



## **Dead & Buried: Engaging young people with death and natural burial.**

This project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC's) Cultural Engagement fund.

The AHRC's Cultural Engagement Fund offers funding to strengthen or develop a university's broader strategy for supporting the engagement of its arts and humanities academic staff with local creative sector organisations.

Dr Hannah Rumble from the University of Bath's Centre for Death and Society, an expert on the natural burial movement, and Charlotte Chapman from Kumiko Community Arts collaborated on this project with the aim of getting young people to respond to natural burial and the wider issue of death and dying.

The aim of *Dead & Buried* was to target young people identified as NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) to engage with an arts-based project that explored issues related to death and natural burial. The young people met on a weekly basis from the beginning of February 2013 at The Park Local Opportunity Centre to attend creative workshops. These creative workshops took place with the support of Ben Carpenter at Youth Moves in Knowle West and explored the young people's responses to two natural burial site visits in Bristol: Memorial Woodlands near Thornbury and South Bristol cemetery and crematorium. During the project the young people were introduced to people who had recent experience of bereavement, funeral professionals and artists who explore the subject of death. Some of these people were kind enough to attend the weekly sessions as guest speakers, so the young people could ask questions and explore the theme of death and natural burial further.

The young peoples' artistic process was developed over 7 weeks in creative workshops and recorded in journals. Their final pieces were developed individually, all choosing to work in different materials. All the journals and final pieces have been their own work and show very revealing personal thoughts and views on the subject matter. Together with the exhibition, the project has been captured in a short film made by film maker Gary Thomas. Each young person has gained Arts Award Explore for their involvement and completion in this project.

The work you see here demonstrates that young people are very capable in engaging in a subject that is often seen as taboo and questions why we don't engage them more.

For further information on *Dead & Buried* go to [www.deadandburied.org](http://www.deadandburied.org)

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