

# Associated services

## CoolTan Arts

CoolTan Arts believes mental wellbeing is enhanced by the power of creativity. CoolTan Arts exists to inspire the wellbeing and creative participation of a diverse range of people through the production of quality art and is a charity run by and for people with mental distress,

“CoolTan Arts is creative, very inspiring and very friendly; people who work together to better the community and health issues, which are very important to the environment, a worth kind cause.”

### Our activities

CoolTan Arts is a diverse and animated arts centre in Southwark’s Walworth Road, near Elephant & Castle, from which we run a varied programme of activities. Through quality arts education with professional outcomes, Largactyl Shuffle walks, community advocacy, self advocacy training and volunteering programmes, CoolTan Arts empowers participants in their own lives and helps break down the stigma associated with mental distress.



### Workshops by referral and self-referral

Arts workshops for people with mental health-related needs, including visual arts, sculpture, drawing, poetry, batik, web design and video editing.



“I feel safe here and I feel the benefits of coming here and being allowed to be creative. I began as a participant and now run a workshop. I never would have had the confidence to do that!”

“CoolTan Arts helps me a lot with meeting people learning new skills. I’ve gained confidence and skills and have been enjoying the Art and Batik sessions.”

We accept referrals. You could also use a personal budget or direct payment, or you may be eligible for funding, so please contact us on [referrals@cooltanarts.org.uk](mailto:referrals@cooltanarts.org.uk) or 0207 7012696 to find out more about our referral process.

We have several free-/ low cost workshops open to the whole community, including meditation yoga, movement therapy, theatre, and food for mood workshops.

### Largactyl Shuffle

One of CoolTan Arts’ most ambitious projects is the Largactyl Shuffle, a fun guided cultural walk for mental and physical wellbeing, using art, humour and history, destigmatising mental distress. The Largactyl Shuffle was named after an anti-psychotic drug that can have extreme physical side effects including a distinctive shambolic gait.

The Largactyl Shuffles are led, organised and managed by volunteers and participants offering them meaningful opportunities to be part of the wider community and de-stigmatising mental health through hidden history.



### Self-Advocacy Skills Training

CoolTan Arts has increased its portfolio of activities and launched a ground-breaking self-advocacy skills training programme, funded by Comic Relief. This unique Self-Advocacy Skills Training is aimed at building confidence and interpersonal skills, increasing knowledge and awareness of rights and entitlements, and empowering people with shared experiences of discrimination.

This self-advocacy skills training has been proven hugely popular and successful. CoolTan Arts is looking to develop a similar training aimed at carers that takes into account carers' specific needs and challenges.

### Community Advocacy Group

We have a community advocacy group - monthly meetings open to everyone with an interest in advocacy or community involvement. A chance to discuss the issues that affect people experiencing mental distress, and make your voice heard.

"I felt very welcome at CoolTan Arts. Participants and staff make an effort to make you feel welcome. It's a very supportive environment and you don't feel awkwardness when you just join in and you are new. They make you feel you belong to a community."

### Volunteering Programmes

Volunteers do a wonderful job and CoolTan couldn't exist without the work they do. Volunteering at CoolTan Arts can help you gain confidence and new skills, get some work experience, make new friends. Surveys show that volunteering can make people 50% happier, so why not improve your own well being by helping out at CoolTan. Other benefits of helping at CoolTan include access to our events, an opportunity to sign up for trips to exhibitions, and social events.

### How CoolTan Arts operate

CoolTan Arts uses social enterprise principles to become more financially sustainable, hires its workshops and tutors to third parties, sells artwork, cards and merchandise.

We take referrals, people with direct payments or personal budgets. We are keen to hear from you to share best practice, put together conferences, have art exhibitions, show films, and work in partnership.

Upcoming events and workshops open to the local community:

- 15th January 2011: Largactyl Shuffle walk – Get fit for the New Year. Start 12noon at Maudsley Hospital
- 19th February 2011: Largactyl Shuffle walk – Celebration of LGBT History Month. Start 12noon, meeting point TBC
- 9th March 2011: International Women's Day Conference at CoolTan Arts. Time TBC
- 19th March 2011: Largactyl Shuffle walk – Celebration of International Women's day. Start 12noon meeting point to be confirmed, meeting point TBC

Open Day in Jan or Feb - date TBC

Community advocacy meetings every third Tuesday of the month 3pm-4.30pm



To find out more about CoolTan Arts, or to discuss how we could help meet your needs, please contact us on [info@cooltanarts.org.uk](mailto:info@cooltanarts.org.uk) or call 02077012696 and check our website [www.cooltanarts.org.uk](http://www.cooltanarts.org.uk) or facebook page [www.facebook.com/cooltanarts](http://www.facebook.com/cooltanarts) for more details and up-to-date information.