

# WOMEN 0>ER 50 FILM FESTIVAL

## Moving Pictures Impact and Learning Report: 2022/23

**March 2023**

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# Executive Summary

1. Moving Pictures, led by the Women Over 50 Film Festival (WOFFF), brings cinema to elder-care home residents in the UK through a programme of short films and creative activities. Older people watch films in small groups and participate in creative activities and conversations around the films' themes, helping them to feel more connected to others and less isolated.
2. Over 12 months in 2022, there were 32 Moving Picture events: 13 care home events, 16 community events, and 3 Ageism Awareness workshops. These events reached 538 participants: 103 care home residents and 24 care home staff, 266 community members and 28 community venue staff and volunteers, and 117 workshop participants. This was achieved through a funding package of £17,403; a unit/event cost of c. £544.
3. WOFFF undertook a small-scale evaluation of Moving Pictures to explore and better understand the impact of Moving Pictures and what can be learnt as the team develop the project for care and community partners across the UK.
4. 75% of Moving Pictures participants said they felt more confident about watching, talking about and/or writing about short films after taking part in Moving Picture events. 64% of participants said that Moving Pictures made them think differently about older women in film. And 80% of participants said Moving Pictures provided them with a worthwhile cultural experience.
5. Enjoyment and connection are significant outcomes for older people. Moving Pictures also helps to strengthen bonds and relationships between care home staff and older people leading to better and more personalised care.
6. Observation of Moving Pictures shows that older people enjoy watching, discussing and responding to films in small groups together. They participate in sometimes small but meaningful acts that they might not ordinarily do or experience (e.g. writing or drawing about their thoughts and experiences, sharing with others). Film is a starting point for them to express themselves and share with others. They reflect, reminisce, imagine and share ideas - and they might support others to do the same.
7. The films' themes act as a prompt for deep and meaningful conversations about shared experiences and topics, from friendships to social and intergenerational change, menopause, and living a life of purpose.
8. Older people enjoy taking part in chair-based exercises, dance and movement activities in response to the films led by Kabecca Films in partnership with WOFFF.

9. Residential care home staff and community centre staff report feeling more connected to older people in their care settings, leading to deeper and more meaningful relationships and in turn, better support, care and quality of life.
10. The flexibility of how the films can be shown and shared, as well as the diversity of films on offer are key factors in the success of Moving Pictures. The fluidity of the sessions - moving from screenings to conversation - is another important factor.
11. WOFFF has adapted its sessions to suit Care Homes. *“Our message became ‘Play one film or play 11. It’s entirely up to you and your residents how you use this DVD. It can be as flexible as you want it to be.’” ~ Nuala O’Sullivan, Director of Moving Pictures*
12. Moving Pictures has helped WOFFF validate and tailor their project to deaf audiences. Instead of asking deaf audiences once a year to come to the annual Women Over 50 Film Festival, now WOFFF has a model of engaging deaf audiences more regularly, in a shorter time frame of three months. The project work has also helped WOFFF establish and strengthen relationships with core deaf-supporting partners, Sign for All.
13. WOFFF is now developing partnerships with care homes and community settings to bring film and conversation to more older people – around the UK, as well as on partnership development in London, the South East.

*“Most activities in a care home typically focus on one thing: you’re either going to watch a film or you’re going to do some artwork. This activity combined a lot of different senses and skills, and it wasn’t prescriptive in any way. The residents immediately got to respond to it through art or prose, and I found that to be incredible, actually. It was their artwork, their contribution, and sometimes from residents who have been in the home for up to 18 years but had never engaged in this way or written a paragraph before. The project has worked incredibly well for my setting, and I’d love to see other care homes and other audiences engage in this way. A film festival isn’t just for a certain type of person or a certain age group. It’s for everyone really, and we’ve shown that.”*

**Averil Pooten-Watan,  
Manager of Grove  
Residential in  
Walthamstow**

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# 1. Introduction

Moving Pictures, led by the Women Over 50 Film Festival (WOFFF), brings cinema to elder-care home residents in the UK through a programme of short films and creative activities. Older people watch films in small groups and participate in creative activities and conversations around the films' themes, helping them to feel more connected to others and less isolated.

In 2022/23, funding from Foundation for Future London, Waltham Forest Make it Happen and Barbican has helped WOFFF build links with new care homes and residential settings in East London and Glasgow, reaching a total of 538 participants through 32 Moving Picture Events. This was achieved through a funding package of £17,403; a unit/event cost of c. £544. This period of development for the festival has seen WOFFF develop and build on partnerships with Kabecca Films, who co-host Moving Pictures in care homes and lead chair-based movement activities in response to one of the films; Sign for All who co-host Moving Pictures and provide BSL-support and BSL-signing in community venues in Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest; and The New Black Film Collective, who support the project with outreach communications and by screening WOFFF short films at their events with older Black audiences, also in Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest,

Connection and a sense of belonging are significant outcomes for older people. The project also helps to strengthen bonds

and relationships between care home staff and older people leading to better and more personalised care. WOFFF has been working with an external evaluator during 2022 and 2023 to explore and better understand the impact of Moving Pictures and what can be learnt as the team develops its services and activities for care and community partners across the UK. A small-scale evaluation project evaluation was co-ordinated through the following activities:

- Conversations with WOFFF's founder and Moving Picture's director, Nuala O'Sullivan
- Desk review of WOFFF's existing reports and information
- Data entry and analysis of WOFFF's Moving Picture paper surveys collected from older people and care home settings from November 2021 to June 2022
- Qualitative interviews and story collection with a small sample of participating care and community partners, exploring the 'Most Significant Changes' for older people and partners
- Analysis and triangulation of key themes
- The evaluation has also helped WOFFF embed evaluation tools into project work, including story collection and qualitative discussion guides

This report summarises the key findings and messages from this evaluation activity.

## 2. Project reach and participation

### Total participation

Over 12 months in 2022, there were 32 Moving Picture events: 13 care home events, 16 community events, and 3 Ageism Awareness workshops.

These events reached 538 participants: 103 care home residents and 24 care home staff, 266 community members, 28 community venue staff and volunteers, and 117 workshop participants.

Moving Pictures Partners	Events	Participants	Staff and volunteers
Care Homes	13	103	24
Community	16	266	28
Ageism Awareness Workshops	3	117	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>52</b>

This was achieved through a funding package of £17,403.

### Survey Data: November 2021 to June 2022

In response to the pandemic, DVDs containing 11 WOFFF short films with interactive writing and drawing activities were delivered to 6 sites, reaching 176 people across London and Glasgow between November 2021 and June 2022. Feedback forms were received from 15 organisers and 75 older people.

- 176 people watched the films, of which 93% discussed the films, and 77% responded to the films
- 27% had attended a WOFFF event previously
- 89% of participants said they would recommend Moving Pictures to a friend, indicating high levels of enjoyment and satisfaction.

### Demographics

Most older people (30%) were aged between 71 and 80. Four in five (82%) identified as women. All respondents self-described as heterosexual. The majority (64%) did not consider themselves disabled, while nearly one third (30%) considered themselves D/deaf or hard of hearing.

One in five (15%) considered themselves to be from a disadvantaged background. The majority (54%) of participants were White (British or Other), followed by 10% Black Caribbean, 9% Mixed / Multiple Ethnicity and 4% Black British. Overall, 39% of participants came from a Black, Asian or other minority background.

### Impact

- 93% of organisers noticed a positive change in people's attitude, behaviour or emotional state, with most organisers citing connection as a key outcome, followed by the conversations.

*“Everyone understood the themes of connection running throughout and bonded over sharing memories evoked by the films.” ~ **Organiser, Golden Lane Community Centre, City of London***

*“Both residents had previously watched ‘Older Than What?’ short film. They were very open during this film about sexuality. Both have very accepting opinions about sexuality in society and loving people of the same sex. Lovely points raised included memories about war - both sad and positive. Thinking about how we are physically made up and not having much of a choice in who we love.” ~ **Catherine Heath, Manager of Forest View Care Home, Walthamstow***

- 4 in 5 (82%) older people agreed that Moving Pictures provided a worthwhile creative experience
- 77% agreed the event introduced them to different types of film
- 66% agreed that it made them feel more confident discussing and writing about short films
- 65% agreed that Moving Pictures made them feel differently about older women in film.

### **Learning**

- When asked what could be improved, 31% of organisers suggested adjusting activity sheets, as participants struggled due to memory / cognitive problems. Others (15%) asked to keep the DVDs for later use and a further 15% requested ‘improve accessibility’ in the tasks.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation Data for Foundation for Future London: June 2022 to October 2022.**

WOFFF successfully secured a project grant from Foundation for Future London to extend its work with care and community settings in East London during 2022.

### **Participation**

- 319 older people (aged over 50) in Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest engaged directly with Moving Pictures and a further 150 indirectly (though conversations with family, friends, care staff about Moving Pictures)
- People took part in 15 Moving Pictures events in 14 venues - in care homes and community venues (libraries, community centres, places of worship) - across the four east London boroughs of the project.

### **Impact**

- 75% of Moving Pictures participants said they felt more confident about watching, talking about and/or writing about short films after taking part in Moving Picture events
- 64% of participants said that Moving Pictures made them think differently about older women in film
- 80% of participants said Moving Pictures provided them with a worthwhile cultural experience.

## Diversity of experience

Participant survey feedback shows:

- 74% of Moving Pictures participants were over 50
- 52% of participants were between 71 – 80
- 81% identified as women
- 32% were Black, Asian or another ethnic minority
- 85% self-described as heterosexual
- 13% considered themselves to be from a disadvantaged background.

In a recent collection of 92 surveys from older people participating in 20 events across April to December 2022:

- Almost a third (32%, 30 respondents) described themselves as D/deaf or hard of hearing.

Analysis of additional feedback forms is ongoing.

27 artists/creative practitioners were involved in the delivery of project and 2 new creative commissions were created. 7 freelancers/entrepreneurs were supported to develop their work through the project. A self-assessed skills survey also shows that organisers feel Moving Pictures positively contributes to a wide range of skills in older people: creativity, problem-solving, adaptability, analysis, and independence.





### 3. What do the stories tell us about the impact of Moving Pictures?

The qualitative conversations with care home and community venue staff show that Moving Pictures is positively contributing to a wide range of benefits and outcomes for older people, summarised below:

- Older people enjoy watching, discussing and responding to films in small groups
- Older people participate in sometimes simple but meaningful acts of creativity that they might not ordinarily do or experience (e.g. writing or drawing about their thoughts and experiences, sharing with others)
- Older people feel connected to others (and less isolated). We acknowledge that "wellbeing" can be challenging to measure and would benefit from further evaluation but it is clear that connection as a key NHS step to wellbeing comes about through Moving Pictures
- Older people express their creativity: they reflect, reminisce, imagine and share ideas - and they might support others to do the same.
- Awareness of older women's lived experience
- Deeper and more meaningful relationships between staff and older people.

#### **Observations and conversations reveal small but significant changes and outcomes for older people.**

The team met a 92-year-old man who had been a care home resident for three years. He hadn't written more than one word in any of the care home's art activities. But, after watching a Moving Pictures short film, *Bronwyn goes Dancing*, he wrote a paragraph about a character's "madness", about how she "didn't go mad in the end".

From the care home staff, the team learned that as a boy he used to wet the bed and had been committed to a "mental asylum" at a young age because of it. He spent almost his whole life in an institution. He wasn't "mad". He was misunderstood. Staff at the care home said this was the first time they'd been aware of him saying or writing anything about this experience. That he wrote about his experience after watching a Moving Pictures short film was an unexpected, transformational and moving experience for everyone involved.

Averil Pooten-Watan, Residential Care Home Manager, Grove Residential Home made the following observation about two older people interacting in one of her Moving Picture sessions: "Both residents were engaging more with each other. They didn't communicate verbally but were interacting by sitting close together

and sharing coloured pencils." The WOFFF team reflected: "This feedback highlights something many of us may not have noticed if we'd be in the room – the sharing of pencils – but that Averil, the care home manager, noticed and highlighted as important and significant."

## **Older people connect and share with each other**

Friendships and relationships are formed and strengthened by watching and discussing films and through shared experiences. The films allow the residents to connect with their memories and share them in a group setting. The activities engage many of the senses and give the residents a starting point to explore and discuss themes, feelings, and memories that are important to them.

One organiser said that the best part of Moving Pictures was *"bringing people together, shared experience, strengthening connections, stimulating conversations, a new experience, and bringing art and culture straight to the community. Some beautiful and poignant conversations were had between women of really different ages about menstruation, menopause, friendship, freedom, responsibilities, duty, what it means to be a woman, and the experience of getting older."*

*"And that sums up the kind of feedback that we get. Film touches people and brings up memories and emotions. It's a way of getting to talk about something."*

~ **Nuala, Moving Pictures director**

*"I suppose thinking about the film screenings, that's helped to deepen relationships and stimulate conversation. It's also offered some really lovely opportunities for conversation between the different participants of our project [an intergenerational community connection project]. I was quite struck by some of the younger people in the room, the young parents who were really welling up and kind of getting quite emotional [as the group explored themes and topics such as the menopause, social change, and living a life on purpose]."*

~ **Fiona McAllister, All Ages Coordinator, Round Chapel Old School Rooms, Hackney**

## **Self-expression**

The film and movement activities allow residents to express themselves and share their opinions. They reflect, reminisce, imagine and share ideas - and might support others to do the same. The sessions and activities are fun and interactive, encouraging residents to think in ways they might not usually.

*"[It was a] lovely starting point that residents could kind of run with. Lots of residents have really clear memories of the past and they were able to share those in the group in an authentic way."*

~ **Catherine, care home manager**

## Moving more

Older people enjoy participating in chair-based exercises, dance and movement activities in response to the films as this video shows:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/ClrDujVNjbK/>

This is an at-seat movement response to one of the films, Lay Me Low, and its theme of water and rivers. In the activity, care home residents and the WOFFF team created their own river with a large piece of blue cloth which they all held together and waved up and down. It might seem as if the residents aren't participating very much but Averil, the care home manager, wrote in her feedback, *"The residents engaged fully with the blue blanket by simply holding onto the blanket."* Sometimes what may look like a very small piece of writing, drawing or participation in a creative activity in an elder care residential home can actually be a huge achievement or show incredible engagement when care home staff, who know these residents so well, comment on it.

Catherine also reflects: *"It's not something you do every day, you know, you, you, sort of taking a movement and taking a sound or a short clip and then putting it into a movement. It doesn't come naturally to a lot of people, but it was a real success because again, it was slightly different."*

## Engaging all of the senses and helping people to be present and mindful

Catherine at Forest View Care Home shares about the difference Moving Pictures has made to some residents who are more auditory-focussed.

*"It's not always just the visual, you know, we have one lady who's got vision problems, so for her, all she was engaging with was the music, but the whole time she's playing the piano, she can hear the piano moving and she's swaying, so she's taking out from that what she can. It engages all of the senses."*

## Increased awareness of older women's lived experience

The themes of the films act as a prompt for deep and meaningful conversations about shared experiences.

*"The films really stimulated some wonderful conversations ranging from friendship, menstruation, period cycles, the menopause, grief, what it means to have purpose in life, what it means to be a woman and to get older. I found it very moving to be part of these conversations happening in the room."* ~ **Fiona**  
**community venue co-ordinator**

*"The conversation [we had at our session] was just absolutely, yeah, it was absolutely gold. It was this exchange of experiences, of talking about people's menstrual cycles and, you know, different generations and perceptions and societal change. It was just remarkable."* ~ **Fiona**

"We're quite female dominant within our care home at the minute and so anything to do with sort of empowering the older generation of women, I was all for. [The Film topics were] really juicy and they created kind of conversation in a really natural organic way rather than me walking into a room and saying, 'hey should we talk about sexuality?'"

~ **Catherine, care home manager**

## **Deeper relationships between staff and older people**

Residential care home staff and community centre staff feel more connected to older people in their care settings, leading to deeper and more meaningful relationships and better support, care and quality of life.

Relationships in care homes are important for providing good care and meaningful end-of-life care for the resident.

*From a different perspective, I've also been able to assess my staff's person-centred skills through this project. I've had them feed back to me how engaged they've been with the residents too. My staff have been able to find another activity with the residents that's meaningful, and they've been able to see the difference in the residents. So I've had my staff say, "Wow, I never knew so-and-so has got such great penmanship! Look at how much he's written!" Because they too have not seen this side of the residents. So it's really deepened connections. It's been a win-win, and all in a holistic way. ~ **Averil, care home manager***

*"There is one resident who springs to mind. I always got on well with her. She's a lady who has full capacity but as she would say herself she dips in and out of memories but is actually deemed to have full capacity. We now talk about family and children and past things that have upset us. So our relationship has been brought on by the interaction we had through Moving Pictures. Once that relationship develops and strengthens then you can I guess really support residents like her even in an even more in-depth way than you might have been able to in the past. Just because someone comes into a care facility because they need help with their day-to-day life, doesn't mean that they become a number. And if you don't have meaningful relationships then the care isn't good."*

~ **Catherine, care home manager**

## **Additional themes and observations from Moving Pictures at Round Chapel:**

Fiona has shared with the team how Moving Pictures contributed to a sense of belonging and connection in the community, and complemented Round Chapel's wider intergenerational community programme. The richness of the conversations and connections were among the most significant observations and changes.

*"I felt like the discussion element was just really heart-warming and quite moving, particularly second time round. For women, for older women to see themselves represented on screen, I think*

was really powerful. It's also offered some really lovely opportunities for conversation between different participants of the project. "People don't have to interact with each other if they don't want to, if that doesn't feel comfortable. Over time it feels like this gentle approach has been really impactful." ~ **Fiona, community venue co-ordinator**

- People attending the second session had warmed up to the idea of the program
- There was a good diversity of films, including one about menopause
- A member of the community was featured in one of the films, and another contributed a performance piece
- People have spoken fondly of the films and screenings, and Fiona has reached out to Nuala to explore a follow up
- The screening sessions deepened relationships, stimulated conversation, and helped people form friendships outside the community project.
- The themes of the films acted as a prompt for interesting conversations.
- "Having a sense of community and kind of feeling a bit anchored in a
- It would be great to meet some of the people behind the films
- "It would be really fun to have shared, you know, like one or two of the shorter films with people across the project and perhaps also some of the people who couldn't make it."



## 4. Project learning and reflections

**The flexibility of how the films can be shown and shared**, as well as the diversity of films on offer are key factors behind Moving Pictures success. Residents and older people enjoy a wide range and variety of films and creative activities. This creates an offer that can be adapted by the care homes to suit different needs and resident interests.

*"There was a great variety of genres in the WOFFF films that the residents wouldn't normally engage with, and this enabled them to have access to something different. There was some 'heavy' content but this didn't affect them in a negative way. It was also quite flexible. So we didn't have to watch all the films in one go, or at a set time. I could just pop the DVD on and stop it when we needed to: we could tailor it to how the mood was in the room. Watching a film, responding, creating – or not, if they didn't want to – there was no pressure around it. It was a different meaningful type of activity, and there was nobody who didn't respond."*  
~ **Averil, care home manager**

**The fluidity of the sessions** moving from screenings to conversation is another important factor.

*"It was fluid and it wasn't a kind of, you need to have this done by this set time, which doesn't always work in a care setting."* ~ **Catherine, care home manager**

**WOFFF have adapted their sessions to suit Care Homes.** Originally WOFFF planned for all 11 films on the DVD to be watched

in one sitting of 75 mins. However, through early conversations, they discovered that care homes preferred to screen 2 or 3 films and then do some creative activities, taking about 45 minutes, the amount of time most care homes spend on a creative arts session. Now WOFFF highlights to care homes that the DVD is theirs to use in the best way of them.

*"Our message became 'Play one film or play 11. It's entirely up to you and your residents how you use this DVD. It can be as flexible as you want it to be.'" ~ Nuala, Moving Pictures director*

**Moving Pictures has helped WOFFF validate and tailor their project idea to deaf audiences.**

*"One brilliant thing that funding allowed was for me to take a step back and think about how WOFFF could engage with deaf people more effectively. We know from Hearing Loss UK that 40% of people over 50 are living with hearing loss, and those numbers increase to 70% for over 70s. So, with partners Sign for All, we hosted four events where we worked on building an audience of older deaf people for Moving Pictures by bringing films to deaf audiences."* ~ **Nuala, Moving Pictures director**

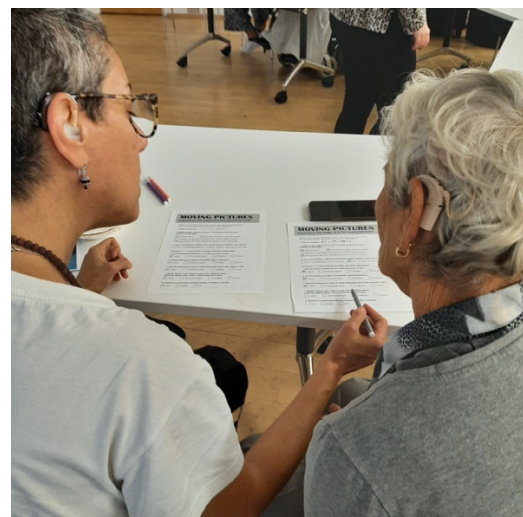
Instead of asking older deaf audiences once a year to come to the WOFFF annual film festival, now WOFFF has a model of engaging deaf audiences more regularly in a shorter time frame of three months. Nuala reflects:

*“We worked closely with Sign for All to connect with their east London followers and service users. We demonstrated that Moving Pictures was reliable; that it showed a varied programme of interesting, engaging work; that WOFFF provided subtitled films and all our events were BSL-signed. Through this, we built up an audience, from one person at our first event to 11 people at our third event. And when only one person come to our event, we used it as an opportunity to learn much more about how our films and creative activities were landing with her, and how she thought they would work or not work with other older deaf people. We discovered that one emotionally complex film needed more than ‘just’ subtitles and closed captions. As a result, WOFFF commissioned Sign for All to add an in-film interpretation of the film, Lay Me Low, which our next deaf audience said added greatly to their understanding of it.”*

**The project work has also helped WOFFF establish and strengthen relationships** with core partners Kabecca Films, who reflect on their partnership and collaboration with WOFFF:

*“We have never had the pleasure of delivering work so local to where Rebecca lives before and it meant a lot to us to be able to positively connect with and impact people in the neighbourhood. Having an organisation like WOFFF build the local connections and organise the sessions was and continues to be really helpful to the small, part-time set-up we have. We were thrilled that the funding enabled us to*

*bring together the different skills both organisations have to create an activity that has both a physical and mental wellbeing positive impact. This project was Rebecca's first experience delivering work in care homes which created opportunity for a practical experience of skill-sharing and development within the core team of Kabecca Films. Thank you for helping WOFFF make this important work happen.”*



## 5. Future development of Moving Pictures

WOFFF is building on the success of its Moving Pictures project and developing partnerships with care homes and community settings to bring film and conversation to more older people – with a short-to-medium focus on partnership development in East London and the South East.

*Care homes and older people are with us and will be with us more and for longer, and I don't think Moving Pictures has even touched the sides of where it could go and what its potential is. I would like to see it continue around the whole of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and further afield. As a first step, it makes sense to expand further in East London because that's where we are; and we also have very good connections in the South East. There are also a few other key places – Manchester, Liverpool, Norwich and around Bristol – where we have solid connections via cinemas, so we've picked those areas as places where we could work over the next three years to see if this is a project that could roll out further.*

**~ Nuala, Moving Pictures director**

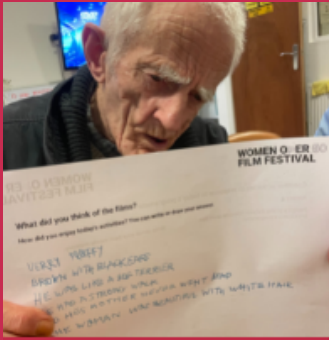
As Moving Pictures expands, WOFFF plans to embed ongoing evaluation and listening into their activity to continue exploring their activities' impact and how they can be developed and improved to meet the needs of care homes,

community settings, and older people themselves

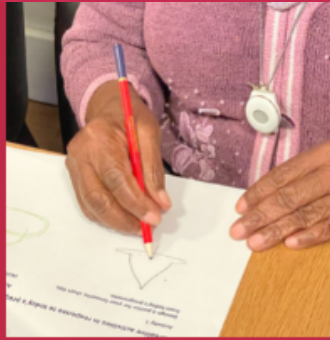
### Suggested evaluation methods:

- Recording participation, duration of participation, and particularly repeat participation as an indicator of enjoyment/success
- Observation and feedback from Care Home and Community Staff
- Story interviews with a small sample of Care Home and Community Staff and listening to the 'Most Significant Changes' for older people and staff
- Observing and listening out for the NHS Five Steps to Wellbeing during the sessions and in the stories/feedback: connect with other people; be physically active; learn new skills; give to others; pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)
- Building in evaluative research questions organically into the post-film discussions themselves: what did the films make you think differently about?
- Where appropriate, documenting sessions and key moments through photography and film
- Collecting a sample of stories from older people who are happy to share about their experiences of Moving Pictures.





Porcelain



The Witch and the Baby



Magickland



Granny: No Problem like Maria



Film stills from Moving Pictures films and elder participants and their creative responses to the films

## Acknowledgements

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