one participant responded that "I would never describe myself as being closed-minded, but it has opened a door to another way of thinking, what if?" This quote reflects the feelings expressed by most of the course participants.

Positive impacts for service users from the pilot included: improved relationships; challenging people to learn; increased enthusiasm among staff; a greater focus on activities and engagement; increased empowerment and confidence for staff and the people they support.

A further sign of the success of this pilot is the ongoing enthusiasm among staff for taking forward the work. Future plans for both communities include:

- More social pedagogy training for staff;
- Further 'Communities days' in order to share practice;
- Sharing knowledge through learning logs and inductions;
- Using reflective practice in supervision;
- Using social pedagogy in care plans and review system;





## 5. Reflections and Recommendations

This social pedagogy pilot has clearly had a positive impact on the staff who undertook the training and there are indications that it has had a positive impact on the service users they are working with. The staff who undertook the training are beginning to share their learning on a wider basis in both communities through formal and informal mechanisms. Further work will be needed to embed social pedagogy in both communities and strong leadership will be crucial to those efforts. The learning from this pilot is also of value to the wider sector and should be shared and further developed. The authors of the report make the following recommendations:

### Recommendation 1:

Individual learning is necessary, but is not sufficient for organisational learning (Gould 2000). In order for organisational learning to take place, learning needs to occur across multiple levels so that social pedagogy is rooted in the policies and procedures of both communities. In order to further embed social pedagogy in both communities we recommend that the approach become part of the infrastructure included in care plans, reviews, appraisals and learning logs.

### Recommendation 2:

Critical reflection is a catalyst for learning and, as such, we recommend that opportunities and space for reflection be continued on a formal basis through team meetings, supervision, community reflection days, and on an informal basis as part of the ongoing conversations staff, volunteers, family, members and residents have about ways of working and being together.

### Recommendation 3:

There is further work to do in rolling out the use of the new outcome recording system (SPORS) across both communities and ensuring consistency in the way forms are filled out. It is the recommendation of the evaluation team that there be a period of further reflection on the use of the SPORS forms before their use is mainstreamed throughout both communities. We feel the forms should be shorter and more user friendly. It might be useful for staff involved in this development work to review other approaches, such as Talking Points (Cook and Miller 2012), in order to think about which elements are most useful and to develop their approach in completing these with service users. This process will no doubt be

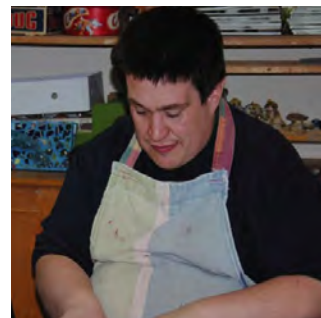
facilitated by further training which is to be provided by Evaluation Support Scotland to members of Camphill Communities from across Scotland in 2015.

### Recommendation 4:

These two Camphill communities have made considerable progress in rolling out Social Pedagogy during the period of the pilot. However, given the importance of Camphill to the learning disability sector in Scotland, we believe there would be merit in providing further evaluation funding to follow up the progress of these communities in another year. With a new outcome measure in place it would be possible to track the progress of service users during the period in a more systematic way and give a more detailed picture of what social pedagogy can achieve for practice with people who have learning disabilities.

### Recommendation 5:

We recommend that the Scottish Government fund further social pedagogy training in agencies providing a service to people with learning disabilities in Scotland. Future projects should be funded in agencies where staff are not familiar with social pedagogy, in order to get a better measure of the impact the training can have on staff practice and outcomes for service users. As this is a low pay sector, which is under increasing pressure from funding cuts, it is essential that the funding covers the cost of staff backfill. Evaluation methodologies for such projects should include a longer lead in time to ensure that baseline measures can capture data on outcomes for service users before and after the training and follow this up over a longer period. Consideration should also be given to the use of comparison groups to achieve a clearer picture of impact.



# Chapter one

## Introduction

In 2013 the Scottish Government published *Keys to Life*, a ten year strategy for improving the quality of life for people with learning disabilities in Scotland. The section on Supported Living highlighted the work of Scotland's twelve Camphill Communities, which support over 400 people with learning disabilities from early years through to older age. The report explains that:

Many staff in Camphill communities are trained in social pedagogy, a relationship based approach which uses everyday living situations to help residents to learn and develop skills that will enable them to participate more fully in decision-making about their own lives, maximise their own potential and to live as independently as is possible.

(Scottish Government, 2013: p.62).

In recognition of the benefits of this approach, and the need to transition to a more outcome based approach, Recommendation 30 of the report states that Camphill Scotland will be funded 'to prepare for practice change and training in social pedagogy by staff and residents working together to identify outcome measures for individual residents and to implement and evaluate these'. This recommendation led to the Scottish Government funding the Social Pedagogy Pilot evaluated here.

## Overview of the Social Pedagogy Pilot

The Social Pedagogy Pilot was intended to test the potential, processes and implications of using social pedagogy as a framework for developing the quality of care services for adults with learning disabilities. Specifically, it focused on the impact of an in-depth training programme on social pedagogy, delivered by ThemPra – an organisation that specialises in the theory and practice of social pedagogy at two Camphill communities (Blair Drummond and Tippereth).

The original intention of the pilot was also to introduce the 'Outcomes that Matter' (OTM) system in order to encourage a focus on outcomes for people in the Camphill Communities and provide a system for collecting and analysing outcome data for the purpose of assessing and demonstrating impact. The system involved staff recording on a weekly basis any highlights and critical / significant incidents, as well as recording the extent to which service users have 'achieved' in relation to a number of areas of personal development, relating to Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity.

It is important to note that the OTM system was developed for use with children and young people in care settings (Fulcher & Garfat, 2013), rather than with adults with learning disabilities. Almost immediately upon introduction the majority of staff using the OTM system at both communities expressed criticisms related to the specific paperwork and recording system, which was experienced as time consuming. They were also concerned that it would not provide an accurate reflection of outcomes.

The approach was never fully taken up in either community and in September 2014 the decision was taken by both communities

to discontinue the use of the OTM system and replace it with a new outcomes monitoring form, developed by staff themselves, which they have called the Social Pedagogy Outcomes Record Sheet (SPORS) (See Appendix A). This outcome recording sheet focuses on outcomes that have been identified collaboratively with service users and carers so that they are meaningful to the people involved (Miller, 2011).

## Social Pedagogy Training

ThemPra Social Pedagogy Community Interest Company is a social enterprise committed to supporting the development of social pedagogy in the UK. They have been delivering social pedagogy training across the voluntary and statutory sectors in the UK since 2007. Their training involves experiential activities aimed at helping practitioners understand how they can use social pedagogical theories and values in practice. Examples for discussion during the training are drawn from practitioners' own practice experiences. Throughout the training participants are encouraged to keep a reflective diary and time is set aside at the end of the training to support participants to think about how they will take developments in their practice forward after the training.

The first phase of ThemPra social pedagogy training was delivered in 3 blocks of 3 days, the first of which was carried out in June 2014 with two further blocks in August and September 2014. 16 staff participated in the course, 4 from Tippereth (one of the participants has now left Tippereth) and 12 from Blair Drummond. From Blair Drummond, staff were selected on the basis of having a cross-section of people from the workshops and houses. Some of the staff were chosen because of their passion and commitment to the work, despite being relatively new to the community, while others were selected because of their leadership qualities and their ability to apply the principles of social pedagogy to practice. At

Tiphereth, participants were selected through nominations from staff expressing an interest in social pedagogy. All the staff at Tiphereth were from the day service.

A further 3 days of Social Pedagogy Leadership training were provided in December 2014 to 14 staff across the two communities. Some of these participants had been on the first phase of training and some had not.

In April 2015 there was a joint communities training day run by course participants for other members of staff from both communities, who had not had any of the ThemPra social pedagogy training. This was attended by 40 staff members from across both communities. Andy Carter from ThemPra attended the day and provided some support to organisers.

## Pilot Sites

The Camphill movement was started in Scotland in 1940. Camphill is a worldwide movement with over one hundred centres (communities) in twenty countries supporting people with learning disabilities and other support needs. The Camphill model centres on the creation of intentional communities, where children, young people and adults work and grow with others in healthy social relationships based on mutual care, respect and learning.

Although Tiphereth and Blair Drummond are both Camphill communities and subscribe to some of the same key principles, including “living, working and growing together”, they are different from one another. These differences have influenced how the pilot has developed in each of the communities and our evaluation has tried to take account of these differences.

Tiphereth is the smaller of the two communities. The organisational structure of Tiphereth is symbolised by the Tiphereth “Tree” with 3 branches to represent the residential, day service and social enterprise functions of the community. Each of the 3 residential houses has 4 residents, with live-in house parents to provide residents with the stability and consistency of family life. The day service offers meaningful work through a range of creative activities to 40 day members, as well as an innovative social enterprise model to provide paid work opportunities for adults with less complex needs. 25 paid staff are employed at Tiphereth, 6 house parents, 6-9 foundation students and 5 paid part-time staff as part of the social enterprise, Tiphereth Trading Ltd.

Blair Drummond was established over 30 years ago and is home to 44 residents who live in 7 houses, including 5 new purpose-built residences. The day service offers a wide selection of purposeful activities designed to help members fulfil their potential. 89 members of staff are employed at Blair Drummond alongside 35 full-time volunteer co-workers.

## Social Pedagogy

‘As an overarching framework for care practice, social pedagogy is concerned with well-being, learning and growth.’ (Eichsteller et al. 2014: 8).

Social pedagogy is an approach which focuses on understanding people as complex social beings with ‘rich and extraordinary potential . . . for pedagogues there is no universal solution, each situation requires a response based on a combination of information, emotions, self-knowledge and theory’ (Children’s Workforce Development Council 2006 cited in Eichsteller et al. 2014: 9). This makes it a complex approach to evaluate. Using the ThemPra training materials and our own review of the literature we began the evaluation by identifying some key areas which we would expect to see developing during the pilot.

In keeping with the quote above, first and foremost we sought to understand how staff developed their approaches to promoting the well-being, learning and growth of the people they work with. Growth is understood here as something that increases the independence and the interdependence of service users.

Beyond these broad areas of focus we sought to understand how the work with people is done. This was about trying to understand how attitudes, values and beliefs are put into action. In social pedagogy there is a particular emphasis on:

1. Valuing relationships: We hoped to see staff working to ‘get alongside’ service users and using positive relationships as a vehicle for promoting wellbeing, learning and growth.
2. Valuing equality: We hoped to see non-hierarchical life space interactions, efforts to engage with the whole person, and the promotion of service user rights.
3. Valuing the self as a practitioner and person: We hoped to see staff taking up opportunities for reflection, feedback and development and experimenting with new ways to make use of themselves in the work with service users.
4. Valuing good communication: We hoped to see communication with service users developing and improving but were also interested to see how communication between staff, different parts of the Camphill community, families and outside services developed.
5. Valuing teams and communities: The inter-connection between communities is really important here and we were interested to see how communities within and out-with Camphill were valued and how methods of engagement were developed.
6. Valuing the everyday: We were keen to see how staff reflected on the minutia of practice and made use of everyday interactions with service users, each other and those outside of Camphill to promote the wellbeing, learning and growth of service users. Nurturing and predictable rhythms and routines of living and working together which allow for mutuality were also important here.
7. Valuing practical activities: We were interested to see how staff might further develop the use of activities to promote wellbeing, learning and growth.

***In undertaking the evaluation, we searched for evidence of these values informing practices at the Camphill Communities.***

# Chapter two

## Objectives and Methods of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation, as outlined by the Camphill Pilot proposal, were to:

- Explore the impact of social pedagogy training on staff
- Examine whether and in what way social pedagogy has influenced staff behaviour
- Identify facilitators and barriers to implementation of social pedagogy in the two services
- Determine the added value of social pedagogy in these services
- Explore the impact of the use of social pedagogy on people using the services
- Determine the extent to which the Project has met its objective

The evaluation took an ‘action research’ approach, based on the idea that the research should be participatory for the staff and the people they support (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). It

involved a series of ‘feedback loops’, whereby the researchers shared their findings at regular points to test their conclusions and engage in mutual learning processes to encourage ongoing improvement and development.

### Overview of Data Collection

As is typical with most action research, we used a range of methods to allow us to develop a multi-dimensional view of practice within the two Camphill communities (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). The findings of this are based on data collected using: observation, interviews, focus groups, discussion with service users, surveys, outcome data and document analysis. A brief summary of how each method was used at each community is provided in table 1 below.

Table 1. Data used for evaluation

Data source	Purpose	Nature	Quantity
Observations	Observation was used to gain an understanding of working practices and build relationships with staff.	Members of the research team attended staff meetings, engaged in Camphill workshops and attended meal times. Notes were recorded in relation to conversations about practice, observations about practice and the feelings the researcher had while spending time in the community.	3 baseline observations at Tiphereth 2 baseline observations at Blair Drummond 1 end of pilot observation Tiphereth 1 end of pilot observation Blair Drummond <b>Total Observations: 7</b>
Interviews	Interviews with key staff members were used to explore Camphill working practices and establish the impact of the pilot.	Semi-structured one-to-one interviews focused on working practices and the nature and impact of the pilot (see Appendix E for details).	Baseline interviews were completed with Director and Manager (Day Service) and lead Staff Member at Tiphereth Baseline interviews were completed with the Chief Executive, Assistant Director, Manager (Residential Service), and Manager (Learning and Development) at Blair Drummond End of pilot interviews with one member of staff from Tiphereth and three from Blair Drummond to provide an in-depth account of their learning journey <b>Total Interviews: 11</b>



**Table 1. Data used for evaluation**

Data source	Purpose	Nature	Quantity
<b>Focus groups</b>	Focus groups with staff members involved in the pilot were used to explore Camphill working practices and establish the impact of the pilot.	Semi-structured focus groups, run by two members of the research team, focused on working practices and the nature and impact of the pilot (see Appendix C for details).	<p>2 Baseline Focus Groups (1 at each community)</p> <p>2 Baseline Report Discussion and Feedback Focus Group (1 at each community)</p> <p>2 Midpoint Focus Groups (1 at each community)</p> <p>2 End of Pilot Focus Groups (1 at each community)</p> <p>2 End of Pilot Report Discussion and Feedback Focus Groups (1 at each community)</p> <p><b>Total Focus Groups: 10</b></p>
<b>Discussions with service users</b>	The people supported at the Camphill Communities were invited to give their views on the Communities and any observations they had on changes resulting from the pilot.	Initial interviews with both communities focused on the likes/dislikes of living in a Camphill community. This was followed by an activity using photographs to create storyboards and a collage.	<p>Initial Interview at Blair Drummond with 2 residents who were able to communicate verbally. Second Interview with 3 residents.</p> <p>At Tiphereth, initial interview with 4 residents, second and third interviews with 3 (sadly one resident had died). Two residents needed support to communicate.</p> <p><b>Total number of service users consulted: 9</b></p>
<b>Surveys</b>	Staff were surveyed at the start and end of the pilot to establish their knowledge and understanding of social pedagogy and gain information about working practices at Camphill.	The surveys were administered in electronic and paper forms, focusing on knowledge and understanding of social pedagogy and views on Camphill working practices (see Appendix B, D for details).	<p>Of the 16 staff who completed the training, 12 completed the baseline survey and 11 completed the final survey.</p> <p>Of the staff not on the training, 14 completed the baseline survey and 21 completed the final survey; respondents were from across both communities.</p> <p><b>Total questionnaires: 58</b></p>
<b>Outcome data</b>	Outcome data regarding staff members' support to people at Camphill was collected and analysed to explore the use of social pedagogy and its impact for service users.	Staff members originally gathered data using the Outcomes that Matter system. This was later replaced with the bespoke Social Pedagogy Outcomes Record Sheet (SPORS) (see further details below)	<p>None of the OTM data could be used because it was collected for a limited period and was incomplete in most cases.</p> <p><b>A sample of 33 SPORS</b> sheets was collected and analysed. Completed SPORS covered the period from September 2014 to March 2015.</p>
<b>Documents</b>	Key documents from the Camphill Communities were read to inform the evaluation in terms of Camphill working practices.	These were reviewed in-order to understand to what extent Social Pedagogical principles were already being used to in official documentation for both communities at the start of the pilot.	Both communities provided a range of policy and practice documents which were used for staff, volunteer and co-worker induction.
<b>Reflective Diaries</b>	Staff who attended the training were encouraged to keep a reflective diary.	To provide a sense of participant's learning journeys during the pilot.	<b>Three</b> members of staff chose to share excerpts from their diaries



## Outcome measurement

With support and advice from ThemPra, and the evaluation team, the Communities developed the Social Pedagogy Outcome Record Sheet (SPORS) in order to collect outcome data. This form included fields for:

- An identified outcome the staff member is working on with the person they support;
- Identifying the elements of social pedagogy that will be used;
- Steps taken to achieve the outcome;
- Reflection on steps taken, factors enabling progress and factors hindering progress;
- Evidence of changes / improvements;
- Future plans;
- Describing a 'sparkly moment'<sup>1</sup>;
- Further notes or photos.

The research team were given their first sample of these forms in January 2015. Based on our review we provided the communities with an exemplar SPORS sheet, chosen from the batch we were given by the communities. Our aim in doing this was to encourage staff to fill in these forms in a way that was more detailed and identified clearer links between theory and practice.

We analysed the forms using the key Social Pedagogical theories, e.g. Diamond Model, 3Ps<sup>2</sup>, etc. and also using the 7 core Social Pedagogical values identified at the baseline.

## Data Analysis

The data was analysed in a way that gives value to, and seeks to understand, the views of staff and the people they support in relation to the way the communities operate and the impact of the training. The approach draws on principles of ethnography, whereby the accounts that people have given us are combined with our own observations to provide an understanding of the local cultural contexts of the communities from the 'inside' (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). An important aspect of this methodology is that our conclusions were checked with community members in order to ensure their accuracy and validity.

## Ethical Considerations

The criteria for ethical social science research which appear across a range of guidance<sup>3</sup> and were adhered to in the conducting of this study are:

- Preventing harm to participants
- Ensuring anonymity, informed consent and confidentiality
- Promoting justice and making a positive contribution to knowledge (Alston and Bowles 2003: 21)

Throughout this evaluation project we aimed to ensure that staff, volunteers and service users understood why we were spending time in their community. We worked to ensure that they felt comfortable with what we were doing and were able



to ask questions. We worked to prevent harm to participants by ensuring our approach to questioning and observing was sensitive and not overly intrusive. We gave participants questions ahead of time and we invited participants to answer only those questions they felt comfortable with. We ensured informed consent through discussion and transparency. We discussed our findings with members of the pilot at regular intervals to ensure feedback and a balance of perspectives.

When we engaged with service users we ensured that we worked alongside staff that knew them well and could advise us about methods of engagement and support communication to ensure informed consent.

This project was reviewed and approved by the University of Edinburgh's Research Ethics Committee in the School of Social and Political Science.

## References

1. 'Sparkly' moments is a term used in the ThemPra training to denote a moment when things come together and it is possible to see and feel progress has been made. They 'sparkle' because they are special and they feel good.
2. These theories will be discussed in more detail later in the report.
3. See for example: the University of Edinburgh's Research Ethics Policy and Procedure, the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice (2002), the Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee Code of Ethical Practice for Research in Social Work and Social Care (2009) and the Code of Practice for Research in Social Work Departments issued by the Association of Directors of Social Work.



# Chapter three

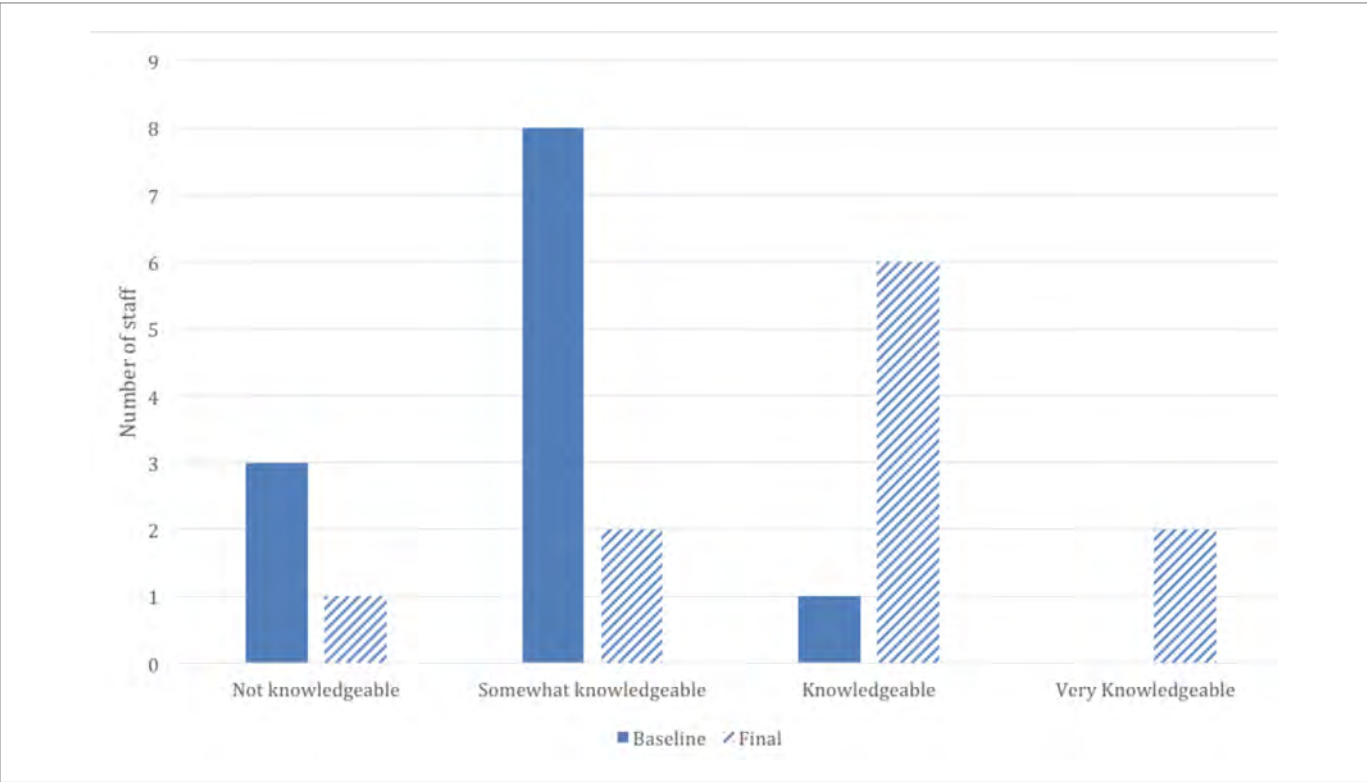
## Baseline Findings

We undertook a staff survey, interviews, focus groups, document analysis and observations to establish the baseline for the evaluation. In other words, we sought to identify the extent to which the Camphill Communities already practised in a way compatible with social pedagogy prior to the training, so that we could establish the impact that the pilot had.

### Existing knowledge of Social Pedagogy

The survey of staff at the two Camphill Communities, undertaken towards the start of the pilot, showed pre-existing knowledge regarding social pedagogy was relatively limited; although several staff described themselves as 'somewhat knowledgeable' and two members of staff reported having greater levels of knowledge.

**Figure 1. Baseline staff survey of knowledge regarding social pedagogy.**



### Existing compatibility with Social Pedagogical values

In many ways, at the start of the pilot the Camphill Communities already practiced in ways that reflected, or were at least compatible with, the values of social pedagogy. For instance, we found ample evidence that both communities focused on developing wellbeing. This was conceived in holistic terms with a focus that extended beyond the typical attention to the emotional and physical to the often ignored spiritual elements. The provision of a nurturing physical environment was core to this and a real strength of the Camphill model as it is implemented in both these communities. The communities also demonstrated an emphasis on developing strong, trusting, compassionate relationships, paying attention to the needs, interests and abilities of

the individual people they support. Promoting choice and independence formed a crucial aspect of any work undertaken to enhance life and social skills. Relationships between staff and members/residents seem to be characterised by a partnership approach with an emphasis on equality and inclusion. Inspection reports by the Care Commission from before the pilot period for both communities identified a range of good practice in terms of promoting the dignity and the rights of members/residents.

The commitment and passion to work was evident in what many staff said and did in both communities. For many staff, working at Camphill was more than just a job, exemplified in the quote of a staff member whose motivation stems from “the desire to support people to live meaningful and rewarding lives.” Many of the residents and members at both communities are



non-verbal and do not read or write. Staff have adopted a range of methods to improve communication such as Makaton and the use of visual aids and social stories with autistic members. All the members/residents we spoke to felt listened to and understood by staff.

Both communities worked collaboratively with families. Families at both communities were kept informed and involved through regular newsletters, reviews and an open invitation to spend time with their children in residence. Parents were represented on the Council of Management to help guide strategic direction and involved with the Parents' Forum.

Both communities had developed links with the wider community in different ways. Tiphereth's links with the wider local community include: the Council contracted garden waste collection around Colinton by the Pentland Group, skills accreditation opportunities through Borders College, attendance at Colinton Parish Church, concerts in St Giles Cathedral, use of local swimming pools and gyms, local stalls selling Tiphereth produce, summer fair, use of local volunteers, and the Peregrine Group supporting the work of publicly funded conservation/restoration projects and church projects. Blair Drummond has a similar range of activities to engage the wider community. They also employ a Communication and Involvement Leader who is responsible for setting up links with activities in the community for residents. Befrienders from the local community are also involved in supporting residents either in the workshops or taking residents to local resources.

There was a clear structure to the day in both communities and this afforded members/residents with a predictable, consistent and safe environment. Rituals such as lighting the candle and eating together meant there were particular times for residents and staff to pause and notice the value of just being together. Festivals and cultural events provided a shared focus for time together and were a reminder of the changing of the seasons and lessons for development from nature.

Smith (2009) emphasises the practical and creative aspects of social pedagogy. From our observations of the workshops, there was considerable evidence that staff in both communities were able to provide a wide range of activities to give members a sense of purpose and develop their skills and confidence. Furthermore, activities seemed to have a therapeutic component; one staff member commented that activities were a "vehicle for developing relationships, social interaction and social skills in a non-threatening way." A number of staff have made the point that it is important to have an "end product" to give members a great sense of achievement and help instil a feeling of pride in their work.

## Areas for development at baseline

Building on the existing strengths of the two Communities, we noted a number of areas for potential further development, particularly in terms of embedding an approach that was more in line with social pedagogy. These included:

- Further developing opportunities for critical reflection on daily practice;
- Exploring new approaches to assist Community members to realise their potential;

- Being clearer about the outcomes staff are working towards in relation to the people they support;
- Improving communication and joint-working between staff based in different parts of each Community and between Communities;
- Greater involvement of families and carers;
- Ensuring choice for people supported in the Communities, given the existing structures and rituals;
- Embedding a partnership approach to decision-making with residents/ members and staff and volunteers.

## Staff view on hopes and challenges for the Pilot

When asked to identify their hopes for the pilot staff identified the following key areas:

- Giving us the knowledge and a supportive structure to further develop the holistic, caring, person centred approach we already use in our work with members/ residents
- Reaffirm the values that underpin our practice
- Developing a more reflective ethos
- Helping us to be more confident in articulating the approach we use with members/ residents and why
- Helping us to be clear about the outcomes we are working towards
- Helping us to improve our methods for communication and the sharing of good practice
- Ensuring a more consistent approach to practice throughout the community
- Having a positive impact on the lives of the people we support

In interviews and focus groups we asked staff to identify any potential challenges for the success of the pilot. These included:

- A lack of clarity among some staff about what the pilot should do or achieve
- Changing some "entrenched views, attitudes and opinions"
- Reluctance or fear from some staff about trying something different
- Operational pressures which push out time for reflection and development work
- Keeping up momentum
- Difficulties in disseminating learning about social pedagogy to a very large staff groups who are very busy with the day-to-day work

## Summary

In sum, the baseline evaluation identified that the Camphill Communities were appropriate sites to explore the potential for Social Pedagogical approaches to improve the support given to people with learning disabilities. In many ways, even though most staff reported a relatively low level of pre-existing knowledge regarding social pedagogy at the outset of the pilot, existing practice reflected core social pedagogical values and many of the staff were motivated to engage with this approach. Some of the key challenges and areas for development included: improving communication in certain respects; bringing clarity to a focus on outcomes; ensuring choice in a context of structure; ensuring space for reflection; and embedding new practice within large and diverse staff groups.

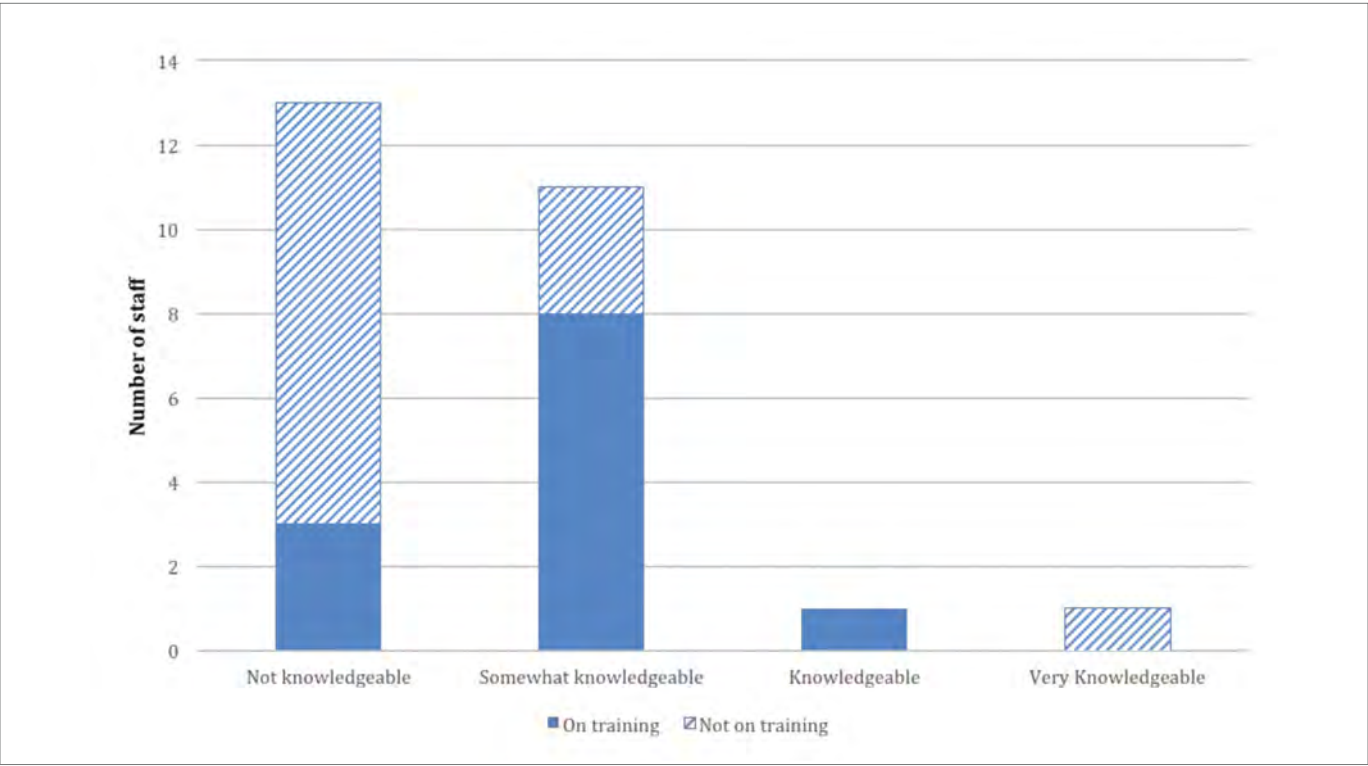
# Chapter four

## Impacts from the Pilot

### Transformative training

Staff attending the social pedagogy training completed surveys at the beginning of the pilot (June 2014) and again towards the end (April 2015). Eleven of the sixteen (69%) staff on the training completed the survey at each point. As the figure 2 shows, staff who attended the training tended to report an increase in knowledge regarding social pedagogy over the course of the pilot, with eight of the eleven respondents (73%) reporting being 'knowledgeable' or 'very knowledgeable' at the end of the pilot.

**Figure 2 Level of knowledge regarding social pedagogy of staff who attended training.**



However, the impacts of the training went far beyond increasing knowledge about social pedagogy. The training course appears to have had a profound effect on participants both at a professional and personal level. The majority of participants commented it was not like any other training course they had experienced, perhaps because of the style of presentation. It was described as more of an 'experiential' course where participants learned through doing fun activities, which were all learning experiences linked to theoretical concepts. Participants felt that the inclusion of 'fun' elements made it easier for people to learn, 'learning by accident', as described by one participant. The combination of various styles of learning appealed to participants so that everyone could find a way to engage with the training, rather than a reliance on traditional teaching methods. As another staff member commented, "You might forget what someone says

to you, but you never forget something that makes you feel good." Course participants felt that the ethos of the social pedagogy course resonated with the core values within the Camphill communities. As one participant explained:

"The reason it works so well is that it connects with the very innate core of the human being. It is really about the heart and how you connect and respect people and that will never go because it is there already."

(BD Final Focus Group, Participant 3)

We had hope to collect all of the baseline questionnaires before the first three days of training commenced, however, this was not possible for all participants due to variable return dates.

Rather than a collection of theories, social pedagogy was viewed as more of a 'mind set' or way of thinking.

**"My whole outlook has changed for the better. It is not something you leave at the door. For me, it is everything and I am still learning."**

(Final Individual Interview, Participant 1)

The course appears to have reawakened a desire to do further training, with one participant wanting to do the degree in social pedagogy. All participants agreed that social pedagogy fits well with existing practice but gives an added dimension, illustrated in the analogy

**"For me, it is like buying a new tool that does what other tools did, but this one does it really well. It is like having a "pucker" saw, dead sharp and cuts in straight lines. It embellishes what we already do."**

(BD Final Focus Group, Participant 3)

Several participants felt that the course had been a life-changing experience,

**"It has been totally life-enhancing and regardless of where I am in five years' time, social pedagogy is something I am going to take through the rest of my working life and my personal life, it has had so much of an impact".**

(BD Final Focus Group, Participant 8)

There were few suggestions about how the course could have been improved, however, one participant commented that the leadership days could have been more challenging to allow people to share more about their experience. Overall the feedback was extremely positive.

**"I cannot think of a single negative... It is just so life-changing and life-affirming."**

(BD Final Focus Group, Participant 8)

## Creating and taking forward an action plan

At the end of the training course and in the follow-up leadership days, both communities were tasked with devising an action plan to embed social pedagogy into practice.

At Blair Drummond they felt the best approach would be to introduce concepts gradually to community members and staff at different levels of the organisation. This was described as a "drip-feed" approach and the action plan outlined how this would be taken forward using the following actions:

- Social pedagogy was introduced as a standing item on the agenda of team meetings, management meetings and House meetings.
- In supervision, staff members would be expected to reflect upon their practice and describe how they had used some of the Social Pedagogical concepts.
- SPORS sheets to be used as a teaching tool to help other staff members to learn about putting different theories into practice.
- Each person on the course took a particular social pedagogical theory and was responsible for writing a short explanation of the theory. This was collated into a mini-booklet that will be kept visible in the workshops and Houses.
- The core group of staff from the course, along with representatives from the management team, have met every three weeks to re-group and review progress made.

Eventually, staff at Blair Drummond would like social pedagogy to be integrated into all support plans, learning logs and appraisals; however, this was not part of the initial action plan for the pilot.

Tiphereth has formed a task force consisting of the three course participants and the manager of the day service. There are plans for the House Parents and staff based in the residential service to become part of the task force in the near future. Meetings are held every two weeks where progress is reviewed and practice issues discussed. Tiphereth has adopted a similar approach to Blair Drummond in trying to embed social pedagogy on a gradual basis by introducing one or two topics into team and community meetings. Critically reflective practice was felt to be an important aspect of social pedagogy. Tiphereth already has a system of "Giving Account", designed to encourage reflection. To strengthen this approach, the whole team are now involved in discussions with participants about their experiences and what they have learned.

In terms of implementation, staff at Tiphereth have made strides to embed social pedagogy into practice. The SPORS sheets have been identified as an essential introduction to social pedagogy in helping other staff members establish goals and the steps necessary to achieve goals. Other ways of introducing social pedagogy have been through modelling practice. For example, with one member who was reluctant to join a group, the course participant was able to explain to other staff that the member was out of his "comfort zone" and suggested ways that they could increase his level of comfort to enable him to take part in the activity.

Course participants from Tiphereth have helped to facilitate three training sessions, two involving the whole Tiphereth community. One of the games from the course was used, the “Cup dance” to emphasise the importance of the bonds within the community. They also showed a video, “The Butterfly Circus”, which demonstrates the importance of allowing individuals to develop at their own pace. The use of practical and visual means of learning are concepts underpinning the social pedagogy course. One of the task force commented that:

“The responses of people have been good but it will take more time to embed it into people’s consciousness. I think it is a good, strong taskforce and we are all motivated by it, so I think it will keep going and it will work well for us.”

Staff from both communities who completed the social pedagogy training, supported by key managers, worked together to organise a Communities Day as a “launch pad” for further dissemination of the Social Pedagogical approach. The day was attended by approximately 40 staff and co-workers from both communities. In keeping with the style of learning from the course, staff members were clear that it needed to be a “hands-on” approach, to make it fun “because that is what made us learn so easily”. Using materials and activities from the course, facilitating staff worked with small groups to demonstrate how the concepts could be used in practice. The games taught on the course have also been used at the beginning of workshops to reinforce the notion of “rhythm” or structure to the day. Informally, staff have been working within their “sphere of influence”, choosing people who they feel may be receptive to social pedagogy to build confidence and knowledge. Many of the co-workers are central European and already have a grasp of basic social pedagogical concepts. Therefore, starting with people who are already familiar with the approach will help to encourage and influence other staff members. One of the management team commented:

“Social pedagogy has been a fantastic tool for Blair Drummond. People have embraced it, we have seen good results from it and as far as we are concerned we will continue with it. We will go on and we will support it so that was our view that it has been a real success for us.”

While course participants and management acknowledged that embedding social pedagogy will be a long, slow process, there is evidence that staff have made progress both formally and informally. Examples of social pedagogy in action were given by

staff at both final focus groups, such as the creation of a social pedagogy tree that could be placed in one of the Houses. Another course member had used the concept of “Head, Heart and Hands” in a pottery workshop, making ceramic representations as a means of explaining to staff and members the importance of a holistic approach.

## Using Social Pedagogical Theory in Practice

The course participants reported a number of ways that they used social pedagogy to support the people they work with, including:

- Creating a comfortable, friendly and fun atmosphere;
- Emphasising people’s individual needs;
- Developing a common language and framework for the way they work;
- Referencing social pedagogy in documentation to share with other professionals and family members;
- Empowering people and creating choice;
- Applying specific theories to practice;
- Applying a holistic approach to their work;
- Emphasising the importance of relationships;
- Using social pedagogy in interactions with other staff.

The social pedagogy theories most commonly mentioned by respondents across the questionnaire, SPORS sheets, interviews and reflective diaries were:

- The diamond model;
- The learning zone model;
- The three Ps;
- The common third;
- Non-violent communication.

Individual respondents also mentioned creativity, pedagogical style, supporting staff, pedagogical triangle, multiple intelligence and the nine principles of social pedagogy. We will now examine in a bit more detail the five theories which came up most frequently in interviews, focus groups, the survey, the SPORS sheets and the reflective diaries.

### Diamond Model

The Diamond model is an overarching and fundamental principle of social pedagogy. The four aims of the model include improving well-being and happiness, achieving empowerment, encouraging holistic learning and developing relationships. The model is based on a belief that human beings are intrinsically full of rich potential and the role of the Pedagogue is to realise that potential for learning and personal growth (Cameron et al 2011). Building caring and trusting relationships is of paramount importance and while was evident at both communities at the start of the pilot, the course has reaffirmed the need to keep “purposeful relationships at the forefront of practice.” Well-being and happiness is a central tenet of the model with a responsive focus on individual need. Holistic learning refers to the creation of learning opportunities to develop the potential of the individual, whether that is on a physical, emotional, social or practical level. Empowerment encompasses notions of choice,





ownership and taking responsibility for personal learning to avoid creating dependency. At the heart of the Diamond model is the concept of “Positive Experiences” to increase self-confidence and self-worth, which is the holistic combination of the four elements.

There were many examples of staff using the idea of the Diamond Model as a tool for thinking about the purpose of their work and engaging service users to identify outcomes that were important to them and would promote their well-being, happiness and learning. An example of using the Diamond model was the work undertaken with a member who made a request for a pen pal. Instead of telling the member what to do, the course participant asked the person to think about the first steps, which included approaching the Participation & Communication Leader by email. The staff member was then able to support the member to compose an email and to help her choose from possible candidates. In her SPORS sheet, the staff member was able to link other theories such as the Learning Zone, as this was the first time the member had written an email. When asked how she would have approached this situation prior to doing the course, the staff member responded that:

“I would have done every single thing for her [the service user] until she had a name [of a pen pal]. I would have corrected her spelling mistakes and totally taken over, whereas now I totally stepped back this time. There is the difference.”

### ***The 3 P's: Personal, Professional and Private***

“[I have used it] to discuss with staff situations they find themselves in and how they handled different situations and how this then relates back to the 3 P's. I also find myself thinking about this theory and how it impacts on me as an individual in both my personal and professional life.”

(Final Questionnaire)

The role of the social pedagogue is divided into three elements. The first is the Professional self, for whom knowledge and skills are necessary to understand the reaction of individuals. The second is the Personal aspect of self, this about using personality and social skills to build genuine relationships. The Private self determines the boundaries of the role, where the Pedagogue decides what is appropriate or inappropriate to share. Hatton (2013:155) says social pedagogues are practitioners who: “Acknowledge the emotional aspects of the professional-personal relationship and are less concerned with the niceties

of professional distance that social workers increasingly fall back on to mediate their relationships with clients.”

Some of the participants had a background in social care before joining Camphill. One person commented on the difference in personal/professional relationships in previous jobs. “It was all very much “I am here, I work with you and I don’t give anything of myself except maybe a bit of my personality””. In contrast they felt that at Camphill, “relationship building and that sense of community is different.”

The social pedagogy course seems to have given participants a structure in which to frame relationships.

“It gives you a reason as to why you are approaching something, like the 3 P’s, why you are giving a more personal approach to help build that relationship and that trust but you know why you are doing it. It helps you to know when to pull back and to be conscious of what you are doing.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 4)

Participants felt the emphasis on the personal aspect of relationships has made contact with members more authentic (Lorenz 2008). As an example, one participant felt she was more open with members about when she was having a bad day.

“I can say to the guys that I am tired so I may be a bit grumpy today. The members read it from my body language and they also understand that I am ok with it. I don’t need to go into the “ins and outs” of it because that would create a negative environment. Quite often the member will come and give you a hug so you are using your personality to bond with people.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 2)

## ***Non-violent Communication***

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“Instead of saying ‘no, no, no’ all the time, I have been encouraging those I work with to use ‘positive speak’. For example: “It is ok to walk here” rather than “don’t run in the kitchen” or “stop jumping.”

(Final Questionnaire)

Non-violent communication is about engaging in a way that avoids judgements where the objective is to help people communicate in a positive manner, to understand how others may be feeling in an attempt to resolve conflict (Rosenberg 2003). Dealing with behaviour that would often be labelled as ‘challenging’ is part of the everyday work at both communities. Course participants felt that learning about non-violent communication had given them more positive strategies for risk management. Course participants have been encouraged to rephrase directive commands in order to be less confrontational. One of the course participants felt she had also used non-violent communication with other staff members who were sometimes quite negative in their approach because of the emphasis on setting boundaries. The participant was able to explain that positive boundaries can be set.

“It is about learning together, doing together and cutting things down into bite-size pieces that are non-threatening. It is about building up the positives and being happy together.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 2)

The participant noted a change in atmosphere within the workshop and that staff are now getting better as result of her change in approach. Another course participant commented that non-violent communication had been a major influence on her practice and has had a positive effect on residents.

“I think we have developed more trusting relationships and a more respectful relationship. This has filtered through to the other staff members and co-workers in the House so we look at different ways of dealing with issues that is not going to involve any kind of punishment or major consequence.”

(BD Final Focus Group, Participant 8)

The course has also made one participant reflect on the importance of potential and being open to possibilities.

“One of the things that I find with non-violent communication about “don’t do this or that” is that the biggest “don’t” we give ourselves is that we cannot do something, so do not try. When I realised that, it was one of my “breakthrough” moments in social pedagogy.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 2)

### ***Learning Zone/ Comfort Zone/ Panic Zone***

The comfort zone represents a safe haven with all that is familiar so that the person feels at ease and comfortable. To achieve maximum potential, the person needs to be encouraged to enter the learning zone by trying out new and different activities. However, skilled observation is necessary to gauge whether the person is ready to move into their learning zone. If pushed too quickly then the person can enter the panic zone, making it impossible to learn because of the heightened state of anxiety. The pace at which individuals learn is also crucial to break down the activity into manageable steps and this needs to be assessed on an individual basis.

Staff at both communities have used this concept to good effect. One example is of a day member who becomes quite agitated and distracted by new people and any form of change. The course has helped staff to pick up the subtleties of his behaviour and to recognise that the introduction of a new person throws the member into his panic zone. The key worker for this person commented that she has focused on developing a closer relationship so that in effect she becomes his comfort zone. Staff have also introduced a system whereby two people work with this member to extend the number of people with whom the member feels secure. The workshop leader for this particular member commented that the course has helped him to think about practice in “a more structured way, developing an awareness of how and why”. Although he may have considered a systematic way of introducing new people to this member at some point in the future, he felt that ultimately the course had helped to “speed up the process”.

### ***Common Third***

The Common Third relates to using an activity as a vehicle for developing and strengthening relationships, where both staff and members are equal partners and can learn from each other. Staff from both communities have used the Common Third to try out activities that are new to them so that they are not seen as the “expert”. As one participant commented,

“I thought that it would make it more chaotic because I needed to learn woodwork, but in this case it was important because you are learning something new as a whole community or a whole team. Actually it has been really good because we have been able to develop different relationships and everyone has been together and it is really positive. Before the training, I wasn’t really looking at it that way.”

(Second Focus Group, Tiphereth, Participant 1)

Our discussion with participants suggests that the benefit of using activities that are new to staff is that it empowers members and in a sense takes the pressure away from staff with the result that more progressive relationships are created.

“I used to think that I had to learn to do it before teaching the members but now lots of members know more about woodwork than I do. I think it is totally ok to go up to one of the members who knows more about it than I do and ask them to show me how to do this, so it is very much from them, which is really great and I feel more relaxed about learning from them.”

(Second Focus Group, Tiphereth, Participant 3)

There were many examples of staff using the Common Third. One that illustrates the kinds of things staff did was the example of a staff member working with a member who has difficulty concentrating. That staff member knew that he liked switches and playing drums. She gave him an “embellisher” (tool for working with felt) that neither had used before. She comments that it was a

“It was a brilliant success and he worked for the whole session because he was in control. It didn’t work just once but for quite some time. Then you think the development from that is to go on a sewing machine. D was so happy so it

is surprising what he can do. I am going to ask him to make the curtains for the sensory room.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 2)

This is another example to illustrate that allowing members to try new and different activities challenges assumptions about what members are capable of achieving and provides opportunities for members to learn new skills to enhance their sense of self-worth.

### Developing Social Pedagogical Values

When asked to reflect on how different their practice was, as a result of the training, six respondents out of eleven from the final survey said their practice was ‘a little different’; a further two respondents said it was ‘somewhat different’ and one said it was ‘very different’ (one said it was ‘not at all’ different and one did not answer this question). Overall this suggests that most respondents viewed their practice following the pilot as very similar to practice before the pilot. Many of the comments highlighted the compatibility between social pedagogy and the way the communities already operated. Several suggested that the training helped to increase awareness of what they already did, to ‘give it a name’, provide a common language, and to explain theoretical concepts that could underpin practice. Some also suggested that the training helped to increase reflection regarding their practice.

That said, almost all of the training participants agreed at the end of the pilot period that the pilot had helped develop their practice in the ways they hoped it would. In general, the comments suggested the pilot helped them to develop the skills they already had, affirm the appropriateness of the way they already worked, and / or bring theory and language to ways they currently worked. Some of them mentioned more specific ways they pilot helped them develop, such as promoting reflection, providing tools to deal with conflict, or improving confidence.

In the final survey, those who had completed the training were asked how successful the pilot had been in terms of: promoting wellbeing, learning and growth, and valuing relationships, equality, the self as a practitioner and person, good communication, teams and communities, the everyday, and practical activities. In rating these dimensions from 1 (not successful) to 4 (very successful), all dimensions received an average of at least 3.5, indicating that staff tended to see the pilot as being successful in developing all of these aspects. The dimensions receiving the highest ratings were ‘promoting wellbeing, learning and growth’ and ‘valuing practical activities’. The open-ended comments suggested that the training reinforced the ways they already worked, helping to achieve incremental improvements among those who attended the training, but that more work was required to spread these practices among the wider communities.

There was also ample evidence from across our observations, interviews, focus groups and the analysis of SPORS sheets to show that the use of Social Pedagogical values developed during the pilot period. We will examine each of these in turn; however, we recognise that there is much overlap between the value areas.

### *Promoting well-being, learning and growth*

The strong emphasis on working in a way that promotes the well-being of the human spirit is central to Camphill beliefs and practices. It sets Camphill apart from other forms of social care (Jackson 2006:272). The social pedagogy course has helped participants to expand their views as to what constitutes “learning”, using every aspect of life as an opportunity to learn and develop.

“Be it emotionally or practically, everything that happens in life, there is a possibility for learning in that. When it comes to having a conversation at the table, learning to make a cup of tea, learning how to act in a social environment. Everything we do is an opportunity to learn for the co-workers, staff members and me.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 1)

Extending the idea of learning to all, irrespective of role, has had positive effects in the workshops. The workshop leader has changed the way that she works.

“I no longer say this is what we do. Now, let us all get round the table to discuss what we are going to do next. If a co-worker says how can we do this? I say, read the instructions first, I don’t want to give them all the answers. I want to give them a way to find the answers themselves. It is an opportunity to learn and I will grab onto all the opportunities for them to learn.”

(Individual Interview Participant 1)

The workshop leader comments on the change in atmosphere after her change of approach.

“It is a much less challenging atmosphere. There is a gentle flow and people can be who they want to be. I sense they are proud of themselves in what they are doing because I have photos of the guys with big smiles on



their faces because I have allowed them to try something that I previously would not have allowed them to try.”

(Individual Interview Participant 1)

The concept of “Multiple Intelligences” has helped participants to reflect upon how people learn and the different styles of learning.

“It was really interesting because I can now think that person learns by music or someone else learns by being shown. That is brilliant. I have all these boxes for residents and I have asked staff to think about what a realistic outcome might be and how best they could learn.”

(Second Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 2)

For example, the staff member knew that D likes cooking and that he learns through demonstration. From this task, the staff member discovered that he could read shopping lists.

“I had no idea that he could read. So if we go shopping, I will say, would you like to buy a book so we can read together. So just from that one little thing, we have made huge steps.”

(Second Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 2)

Since the staff member completed the training, she has changed the way that she works by taking a more individual approach to personal needs and development, rather than “just running the house.” “We are looking at each individual and how best they learn and how we can extend their learning.”

### ***Valuing the self as a practitioner***

The notion of reflection is central to pedagogic training and practice (Cameron et al 2011). The complexity inherent in the work at both communities demands that staff reflect on the way they approach their work and what they have learned. Critical reflection upon practice helps staff to remain empathic, connected and resilient (Howe 2014). Reflection is essential to ‘valuing the self as practitioner’ as it requires thinking about the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of practice and tuning into our own feelings, in order to consider what worked well and what could have been done differently. This takes courage and confidence in ourselves and a willingness to see that we are always a work in progress.

As part of the social pedagogy training, participants were given a tool for reflection, the four Fs covering Facts, Feelings, Findings,

and Futures. Using this basic tool has enabled participants to organise their reflections in a more structured and coherent manner. An example of its application is from one of the participants who was reflecting on her work with a day member. She describes how the young person liked to play the drums but did not have the patience to wait until the appropriate time. To bridge the gap, other options needed to be explored to prevent his behaviour from deteriorating. The findings relate to the possible options such as reading a book or spending 1:1 time with him to establish what works, which will then determine how to deal with this situation in the future.

Although most of the participants felt that they were reflective before the course, it has reinforced the importance of reflection and taken it to a deeper level.

“I think that reflection was a huge thing for me. I always thought that I was reflective. I now realise that I was not as reflective as I could have been. I am now able to go back and say that did not work. It is no criticism of me that it did not work. It just did not work and I am learning about myself and how I can do things differently. I am much more critical in a constructive way about myself.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 1)

This participant cites an example of working with a member who is severely autistic. In an effort to encourage communication, she introduced a board maker. On reflection, the participant was able to recognise that the introduction of the board maker was a mistake, given his negative reaction, possibly related to other changes at home. Before the course she felt that she probably would not have considered the wider context and implications of other issues.

The course has helped the participants to hone their observation skills to look at the subtleties of practice.

“I think the thing that has struck me most is the games we played that really made me think about things that I had not thought about before. It has made me reflect more, so that if something is working with one person but not another, then why is it not working? I am much more aware of the little things that I do.”

(Second Focus Group, Tippereth, Participant 3)

Another participant felt that that reflection had helped her to apply theory to practice as a means of finding solutions to everyday problems.

“After the course I was reflecting on things more and I feel it is really helpful because the more I reflect on things that need to be changed, I think back on the course and find my own solution to a situation. For me, reflection was helpful because it helped me to put what I had learned into my everyday practice.”

(Second Focus Group, BD, Participant 2)

One of the potential benefits of introducing social pedagogy identified by a manager from Blair Drummond was to have more confident practitioners.

“Confidence is an essential skill. If people are confident in explaining or expressing what they do, then that improves the confidence of other staff and co-workers. It not only benefits the people who work here and the residents, it also enhances our reputation.”

(Individual Interview with Manager)

The increase in confidence of participants was a recurring theme from the data. Having a framework for practice and a language to explain the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of practice seemed to free staff up to try new things and be more relaxed.

“I feel much more confident to speak about my practice. The training has been reassuring. I can explain things that felt very intuitive; there is a theory to explain these things and my work feels more purposeful.”

(Final Focus Group Tiphereth Participant 1)

It has given participants a common language to explain their work to other professionals and families, building on the strong value base and person-centred practice that already existed.

“For me, it hasn’t really changed too much about how I work, but it has given me labels I can put on things, to be able

to categorize. I have always been like that but this has enabled me to think that it is ok or a justification. I feel more confident.”

(Final Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 3)

The increase in confidence has also brought additional benefits in relation to the environment created within the houses and workshops, a more relaxed atmosphere as a consequence of staff feeling less pressured.

“For me, I like having a laugh. Before I would do it anyway, but I was thinking it might be frowned upon. It has become a creative experience rather than a craft workshop. Now if people want to run around in a circle, as long as they are safe, then I don’t mind. It has made me more confident in what I am doing so it does not have to be art or music as long as they are enjoying the environment.”

(Final Focus Group, Blair Drummond, Participant 9)

The sense of reassurance and affirmation that the work carried out at both communities was along the “right lines” was evident.

“It has made me more relaxed and happy that we have been doing those things and moving forward in a positive way. It has reassured me about the work we are doing.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 4)

### ***Valuing practical activities***

Staff appear to have been energised and inspired by the course with a renewed enthusiasm for trying out new and different activities.

“I think it has made me more courageous to try new techniques. It has also made me focus more on relationship building as a way to help people engage. I am more relaxed about failures. I am just more

confident and I realise it is ok to show you do not know everything.”

(Final Focus Group Tiphereth, Participant 2)

This more relaxed attitude has had a positive effect on members, allowing them to take a more active role in the choice of activities.

“They are coming in with their ideas. They are using sewing machines when previously I would have thought “no, they are not able to use sewing machines”. And now I am “come on, you can do it.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 1)

People’s engagement has improved and the way in which activities are structured is also having an impact.

“The people we work with seem to be enjoying trying new things. And the fact that we are more relaxed has an impact on them.”

(Final Focus Group, Tiphereth Participant 1)

Members and residents from both communities were invited to give their views through an activity based medium. At Tiphereth, a collage was made from photographs selected by residents to represent what was important to them about the community. Various themes were identified including relationships, outings, sense of humour, as well as the caring/sharing nature of the community. One of the residents commented that he had noticed a change in the way that the day services were structured after the social pedagogy course. He explained that members were able to choose an activity for a term rather than deciding on the day. He felt this was better because members could then focus on a task and it also meant that people were better prepared. At Blair Drummond, 3 residents completed story boards from photographs they had taken of important people or places.

Historically, the ethos of Camphill was to provide “meaningful” activities focused on achieving an end result. The tension inherent in balancing “process” and “end product” has been an on-going struggle in both communities. The course has enabled staff to re-evaluate their priorities and to realise that the process is far more important than producing goods.

“I think I have a better balance now between process and outcomes. I am more aware about the process of doing

things and letting members lead work and having fun while doing the work. I think I used to get more stressed about getting the work done and producing things.”

(Final Focus Group, Tiphereth, Participant 2)

As an example, one of the residents likes to help with washing dishes, “but if he does the dishes, they are usually dirty. So I was just facilitating him to start the dishes and to help him if needed. If it is dirty then we just wash again. But if he never tries, he will never learn. It is great that he is participating. It can be a tiny little thing, but it is important to that person.” The course has also made the participants reflect upon the importance of breaking down activities or tasks into small, manageable steps to ensure members are able to participate in some way. Staff also recognised that on some days, members or residents may not want to participate, perhaps due to low mood or personal issues.

“I think before social pedagogy, I would have thought he should be working, I cannot just let him sit and do nothing. That is not right we are here to do things, but now I have a reason so I think that has changed in practical ways.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 1)

### ***Valuing teams and communities***

Social pedagogy is concerned with fostering a sense of community through reciprocal relationships. Participants felt this fit well with the existing Camphill approach.

“That is the mindset that people have at Camphill, that desire to interact and connect with other people. How I value people and share my life and experiences with them irrespective of whether you are a staff member or co-worker. It creates a sense of security and safety where people have a sense of purpose.”

(Individual Interview, Manager Blair Drummond)

Although the ethos of social pedagogy is in keeping with the core values of both communities, participants felt it has made staff more mindful about relationships between staff members, as well as the relationships with members. As an example, one of the managers has now started team

meetings with an exercise from the course designed to test energy levels.

“It is much better to ask people maybe if you were a car, what kind of car would you be today. It then gives people a description of either a disability scooter or a BMW and it is easier than saying I am struggling a bit. If you ask people how they are, usually they say they are fine. It is a more palatable way to describe how you are feeling. It helps me to know that if someone describes themselves as a disability scooter, then I do not have to place such a high expectation on that individual, so it has been really useful.”

(Final Focus Group, Blair Drummond, Participant 12)

Another participant commented “I have been more aware of my relationships with staff members and thinking there maybe something in their personal life that is affecting them. I am more mindful of my contact with staff members.”

Team-building is an essential aspect of work at both communities. The interest and curiosity generated by the social pedagogy course from staff has helped to improve communication and to develop “shared reflections”. The workshop leader commented that:

“Overall, there is more comfort in the team with people more willing to talk about what they are doing and why. We are having conversations in the team and supporting each other better. It has helped me to think about how I can help members of the team to move more into their learning zones.”

(Final Focus Group Tippereth, Participant 1)

For this particular workshop leader, his consensus style of leadership resonated with social pedagogy, thus giving him more confidence as a manager. “In previous jobs I have felt I was being asked to manage in an authoritative way but now I feel I can be my true self as a manager.” The course has also given the workshop leader the confidence to structure the day in a more planned, systematic way, whereas before the course, planning tended to be rather “ad hoc”. To further develop team-building, another manager suggested that some of the games

demonstrated on the course could be used to good effect.

“I think we should incorporate some of the games within teams because that would get folk to work together and problem-solve. It makes you more open-minded and look at things in a different way. I think practice can be entrenched and if you are used to doing things in a certain way then that can exacerbate behaviour.”

(Final Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 11)

One of our concerns at the outset of the pilot related to the geographical location of both the Camphill Communities. It seemed to us that this might lead to insularity or isolation from the wider communities that are important for service users. However, our engagement with this project has highlighted for us that community can be defined in different ways and different models of community engagement can be valued by individuals in different ways. The service users we spoke to very much valued being part of a Camphill community and felt a sense of safety and belonging. Service user contributions to community life seemed to be genuinely acknowledged and appreciated. We also found that both of the communities were engaged with their wider community through projects and open days, and were continually reflecting on the ways they might further this engagement. One training participant, who had worked in a number of local authority learning disability services reflected on harmony between social pedagogy notions of community and those of Camphill. His comments capture some of these ideas:

“Social pedagogy is also about community and ensuring people have a sense of belonging and reciprocal relationships. [In my experience] With other day services there is a pretty limited idea of community. Just because people use local services doesn't mean they feel part of community. If people are strangers it is not really a community. Social pedagogy is about fostering community, togetherness. It is not just about the preferences of service users and an individualised approach, it is about the individual in relationships of reciprocity.”

(Final Focus Group Tippereth, Participant 1)



## Valuing relationships

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Holistic relationship-building is the cornerstone of good practice both from a social pedagogical perspective and from the standpoint of both communities (Petrie et al 2005). The social pedagogy course emphasised that the relationship not only needs to be the starting point for any work, but also that the relationship is the secure base from which personal growth develops.

“We need to start by building relationships so that the person becomes their comfort zone. It maybe that there is no concrete activity going on, it is more like intensive interaction of relationship building, being with someone unconditionally, of encouraging them to communicate back to you and hopefully at some point being able to do a simple activity.”

(Second Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 1)

One participant commented on the changes in a day member which he feels can be measured by the time spent building a solid relationship.

“Previously he would never have let a member of staff work with him; he was always on edge and that has almost completely gone now. He has been in a workshop and although he has been a bit edgy, before he would have been unapproachable and there would have been a build-up of tension as he is notorious for smashing things. He has never done that in a long, long time.”

(Final Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 10)

A member of the research team also noted a quite dramatic change in this young person, having observed him in the initial phase of the pilot and then again in the final phase. The participant felt that he had been placing undue pressure on himself by giving a time frame to complete activities but now realises the length of time taken is irrelevant. He felt that the young person is more relaxed because he is more relaxed:

“I think it has changed my attitude in that I value the process more and the end result is immaterial and if it happens then it is a bonus. There is a certain bit of me thinking “I was waiting for this course because this is what I have thought all of the time.”

(Final Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 10)

The main area for development from the baseline report was that staff should seek to promote better relationships between members. There is some evidence that participants have made efforts to facilitate communication as described by one participant.

“I now know that relationships between the guys are more important than I realised. I am working to make them less dependent on me and I am more aware of my professional self. For example, I have really been encouraging C & B to build a connection, they never used to speak. The other day C acknowledged B for the first time. This is helping with team work.”

(Second Focus Group Tiphereth, Participant 3)

Relationships between the two communities have improved, evidenced from the “Introduction to social pedagogy” joint initiative held in April, which was well-received.

## Valuing equality

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The *Keys to Life* (Scottish Government 2013) strategy for people with learning difficulties suggests that human rights and the principles of choice, control and independence should be at the heart of the work we do with people. Practice at Camphill communities is underpinned by a belief that all who live and work together are seen and treated as co-equals, illustrated by the quote of one participant,

“It is working in a way that respects the individual and sees the individual as an equal human being.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 3)

Although the value base and ethos of Camphill is fundamentally concerned with notions of empowerment, the course has brought about subtle changes such as a change in role from “leader” to “facilitator”, allowing staff to reconstruct teaching methods. An example of this is the work undertaken with P, an able resident “who wants to do things on his own terms”. Instead of pushing him to try a new project, the staff member waited until P took the initiative and asked to make a bench.

“I now have a consciousness of trying something completely new and it is a bit more about having us at equal levels. I am not leading him so much. We are working at it together and making decisions together. That comes from social pedagogy. I would always encourage people to do things for themselves, but the slight difference is me learning at the same time and doing something new for me, as well as allowing him to do a little bit more.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 4)

Another factor in encouraging the involvement of members is the need to “step back”, giving members the space to try out new things without intervening and telling people what to do.

“I have let go of all those things that had to be right and let members develop to what is right for them. I am a better person for it inside. I don’t get as annoyed or agitated or anxious as I used to be, particularly in my home life. My whole outlook has changed for the better.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 1)

### **Valuing the everyday**

One of the three key features of a Camphill community described by Jackson (2006) is “rhythmicity”, expressed through the daily rituals and festivals to mark the seasons, which serve to increase the sense of belonging and group solidarity. The values and principles are embedded in the way the communities operate through the festivals, as one manager explained:

“That is no different from society, it is just there is more conscious awareness of

it. That consciousness helps people to have a better connection with it. If you are more connected with something, you are more likely to invest in it.”

(Individual Interview, Manager Blair Drummond)

The advantages of having a clear structure are described by one of the participants,

“The actual place follows a rhythm and people are seemingly more secure in that rhythm. It is very clear. When I first started, I thought “Where is the individuality?” But it does seem to help people to be able to cope with change and trying different things. Having that “comfort zone”, knowing exactly what is happening so within that they are more able to push into their “learning zones” to try new things. It brings the community together.”

(Individual Interview, Participant 4)

One of the residents also commented on the importance of the festivals. For someone who acknowledges she does not like change, the festivals represent a framework to denote the changing seasons of the year.

### **Valuing good communication**

At the beginning of the pilot communicating with non-verbal residents was acknowledged by the communities as an area for further development. The social pedagogy pilot has encouraged participants to look at the nuances and subtleties of behaviour in order to develop potential and manage risk. One participant described his work with a day member whose behaviour deteriorated after tea break.

“It turned out that if he is invited to put away cups after the tea break then that settles him. He is not verbal so he is unable to indicate that is what he wants to do. It would have not occurred to me before the course, but there is a vast improvement in his behaviour.”

(Final Focus Group Blair Drummond, Participant 3)

When asked what it was about the course that made him rethink his strategy, the participant responded that “I would never describe myself as being closed-minded, but it has opened a door to another way of thinking, what if?” The management team at Blair Drummond have established “Community Theme Teams” with the aim of involving befrienders, residents, staff and co-workers to volunteer for specific groups where it was felt they possessed an interest or experience. The Residents’ group focused on reaching non-verbal residents, using “flash cards” related to different activities so that the residents could identify the most popular activities. This would help to match the interests of the residents with those of co-workers. A Parents’ group was also set up to enable parents to feel more involved in the community through a range of methods including monthly briefings. Both communities have emphasised the importance of parental involvement, such as attendance at reviews. The SPORS sheets are also a way of communicating the work undertaken with residents or day members to other professionals and parents. One participant commented that she has explained some concepts of social pedagogy in learning logs for the benefit of social workers and families and has received positive feedback. “That has gone down really, really well.”

## Impacts for service users and the wider

### Camphill community

Those who participated in the training were asked in the final survey to identify what they thought the impact of the pilot had been on staff and the people they support. They identified a number of positive impacts including: improved relationships; challenging people to learn; increased enthusiasm among staff; a greater focus on activities and engagement; increased empowerment and confidence for staff and the people they support. Analysis of the SPORS sheets also provided concrete examples of this for individual service users. For example:

- Joy, Michael, Liz, Bill, and Steve all began to engage with new activities, moving out of their comfort or panic zones and into their learning zones
- George, Sally, Zoe, Allen, Grace, and Ed built stronger relationships with workers (who used the Common Third, the Diamond Model and the 3Ps) and other members; their well-being and confidence was increased through new relationships and many of them were able to make contact and initiate engagement with others for the first time
- Tara, Ian, Jess, and David were supported to stay calm, staff teams helped them to do this by using non-violent communication to re-direct anxious behaviours

Across both of the final focus groups there were many examples given of the progress workers had seen for service users as a direct consequence of changes they had made to their practice. Many noted examples of service users becoming less dependent on them and more able to engage with other members and workers. Many gave examples of the sense of achievement and self-esteem gained from participating in new activities and groups.

In our direct engagement with service users we heard from the beginning about how much they valued being part of a Camphill

community and they talked about, or explained non-verbally through engagement with the collage activity, the people they enjoyed spending time with and the things they liked doing. Out of the six service users we engaged with during the course of the pilot (3 from each community), only one was able to articulate any noticeable difference in practice during the course of the pilot. He explained that he felt the day service was now providing him with more choices than it used to. Several members also said they had enjoyed taking part in a community day where members and staff played a game from the social pedagogy training.

When asked about the impact of the pilot on the community as a whole, the majority of respondents who participated in the training highlighted that the main impact was on the people who attended the training, whereas the impact on the wider community was only just beginning or would require further time and / or action. The overall impression was that the impact was very positive. The following comment captures some of these issues:

“I think the Social pedagogy pilot has had a positive effect on working relationships between staff in the core group and in the ways they work with students. The impact on the wider community has initially been slow but now seems to have gained momentum with other members of staff now asking about social pedagogy and showing interest. Since managers attended the leadership course there has been a greater drive to embed social pedagogy in practice.”

(Final Questionnaire)

Those who took part in the training were asked in the final questionnaire to describe a ‘sparkly’ moment in relation to the pilot. The most common response was a moment when they used social pedagogy in practice and could see the effects. Others referenced the training, recognising the value of the way they already practice, or simply ‘all of it’. Examples included:

“Witness effects of non-violent communication with residents. Removing ‘NO’ and ‘Don’t’ from our vocabulary and replacing it with more positive and encouraging words such as ‘it’s ok to’.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Helping staff member from panic zone to [learning] zone when giving insulin to new resident.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“All of it. Every moment.”

(Final Questionnaire)

Non-participant perspectives on Impact

In order to establish the impact of the pilot in relation to the wider Camphill Communities, we undertook a survey of those staff who work / volunteer at the two Communities, but who did not take part in the social pedagogy training. In total, 21 staff members completed the survey (Tiphereth: 5; Blair Drummond: 16). As shown in figure 2, most of the staff who completed the survey indicated that their knowledge regarding social pedagogy increased over the course of the pilot, although at the end of the pilot some still stated they were ‘not knowledgeable’ about social pedagogy and only one respondent described themselves as ‘knowledgeable’.

The staff members were asked whether they thought certain aspects of their practice were ‘the same’, ‘somewhat different’ or ‘very different’ following the social pedagogy pilot. As shown in figure 3, most staff members who responded to the survey suggested that practices had remained the same since the pilot. Nearly a third of respondents thought the way they communicated with each other and the way they worked with

people was ‘somewhat different’ following the pilot. More of the respondents stated that the way they discussed and reflected on practice (48%) or the development of new activities and approaches (40%) was different following the pilot.

As shown in figure 4, among staff who did not attend the training, most of the survey respondents thought the pilot was successful, with 60% describing it as ‘successful’ or ‘very successful’.

Some of the respondents described how those who attended the training shared their learning with them. Although five of the respondents said they haven’t had any learning, or only limited learning shared with them, others described the ways this learning was shared, including:

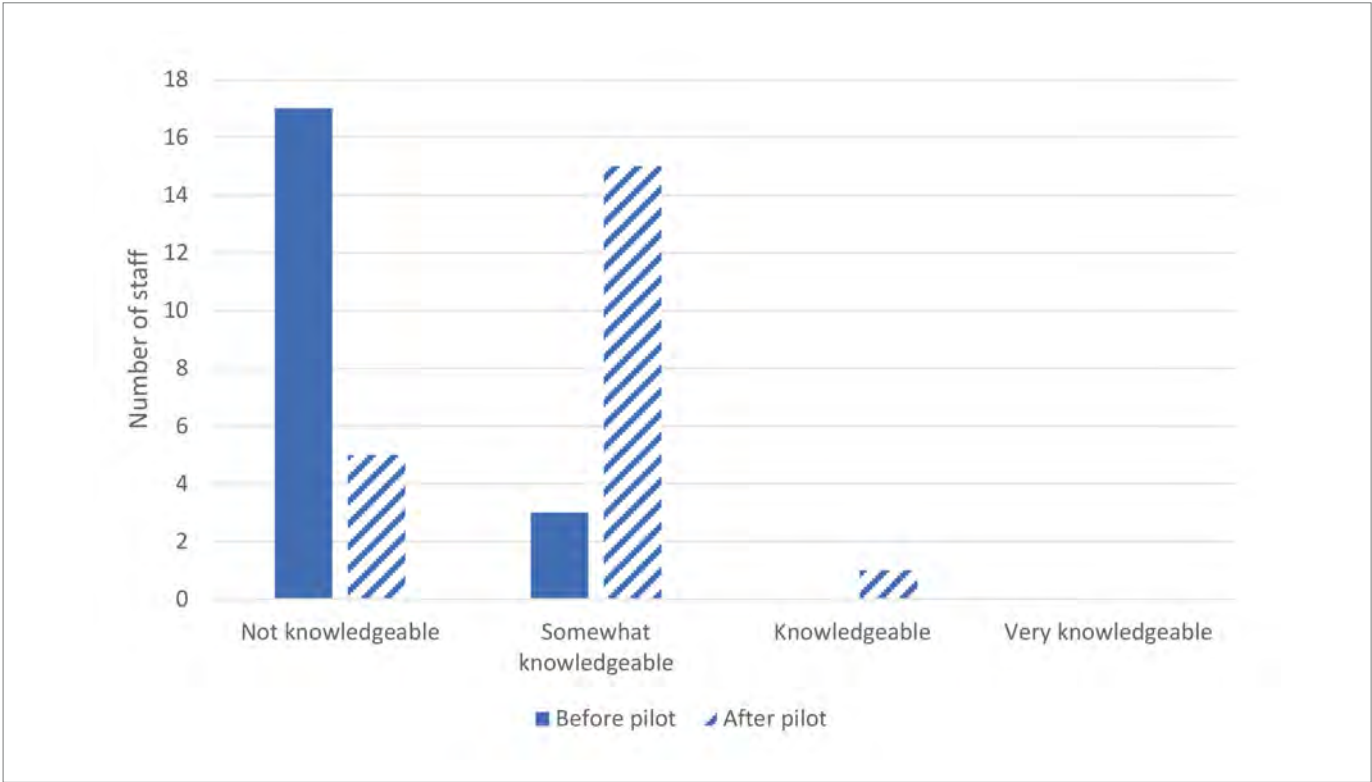
“Through two 1-hour discussions introducing key concepts, and linking them to what already happens in the community.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Yes, we have sessions at our Tiphereth meetings where they have presented their work.”

(Final Questionnaire)

Figure 2: Knowledge of social pedagogy among staff who did not attend training





“We have started to talk about doing a SPORS sheet. We also started doing some team building with the cup game.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Some sharing at group meetings/ community events.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Informal discussion, summaries of different reflective techniques verbally and in written form.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Talking about the learning theories.”

(Final Questionnaire)

These staff members were also asked what social pedagogy theories they were familiar with. Although six respondents stated they were not familiar with specific theories, a further eight made reference to specific theories, including:

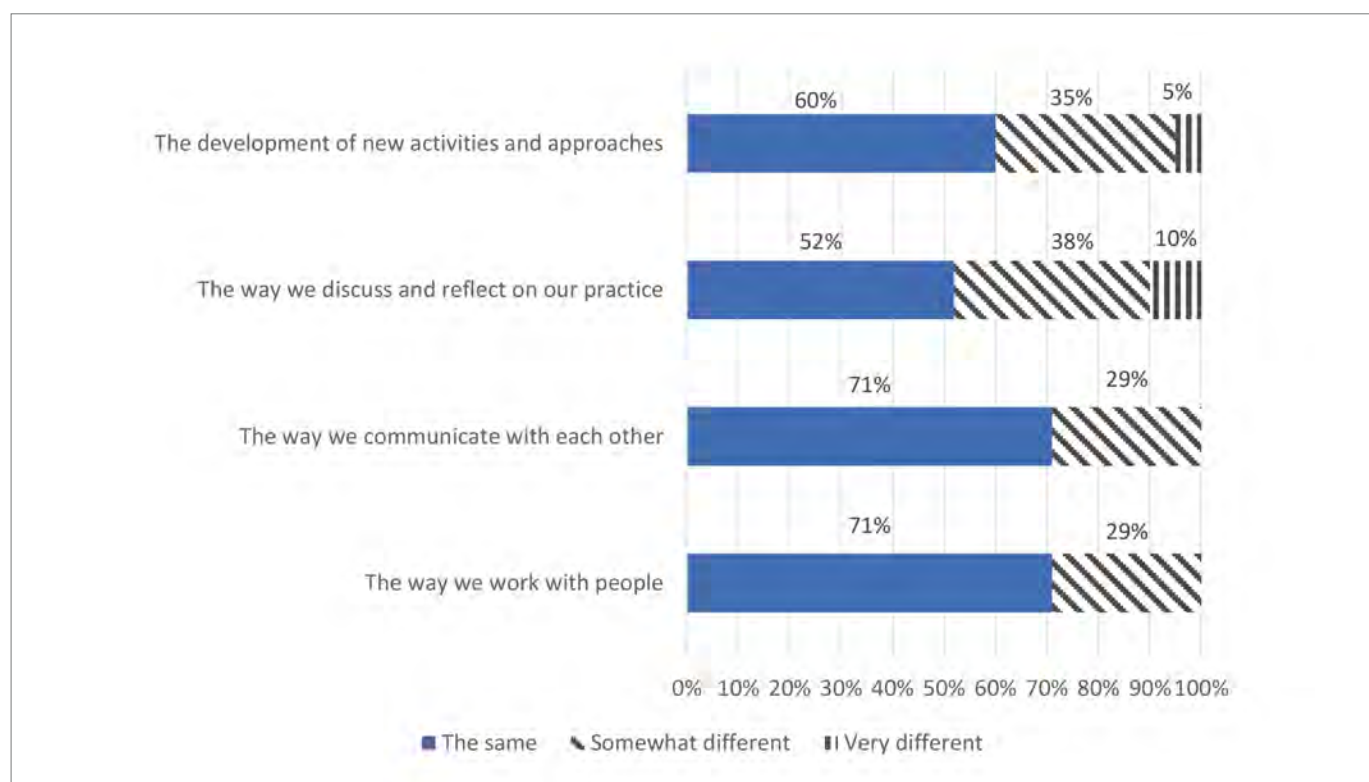
- Diamond model
- The four F's
- Head, heart and hands
- Haltung
- The learning zone model
- Social pedagogy Tree
- Non-Violent Communication
- 3 P's
- Common Third
- Zone of Proximal Development

An additional two respondents mentioned the importance of making time for other people and taking the time to reflect. The staff who did not attend the training were also asked their views on how the pilot has changed things at their community. Overall the comments suggested that those who had attended the training were very enthusiastic about it and had improved their practice in some cases; however, they often mentioned that these changes had yet to filter into wider practices at their communities. The following quotes are relatively representative of the responses:

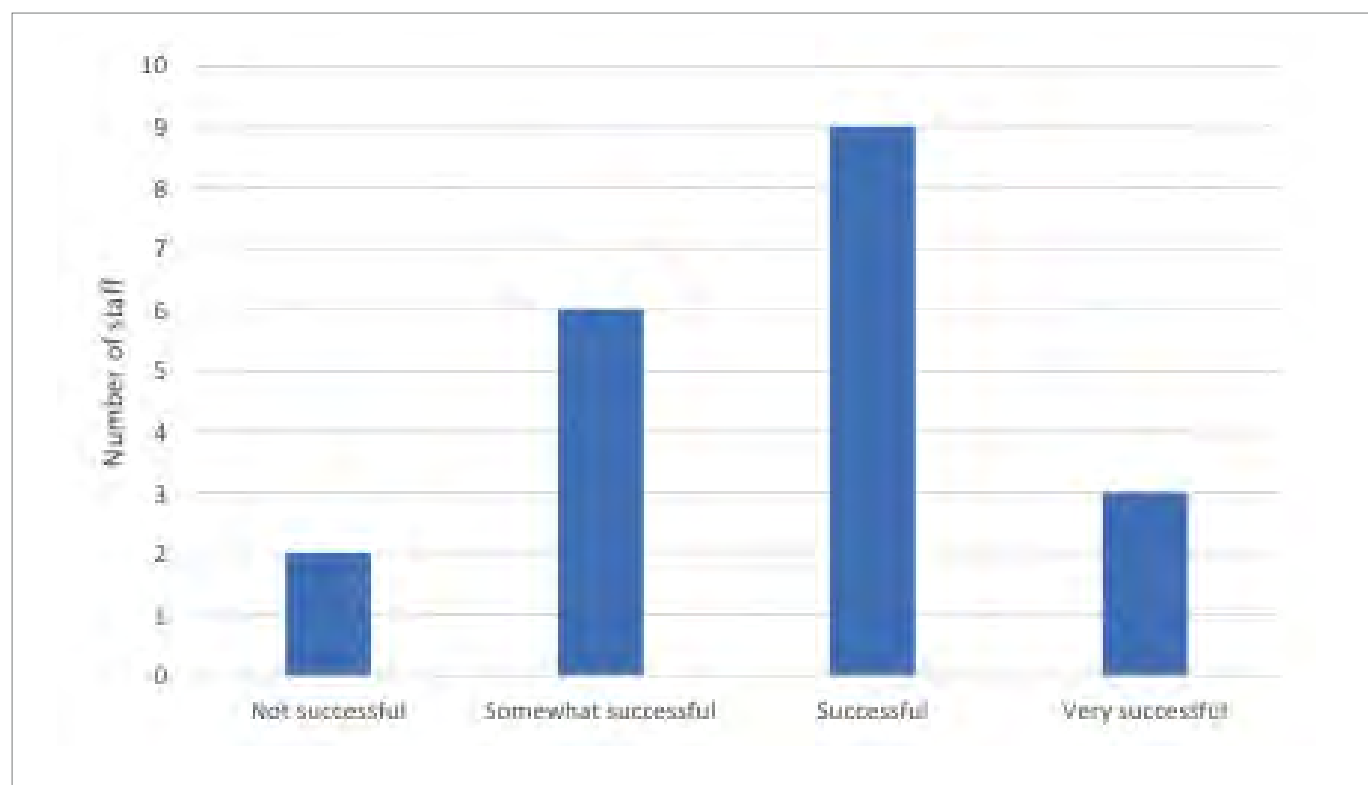
“Co-workers are very positive about the concepts, and everyone has enjoyed seeing how the structure affirms much of what we already do.”

(Final Questionnaire)

**Figure 3: Views on differences and similarities following the pilot among staff who did not attend the training**



**Figure 4: Views on the success of the pilot among staff who did not attend the training**



“Haven’t seen it rolled out yet fully. Think we are in the process of implementing social pedagogy more.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Given us a new common framework to discuss issues.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Some people have clearly changed their practice techniques - others have regarded it as another new approach with accompanying jargon to be learned. In general it has been beneficial: it has given many people a new outlook and renewed enthusiasm for excellence in professional and personal practice.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“More discussion about different aspects of social pedagogy that can be used to

help develop the community. Enthusiasm from staff members directly involved to employ what has been learnt and share knowledge. Development of community days to help share this knowledge. However it still feels like the knowledge from the pilot is still predominantly with those directly involved. It would be interesting to see if there is a deeper and wider sharing of knowledge during the next six months to a year.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Have never seen people so excited by a training course. People speaking about what they have learned. Recording resident progress in a different way to show every success no matter how small. Have words to describe how we do things.”

(Final Questionnaire)



When asked what could have been done to improve the pilot, the responses included the suggestion that more people could have gone on the training and more could be done to brief other staff on social pedagogy. Specific comments included:

“Maybe more info available on social pedagogy for the whole community not just those taking part in the training.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Include more people in the training. Focus more on reflective practice as a group and individually. Encourage managerial staff to disseminate information and practice techniques more broadly.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“More regular, but brief updates to the wider community about the training involved and how this would be passed on.”

(Final Questionnaire)

Overall, the survey of staff who did not attend the training suggests many of them have increased their knowledge regarding social pedagogy. Overall they thought the pilot was successful and they support embedding this approach within their Communities. The feedback also suggested that the impact of the pilot beyond those who attended the training may still be relatively limited at this stage. This suggests that further work is required to embed Social Pedagogical approaches across the Communities.

## Next Steps

Staff who participated in the training and those who had not were asked their views on the next steps for embedding social pedagogy in their communities. Those who did participate in the training mentioned a range of activities, including:

- More training for staff;
- ‘Communities day’ to share practice;
- Discussions with other staff;
- Workshops;
- Pairing up staff who were / were not on the training;
- Share knowledge through learning logs and inductions;
- Use reflective practice in supervision;
- Use social pedagogy in care plans and review system;
- Introducing ideas slowly and sharing them further through communities.

Further open-ended comments highlighted the value of the pilot and their desire to see social pedagogy further developed in their communities and the sector more broadly.



Questionnaires from staff who did not attend the training suggested that many are interested in learning more and there were a number of ideas about useful next steps, including:

“I would like to be involved in the next wave of social pedagogy. I don’t think the training should stop. There should be another group that should go on the course now.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Communication to those who have not been in the pilot what it is about, what we should see change and whether or not we will be involved at a later date.”

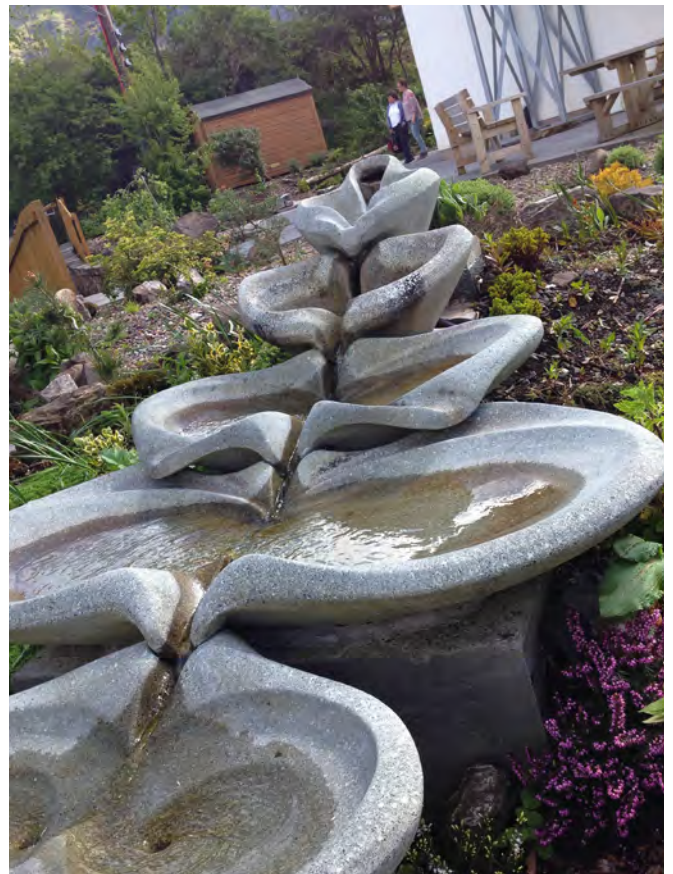
(Final Questionnaire)

“Though it is not a panacea, it is in keeping with the Camphill ethos and its principles and techniques should be encouraged in all departments. A short basic course could be instituted to accompany induction and monthly group reflections/investigations could be encouraged. Camphill practice in modern society is often difficult to describe and understand. Social pedagogy allows for clarity of purpose and practice both for the individual and the community.”

(Final Questionnaire)

“Focus on developing residents’ potential. Pushing staff to move out of their comfort zone to facilitate this idea.”

(Final Questionnaire)





## Facilitators and barriers to implementation

Despite the length of time since the training course, there is still a passion, a willingness and a determination to move forward and a core group of people who say they will “carry it”. Participants feel that because the concepts are reasonably straightforward and easy to understand, this should help with implementing the approach. Staff members also felt that existing practice shared many commonalities with social pedagogy and it was more a question of “building on what they know”, thus easing the process of integration.

Staff who had participated in the training and those who had not were asked what barriers they saw in terms of implementing social pedagogy in their communities. The most common responses were a lack of time and the fact that only a small proportion of staff in each community attended the social pedagogy training. Individual staff also made reference to initial scepticism or resistance to change among some members of staff.

Potential barriers to implementation at Tiphereth include the amount of time available with other competing demands. Having only three course participants, to some extent, places pressure on the individuals but this is mitigated by a strong community who are committed to making it work. The course participants were all from the day service but there are plans to include members of the residential service on the task force in the future.

Blair Drummond is a much larger community which inevitably brings its own issues. The challenges facing Blair Drummond are described as those associated with change management, such as staff members who do not understand social pedagogy and find it difficult to “let go” of traditional methods of working. One of the management team at Blair Drummond commented that the fear is “that our expectations of the positive effects will not be met.” The main challenge for both communities will be to keep up momentum as change effort can slow down when people lose the sense of urgency (Hayes 2002).



# Chapter five

## Reflections and recommendations

### Progressing cultural change

Research into the benefits and outcomes of using social pedagogy has predominantly focused on children in residential care, mainly from a European perspective (Petrie et al. 2006). The growing interest in social pedagogy as a model for practice stems from the significantly better outcomes for children across a range of measures (Smith 2009). While there is a paucity of empirical research findings in relation to the field of learning difficulties, the evidence from a relatively recent study carried out by Carter et al (2013) suggests that social pedagogy lends itself to working with people who have learning difficulties because of the emphasis on a holistic approach to care.

The findings of this evaluation add further strength to such claims. To summarize, the key findings from the evaluation are as follows:

- Social pedagogy brings a framework and common language to practice, enabling practitioners to explain their work to other staff, professionals and parents. It represents a consistent way of working and a shift towards evidenced-based practice. Having a theoretical framework has helped staff to develop a better understanding of outcomes-based recording, which should enhance the profile and reputation of the Camphill communities.
- Social pedagogy encourages the development of reflective practice, and this was one of the key areas for further development identified in our baseline report which has been progressed. A range of reflective tools are now being used by a number of staff across both communities including the SPORS outcome sheets, reflective diaries, team discussions, in-house training activities, and cross community meetings.
- Social pedagogy can help staff to have the confidence to try new things and take risks which allow the people they work with to develop their potential and achieve a greater sense of well-being and happiness.
- Social pedagogy fits well with the overall philosophy and value base of the communities. There are many similarities in the way that staff approach the work on a number of levels: practical, creative, emotional and social. The training has reinforced the centrality of relationships as a basis for work.
- The evidence gathered by the research team suggests that the course has had a transformative effect on participants, notably in terms of their confidence and competence, thus giving them a more professional image and sense of self-worth (Jackson 2006). It has reaffirmed their way of thinking, justified existing practice and has made staff aware of transformative power of subtle changes to practice. The impact on residents/day members is more difficult to evidence because any potential changes could be attributed to a number of other factors. However, the positive feedback from members and examples of progress from the SPORS recordings is encouraging.

Organisational culture will play a pivotal role in any strategic change process. To embed social pedagogy into practice, Eichsteller and Holthoff (2012:42) maintain that

“Social pedagogy must be reflected throughout the entire organisation. Its values and vision must be congruent with Social Pedagogical principles, not just what they are, but how they are owned by employees and brought to life in interactions.”

The culture within both communities of “working, growing and learning together” is a clear strength that will help support the process of embedding social pedagogy. Using the analogy of a gardener, one of the participants described social pedagogy as “setting up the right conditions for the plant to grow and then let it grow in its own way.” The trainer from Thempra took this analogy further by commenting that the seeds had been sown in what was described as “fertile ground”, a reference to both communities.

Effective leadership is essential to improve organisational culture and to successfully guide staff through the transition phase (Hafford-Letchfield et al 2014). The respective task forces have demonstrated leadership qualities combined with a willingness and commitment to make it work. One of the management team commented:

“Social pedagogy has been a fantastic tool for Blair Drummond. People have embraced it, we have seen good results from it and as far as we are concerned we will continue with it. We will go on and we will support it, so that was our view that it has been a real success for us.”



A task force member from Tiphereth commented that:

“The responses of people have been good but it will take more time to embed it into people’s consciousness. I think it is a good, strong taskforce and we are all motivated by it, so I think it will keep going and it will work well for us.”

Both communities have already made efforts to motivate other staff who have not attended the course by a variety of different methods.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Individual learning is necessary, but is not sufficient for organisational learning (Gould 2000). In order for organisational learning to take place, learning needs to occur across multiple levels so that social pedagogy is rooted in the policies and procedures of both communities. In order to further embed social pedagogy in both communities we recommend that the approach become part of the infrastructure included in care plans, reviews, appraisals and learning logs.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Critical reflection is a catalyst for learning and as such, we recommend that opportunities and space for reflection be continued on a formal basis through team meetings, supervision, community reflection days, and on an informal basis as part of the ongoing conversations staff, volunteers, family, members and residents have about ways of working and being together.

### **Outcome measurement**

As discussed in chapter 1 of this report, the ‘Outcomes that Matter’ system was originally introduced alongside the social pedagogy training in order to encourage a focus on outcomes for people in the Camphill Communities and provide a system for collecting and analysing outcome data for the purpose of assessing and demonstrating impact. However, staff found this system – which was originally developed for use with children and young people – to be time consuming and ill-suited for reflecting the relevant outcomes for people supported at Camphill Communities. The staff therefore decided to discontinue the use of this system from the beginning of September 2014 and replace it with a new outcomes monitoring form (Social Pedagogy Outcome Record Sheet; SPORS) that would focus on outcomes that have been identified collaboratively with service users and carers.

Feedback from staff highlighted that the original system did help to bring attention to outcomes, and therefore may have had some benefits, even if the recording system itself was not ideal. Feedback on the new SPORS system highlighted that they found this more relevant and usable than the ‘Outcomes that Matter’ system. However, it is worth noting that some staff still

commented on the time involved in completing the forms. One of the advantages of the system, which was highlighted by staff, is that it can be shared with residents’ family members.

It is our view that the SPORS system is useful in terms of bringing attention to outcomes, encouraging staff to be specific regarding the use of social pedagogy in their practice, and in bringing in a systematic way of recording the aims, nature and outcomes from specific instances of support. One of the limitations of the system is that, due to its qualitative nature, it is difficult to compile the information in a way that would make it easy to see progress across time, individuals or services. In this regard it is worth noting that measuring quality of life outcomes for people with learning disabilities is complex (Townsend-White, Pham & Vassos, 2012). For future evaluations of social pedagogy as used to support people with learning disabilities, it would be worth exploring the use of systematic measures that are designed and validated for use with this population, such as the Caregiver’s Concerns-Quality of Life Scale (Unwina & Debb, 2014).

#### **Recommendation 3:**

There is further work to do in rolling out the use of the SPORS system across both communities and ensuring consistency in the way forms are filled out. It is the recommendation of the evaluation team that there be a period of further reflection on the use of the SPORS forms before their use is mainstreamed throughout both communities. We feel the forms should be shorter and more user friendly. It might be useful for staff involved in this development work to review other approaches, such as Talking Points (Cook and Miller 2012), in order to think about which elements are most useful and to develop their approach in completing these with service users. This process will no doubt be facilitated by further training which is to be provided by Evaluation Support Scotland to members of Camphill Communities from across Scotland in 2015.

### **Reflections on the evaluation methodology**

In planning this evaluation, we reviewed a number of previous social pedagogy evaluations (Berridge et al. 2011; Carter et al. 2012; Vrouwenfelder 2013). We felt a study that employed an action research approach, involving ‘feedback loops’ between the researchers and research sites, would offer a more dynamic engagement with pilot sites. An action research approach allowed us the opportunity to explore the implications of the pilot as it unfolded, and provide our assessments at points along the way, as well as seek comments and clarifications from the Camphill Communities staff. The mixed-methods approach allowed us to draw on a range of sources to build a picture of how the Communities operated over the course of the pilot, particularly in relation to those staff who attended the Social pedagogy training. Hopefully this has proved useful for the Camphill Communities in terms of assisting them to reflect on their practice, and the role of social pedagogy within this, in order to inform their decisions for practice development during and following the pilot.

Given the action research focus, there was less emphasis on a controlled before-and-after or experimental design, which might have provided firmer conclusions regarding the impact of the pilot, particularly in terms of benefits to people who are supported by Camphill Communities. As discussed elsewhere in this report, problems with, and changes to, the outcome data collection systems further restricted the potential to provide definitive evidence regarding outcomes for people supported in the Communities. Moreover, without using comparison groups, either within the two Communities subject to the pilot, or comparing with other Communities, it would be difficult to draw strong conclusions in this regard. As discussed in this report, the Camphill Communities were seen by staff as already compatible with, or even using, social pedagogical approaches before the start of the pilot, which means the 'distance travelled' may have been less than might be evident in different settings where social pedagogy would involve a more substantial change in values and practice. It would be useful to see what impact social pedagogy training could have upon services working with people with learning disabilities who do not currently work in this way and are totally unfamiliar with social pedagogical theories and approaches.

The Social Pedagogy Pilot and its evaluation were funded for one year. These timescales brought a number of limitations. The training began in June 2014 and finished in December 2015, allowing the communities only four months to embed the learning before the final data for the evaluation was collected. This is a very short period of time to expect to see widespread dissemination, never mind measurable changes to practice and culture. This is especially true given how little time staff have during their day to day working lives to plan for changes and developments. A more extended time scale would have allowed for further dissemination of the training throughout the site communities and would have allowed more time to progress action plans.

The evaluation team began their work in June 2014, just as training was about to commence. A longer lead in time for the evaluation team would have allowed for the collection of more outcome data in relation to service users during the baseline phase.

In sum, the strengths of our methodological approach were that it allowed an understanding of how the Camphill Communities operated, how the social pedagogy training related to and influenced practice, and assisted staff to reflect on their practice at various points during the pilot. In terms of limitations, this methodological approach was less definitive in terms of the impact of social pedagogy for people with learning disabilities, although it provided some evidence of benefits in this regard, and future research could adopt a more structured approach to this research question, in terms of using validated before-and-after measures and relevant comparison groups.

#### **Recommendation 4:**

These two Camphill communities have made considerable progress during the period of the pilot. However, given the importance of Camphill to the learning disability sector

in Scotland, we believe there would be merit in providing further evaluation funding to follow up the progress of these communities in another year. With a new outcome measure in place it would be possible to track the progress of service users during the period in a more systematic way and give a more detailed picture of what social pedagogy can achieve for practice with people who have learning disabilities.

### **Reflections on the current policy context**

On 1 April 2014 the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 came into force. This new piece of legislation aims to ensure people who need support will have more choice and control over how they are supported. Central to this are five key principals: involvement, information and choice, collaboration, dignity and a right to take part in the life of the community. Although local authorities are managing the changes associated with the implementation of this legislation in different ways, all local authorities are doing so within the context of continued austerity and increasing demand on social services. Many services throughout Scotland, including those provided by Camphill, have been facing changes to the ways that services are funded and many local authorities are struggling to keep these core principles at the heart of the implementation process (Hood 2014).

It seems to us that the learning from this Social Pedagogy Pilot can make an important contribution to developing our understanding of how the core principles laid out in the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 can be implemented in practice and can also help drive forward the changes in practice suggested by the Keys to Life policy (Scottish Government 2013). The findings of the evaluation suggest that social pedagogy provides an overarching framework, alongside a set of accessible theories and techniques which practitioners seem to find helpful and empowering. Core to this is the quality of relationships with service users; if these relationships are trusting, warm and based on equality and reciprocity then it will be far easier to ensure involvement, information and choice, collaboration, dignity, and community involvement.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

We recommend that the Scottish Government fund further social pedagogy training in agencies providing a service to people with learning disabilities in Scotland. Future projects should be funded in agencies where staff are not familiar with social pedagogy, in order to get a better measure of the impact the training can have on staff practice and outcomes for service users. As this is a low pay sector, which is under increasing pressure from funding cuts, it is essential that funding covers staff backfill costs. Evaluation methodologies for such projects should include a longer lead in time to ensure that baseline measures can capture data on outcomes for service users before and after the training and follow this up over a longer period. Consideration should also be given to the use of comparison groups to achieve a clearer picture of impact.



## Conclusions

On the basis of the evidence collected by the research team, the pilot has been successful in terms of meeting its overall aims and objectives. The evidence clearly illustrates the positive effects that the training has had on staff members and the progress already made in integrating a social pedagogical approach to practice. Although the evaluation was limited in terms of its evidence of outcomes for service users, the available evidence showed some benefits. The communities are aware that this will be a long, slow process,

but the goodwill and commitment of staff should ensure that momentum is maintained. The research team therefore recommends that social pedagogy is retained as a framework for practice because of the numerous benefits that it brings to the communities and consideration should be given to extending it to other Camphill communities. We also hope that Camphill will share their good practice farther afield and that the Scottish Government might consider creating opportunities for other organisations outside Camphill, who work with people who have learning disabilities, to undertake training in social pedagogy.

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# Appendix A

# Social Pedagogy Outcomes Record Sheet (SPORS)

Name of Person:

Name of Staff:

**Date of outcomes development/planning:**

1. In discussion with the person you work with and/or others, identify one outcome which will be a key focus of your work together. Please make a note of who else you worked with to develop the outcome and why e.g. the person you work with, their family/ carer, their social worker, others in your community who work with that person...Write this outcome clearly here. It should be in language everyone can understand.

You may wish to relate the outcome to the key areas of *The Diamond Model: Well Being and Happiness, Relationships, Holistic Learning, Empowerment and Positive Experiences*.

2. Thinking about the different elements of social pedagogy, which of those will you use in working on this outcome? [ e.g. Non Violent Communication, Learning Zone Model, Zone of Proximal Development, the Common 3rd, 4 Aspects of a message, the Diamond Model, Multiple Intelligences]

**3.** What steps will you take towards achieving the outcome? Be specific (what, when, who, how often...)

**Date of reflection on progress:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **FACTS**

**4.** Using the 4 F's model (Facts, Feelings, Findings, Futures), reflect on the actions that you took, their impact and what you might do next. You may wish to include small observations that you have made (as in the Outcomes that Matter model)

What steps did you take towards achieving the outcome (these may be the same or different to those outlined in question 3).  
Be specific (what, when, who, how often...)

**FEELINGS**

**5a.** Using the information from your 4 F's reflection, what factors enabled progress?

**5b.** Using the information from your 4 F's reflection, what factors hindered progress?

**FINDINGS**

**6.** What are the signs that you saw that changes/ improvements have happened? (This may be from verbal or non-verbal communication, or your observations)

**7.** What do other people who support the service user tell you about any changes/ improvements that have happened? (Other support staff, carers, family etc.)



**FUTURES**

8. In discussion with the service user and/ or others, identify if you will continue to work on this outcome or another. Write down what outcome will be the focus of your work next and why?

9. Please note here the 'Sparkly' Moments that may have happened over the duration of the evaluation of this outcome that stand out as important moments worth noting.

Please add photos or additional notes that you feel will add to this Record on an another sheet.

# Appendix B

## Baseline Questionnaire - Camphill Social Pedagogy Pilot Evaluation

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out a bit about how you work with the people you support at the moment. There are no right or wrong answers but the more you are able to tell us the better we will understand how things work at the moment. We will also be speaking directly to staff in each community at the beginning, middle and end of the pilot. At the end of the pilot we will also ask you to fill in a final questionnaire. All the information we collect is very important in helping us understand the impact of the pilot and we are very grateful for your help with this. If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the pilot feel free to contact the project team at: [a.roeschmarsh@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.roeschmarsh@ed.ac.uk).

**1. How knowledgeable do you currently feel about Social Pedagogy? (Please circle one)**

Not Knowledgeable about	Somewhat Knowledgeable about	Knowledgeable about	Very Knowledgeable about
1	2	3	4

**2. What guides the way you work with the people you support at the moment?**

**3. Can you give some examples of how you currently use activities in your work with the people you support?**

**4. What do you hope the Social Pedagogy pilot will bring to your practice?**

**5. How would you like to see practice in the community develop during the Social Pedagogy pilot?**

**6. What challenges might there be to implementing a Social Pedagogical approach in your community?**

**7. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about your current practice and/or the upcoming Social Pedagogy pilot?**

# Appendix C

## Questions for Focus Groups

### **First Focus Group – Pre Training**

1. What do you think are the strengths of the way you work with people at the moment?
2. What do you think are the areas that need development?
3. How well do you think Social Pedagogy fits with the way you work at the moment?
4. What, if any, hopes do you have for the Social Pedagogy Pilot?
5. What, if any, concerns do you have for the Social Pedagogy Pilot?
6. How do you think the Pilot might impact on the people you work with?
7. Are there any other points or thoughts you have about the pilot or the impending training that you want to share?

### **Second Focus Group – After Training has begun**

1. From your experience of the training so far, what aspects of social pedagogy are you already using?
2. What aspects do you think you may be able to use in future practice?
3. How do you think you will put into practice what you have learned?
4. What have been the most useful elements of the course and why?
5. What piece of learning had the most impact from the training? (Ah ah moment)
6. What were the least useful elements?
7. What do you think will help you to hold on to the learning from the training?
8. How do you plan to put the training into practice?
9. Are there any other points or thoughts you want to share about the training so far or what happens next that you want to share?

### **Final Focus Group – After Training has been completed**

1. Looking back on the training now, what do you think were the most useful aspects?
2. Is there anything you wish the training had spent more time on?
3. How do you think the training has influenced your practice?
4. To what extent do you feel the training has changed the way you work with people?
5. How has the pilot impacted on the people you work with?
6. What do you now feel are the strengths of the way you work?
7. What areas do you feel still need development?
8. Was there anything that got in the way of improvements you wanted to make over the last 12 months?
9. What would help you to make further improvements to your practice?
10. Overall, how successful do you feel the pilot has been in improving the way you work with the people you support?
11. Are there any other points or thoughts you want to share about the pilot so or what happens next that you want to share?



# Appendix D

## Final Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out a bit about how your understanding of social pedagogy has developed during this pilot project and how you have used what you have learned with the people you support. There are no right or wrong answers. All the information we collect is very important in helping us understand the impact of the pilot and we are very grateful for your help with this. If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the pilot feel free to contact Sheila Cooper or Autumn Roesch-Marsh.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you completed this questionnaire: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. How knowledgeable do you currently feel about Social Pedagogy? (Please circle one)**

Not Knowledgeable about	Somewhat Knowledgeable about	Knowledgeable about	Very Knowledgeable about
1	2	3	4

**2. How do you use social pedagogy to support the people you work with?**

3. Is this different to how you used to practice? *(Please circle below)*

Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very Different
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4. If different, how is this different from what you used to do before you undertook the social pedagogy training?

5. Since the training, which social pedagogical theories and/or concepts have you used the most in your practice?  
*(Please give an example of how you have used each of these in practice)*

**6. Has the social pedagogy pilot project developed your practice in the way you hoped it would? (Please explain)**

**7. What do you think the impact of the social pedagogy pilot has been on the people you work with?**

**8. What do you think the impact of the social pedagogy pilot has been on the community as a whole?**

9. Please rate how success you feel the pilot has been at developing these social pedagogical values and areas of practice.

Promoting wellbeing, learning and growth	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing relationships	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing equality	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing the self as a practitioner and person	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing good communication	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing teams and communities	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing the everyday	1 Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful
Valuing practical activities	Not successful	2 Somewhat successful	3 Successful	4 Very successful

10. Please comment on your response:



# Appendix E

## Interview Questions

### **First Interview**

1. What is your current role?
2. What is your understanding of social pedagogy?
3. What will be your role in developing social pedagogy?
4. What are the key principles and values underpinning current practice?
5. How do new staff learn about the practice at Blair Drummond/Tiphereth?
6. How would you describe the culture within Blair Drummond/Tiphereth?
7. What do you think are the potential benefits of having staff trained in social pedagogy?
8. How do you think social pedagogy might differ from what you do now?
9. How would you like practice to develop?
10. What, if any concerns do you have in relation to the pilot/training?
11. What suggestions could you make about how to obtain the views of the general community in relation to the pilot/training?

### **Second Interview**

1. Can you describe how you felt about your work before the training and how you feel about it now?
2. Can you describe how social pedagogy looks in practice?
3. Can you describe any changes you have seen in the people you work [service users] with since the training?
4. What, if any, difference has the SP training made to your practice?
  - a. If you have changed, what was it about the course that made you change?
5. Can you describe a piece of work where you have used SP to good effect?
6. What impact do you think the training and pilot has had on other people in the community [colleagues, volunteers, family, etc.]?
7. What, if anything, do you think that people would notice that was different about your practice now that you have completed the training?
8. How do you see your role in embedding SP in the future?
9. Is there anything else you would like to say about the pilot and SP?

# Case Studies

## Sarah

Sarah trained as a teacher before joining Camphill 11 years ago.

“For me it is the best job I have ever had. You are not bound by curriculum so you can work with what you think is best for that person and develop them in a way that is at their own pace.”

In the workshop, Sarah works with adults who have quite complex needs and she has found that the concept of non-violent communication from the Social Pedagogy course is helpful in her work with staff members and service users. As an example, Sarah discusses how to minimise risk by using different strategies:

“They may have a tummy ache and then they are going to kick off so it is about finding a quiet place together. If Lindsay\* is spiralling into a “high”, then I say let us breathe together. You can sort yourself out. I think it is marvellous.”

The benefits of Social Pedagogy are that “you cannot necessarily teach someone something, but you can set up a situation where it is impossible not to learn.” Sarah also sees the advantages of having a common language, which is accessible.

“Social Pedagogy crosses all sorts of different barriers. It is in a language that most people will understand or at least through example, can understand.”

To further develop Social Pedagogical practice, Sarah has found it helpful to:

- Being aware of the possibility for potential and some of the factors that may hinder the development of potential.

“Potential is a huge thing. When you reflect on it, you quite often see the potential in someone else and you get angry because that person is not fulfilling that potential. We don’t remember that potential is hampered by things like motivation or self-confidence. There are all sorts of things that it has to balance with before it works.”

- Ensure that the person is in their comfort zone and respect their wishes.

“Daniel\* is a person in his own right. Sometimes when he comes, he does not want to work with anybody. At other times he will come and brush his cheek against my cheek. That is huge!”

- Break down the activity into smaller steps and recognising the need for personal space.

“Sometimes he will do a stitched rug. Initially we started tearing pieces of fabric without getting too close to his personal space. You can start by making eye contact and start to make communication at their level. You can make the piece smaller so that you are physically closer and then get on to an activity.”

# Case Studies

## William

William worked for 6 years in the field of adults with a learning disability before joining Camphill as a workshop leader. This role differs from previous experience in that it is community based and involves doing communal work together with service users. William feels meaningful shared activity at Camphill makes a real difference in the relationships between staff and service users.

“You can see it in people when they come here. They seem happy and motivated to be here.”

When asked to describe what Social Pedagogy looked like in practice, William commented that:

“It is quite an organic thing. It is unpressured, flexible, considered and reflective. Social Pedagogy is allowing things to grow in their own way as much as possible and if it takes longer, then it takes longer. You let the person develop naturally, conscious of when to guide and when to step in.”

William has applied many of the principles from the course in his work with members. Examples include his work with a service user Sam\*, using the Common Third to design a bench.

“We have sat down and come to a consensus about how to put it together because he comes up with lots of crazy ideas so we have to negotiate what is possible. It has been really positive; every week he has been asking when are we going to do the bench?”

For the future, William would like to see Social Pedagogy further embedded within the organisation.

“I guess for it to work, it needs to be recognised in a wider context and that will make it worth investing in, changing our language and the way we think about what we are doing.”

To further develop Social Pedagogical practice, William has found it helpful to:

- Keep a regular reflective diary identifying the aims of his work
- Use theories to think through problems and identify possible solutions
- Identify outcomes and chart the steps towards achieving these
- Create more time for the team to identify desired outcomes, plan their activities and encourage reflection about the theories which might be helpful in achieving these outcomes.
- Use theories, such as the Learning Zone, encourage staff and service users to step out of their Comfort Zone and try new things.

# Case Studies

## Julie

Julie joined Camphill two years ago with a wealth of experience in the care sector, as well as having run her own business for ten years. She loved the Social Pedagogy course and is keen to extend her knowledge by doing the degree course. For Julie, the crux of Social Pedagogy is the concept of “Head, Heart and Hands”,

“Looking at the whole person and you are looking at growth and providing an environment where people can learn rather than teaching. It is about working alongside and working with people and sharing your own life space.”

Julie has used some of the concepts from the course in her work with Michael\* to engage him in activities that will stretch his “comfort zone”.

“On the face of it, you might not see Michael as someone who is able to learn. But with the Social Pedagogy theories, it is about trying to promote growth. I think it is about expecting that people can participate in some way and that something will develop from it, not being so focused on what the result has to be. When I was doing the painting with Michael, we were having fun. I don’t know what his understanding was, but he was smiling, his eyes were bright.”

Prior to the course, Julie felt she would have spent less time trying to engage with Michael.

“I think Social Pedagogy has made me more pleased with what happened, even if we did not have something tangible to show at the end. The fact that Michael was able to sit down at the same table, I could see that as more of a development than I would have before.”

To further develop Social Pedagogical practice, Julie has found it helpful to:

- Be aware that small changes can have an impact on development: “Social Pedagogy made you see the smaller things and look at smaller changes, smaller goals and breaking it down more. I think it is also about allowing people to have their own space and time. I think it has changed my attitude in that I value the process more and the end result is immaterial and if it happens then it is a bonus.”
- Disseminate learning through practical and visual means. For example, Julie used the concept of Head, Heart and Hands in the pottery workshop. By making ceramic objects to represent each aspect, she was able to teach members and staff about the importance and thinking behind the theory.
- Put relationship building at the forefront of practice: “We are building a relationship and that is every bit as valuable as teaching someone how to rag-rug. If you are looking at outcomes for people with learning difficulties, then that is what you want. It could be the basics like someone being able to go to the toilet, but actually it is more important that the person finds a place in the world and their relationships and how they relate to other people.”



# Case Studies

## Caroline

Caroline has worked at Camphill for 6 years and previously worked in a specialist unit for people with dementia. She describes coming to Camphill as

“really the best move I have ever done. I love my job.”

The Social Pedagogy course has had a major impact on Caroline at both a personal and professional level. She feels that family and colleagues have noticed a difference in her demeanour in that she is more calm. She feels she now provides more

“opportunities [for members] to do things without me taking over.”

The key feature of Social Pedagogy for Caroline is about “using every aspects of life as an opportunity to learn and develop.” Reflection and observation are also viewed as essential parts of social pedagogical practice. In the description of her work with John\*, Caroline uses reflection on an incident which occurred when she tried to introduce a board maker to John in an effort to aid communication. When John became physically aggressive, Caroline was able to reflect that the timing of introducing something too quickly was not good. When asked how she would have approached the situation before the training, Caroline replied that:

“I probably wouldn’t have accepted that my introduction of the board maker caused these issues. I wouldn’t even have thought about building relationships. I would to a certain level, but I wouldn’t have understood as much.”

Caroline believes that Social Pedagogy is beginning to be embedded within the community. She gives examples of colleagues who have not done the training, yet are able to apply some of the concepts into their practice. At workshop leaders meetings there is now a dedicated slot for Social Pedagogy where participants take one of the core theories and discuss it with the group.

To further develop Social Pedagogical practice, Caroline has found it helpful to:

- Have space for reflection at the end of each workshop to give members of the group an opportunity to talk about the session.

