

Community fund application – community assessment

June 2019

Grant requested: £2,500



Cottsway
Community Fund

Name of applicant	Human Story Theatre
Web site address	www.humantheatre.com

Name of your project	Happy Even After
Why are you applying for the grant? (in no more than 50 words)	'Happy Even After' is a drama about Domestic Abuse appearing in 11 communities as a pilot (including Witney, Eynsham and Charlbury) with accompanying Q&A with experts & some people with lived experience. The grant will go towards the outreach part of our programme & funding 1 local show.
How much will your total project cost?	£31,765
How much have you raised so far?	£26,900
How much are you applying for from Cottsway?	£2,500
Have you received a grant from Cottsway in the past?	Yes - we received £1,500 for our project about alcoholism: DRY on 5 th January 2018.

Please indicate the funding aims your project will meet:

Yes	Services and activities for young people and/or older people.
Yes	Services and activities that address rural issues and tackle rural exclusion and social isolation.
	Services and activities that will benefit the environment.
	Services and activities that help prevent debt, provide financial advice and reduce poverty.
	Services and activities that contribute towards getting people online and reduce digital exclusion.
Yes	Services and activities that contribute to an inclusive and active community.

Please tell us how your project meets the funding aims

Human Story Theatre only tour plays, researched from local people's 'human stories' on health and social care issues affecting our communities today. Each issue is explored in one-hour dramas with accompanying Q&A's with experts and people with lived experience of the issue so that our audiences of targeted non-theatre going public can access information in an entertaining and supportive way.

In intimate community settings people are encouraged to share their own experience of the issues themselves and can be signposted to local services. Individuals and the community at large can then take responsibility for these issues and also better support each other, therefore becoming less isolated.

With Happy Even After we hope to get the audience questioning their own power imbalances in all relationships, and particularly to be vigilant about the safety of neighbours and friends whose relationships may have become abusive. Alongside the show and Q&A's we will be recruiting Domestic Abuse champions with the help of one of our partners: Reduce the Risk, these champions will be trained to spot and offer support to those affected by domestic abuse amongst their own communities.

Our other partners include A2Dominion Housing and Oxfordshire County Council Domestic Abuse Services, Clean Slate, Thames Valley Police and the Samaritans who all work to help individuals and communities become safer and they will all form part of our Q&A panels.

We will be running three workshops in local schools about healthy relationships as part of our outreach programme for this project and hope to encourage many local young people to attend the shows. We aim to make our theatre accessible to all immersing our work in the local community with 'pay what you can' ticketing policy.

What activities will the project offer?

The play is currently being researched through dialogue with the aforementioned agencies and people with lived experience of Domestic Abuse locally in Oxfordshire so they feel they are being given a voice for their formerly hidden stories.

As well as the 'hidden harms' of Domestic Abuse the script will contain safety tips and strategies for people at risk in this way, this information will be supplemented by discreet dissemination of advice and telephone numbers on such freebies as lipsticks being trialled to convey this information and information in the venues toilets.

The show programme will contain useful contact telephone numbers and a simple graphic detailing the cycle of abuse. The speakers will be on hand after the Q&A's to talk to individuals more discreetly and they will be encouraging people to volunteer as Domestic Abuse Champions and to spread the word of the existence of this support network.

The play will be about two couples of differing ages to represent the increasing problem of older frail people becoming victims of physical abuse and the younger couple will portray the ever-increasing incidence of coercive control.

The content will amplify safe messages given by the experts. The tour has 11 confirmed dates and venues including Witney library as libraries are being deemed safe spaces for people to go and receive health and wellbeing advice, and Eynsham and Charlbury Village Halls.

We will be siting 3 workshops in local settings prior to the performances. We will be working with DA professionals to design these workshops and A2Dominion Housing outreach team have agreed to co-deliver these. The aim of the workshops is to further highlight safe relationships and services available to support victims of DA.

How has the community and/or Cottswoy residents been consulted in this proposal?

Cottswoy residents specifically have not been interviewed for this project but local people who have been victims of domestic abuse have supplied their stories for inclusion in the script.

All of Human Story Theatre's projects are informed by local 'human stories' and we test these out at an informal reading of the script to targeted audiences and to individuals whom have contributed.

As a company we are very guided by what are the pressing issues for our particular communities and try to respond to these accordingly by amplifying important health and social care messages through our dramas and outreach work.

How will you ensure promotion to Cottswoy residents?

If Cottswoy are interested we are very happy to site one of our 'healthy relationships' workshops in one of your community settings prior to the show being held locally to encourage residents to attend.

We will have flyers and online publicity available for all Cottswoy residents and will deliver these on request to Witney sites. We will be using our usual marketing channels including local press and BBC Radio Oxford to reach our West Oxfordshire communities.