



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

A photograph of two women in a library. One woman, with dark hair and a green polka-dot dress, is smiling and pointing towards the camera. The other woman, with blonde hair and a white shirt, is also smiling. They are standing in front of bookshelves filled with books.

HUMAN
STORY
THEATRE

Connie's Colander Tour Pack

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Human Story Theatre was formed in August 2016 and registered as a charity (CIO) in June 2017. Co-founders, Amy Enticknap and Gaye Poole, are both passionate about exploring health and social care issues through the medium of theatre and raising awareness of important issues that affect communities everywhere.

The plays can 'pop-up' in any designated space with minimal set, giving a 'shared light shared space' experience. Where possible they operate a 'pay what you can' policy, thus importantly aiming to be accessible to all, bringing new experiences into local community centres, libraries and theatres.

Harnessing the power of theatre to convey important messages through new writing about real issues faced by the health and social care sectors today, Human Story Theatre partners with local community groups, health and social care professionals, charities and organisations working to support those affected by these very issues. Members of these groups lead [post-show Q&As](#) with the aim of signposting the audience to relevant resources within their local services.

Human Story Theatre not only informs their audiences, it encourages people to share experiences and to play an active part in the discussions and debate surrounding the issues faced. An important by-product is the resultant understanding between individuals within communities affected by the themes, the further strengthening of relationships and the promotion of individual responsibility regarding the particular issues.

Human Story Theatre has established a strong portfolio of partnerships since it was created and has a strong track record of reaching new audiences. Thus far they have created more dementia aware communities with [Connie's Colander](#), recruited volunteers for organisations that support lonely and isolated people with [Flat 73](#), spread breast-checking messages with [The Fourth Dog](#) and encouraged audiences to interrogate their own drinking habits in [DRY](#).

A photograph showing a group of women in a community setting. On the left, a woman in a green apron is cooking at a table with various kitchen items like a large mixing bowl and a laptop. On the right, a group of women are seated in rows, facing left, appearing to listen to a presentation or a speaker who is not visible in the frame.

We work to unite and inform
communities through the
medium of theatre

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Connie's Colander, by Gaye Poole, is a two hander about a mother and daughter's journey through dementia. Connie is a retired domestic science teacher. Emily, her daughter, is enjoying hosting her first TV cookery show, Connie's Colander, bringing her mother's recipes onscreen and up to date. Sensitively, with humour and tenderness this newly written play traces the evolving relationship throughout their lives, and the impact of Connie's Alzheimer's. Can their relationship, and the TV show, survive?

Gaye Poole:

"I wrote Connie from my experiences of doing reminiscence drama in nursing homes and day centres and seeing more people with dementia and being fascinated with each individual's journey through this fog. [...] My experiences as a nurse come into play often when I remember being the helpless bystander to patients' and their families' exposure to suffering, both mental and physical. All this is so frequently behind closed doors. It is so important that we open up these issues and theatre does this."

We offer a stripped back, 'shared light shared space' intimate performance that can pop-up in any space. We prefer to perform on 'the floor' with the audience, so we can be as up-close and personal as possible, to give the audience the feeling of being in the kitchen with Connie and Emily. 'Get in' time is minimum as we have no lighting and a sparse set.

We seek partners from the locality that we tour to and these contacts then help to form the foundation of our new audiences. Every show is accompanied by a Q&A with specialists relevant to the themes explored in the play. An informal atmosphere is created for the Q&A, facilitated by the two actors, with local dementia specialists able to signpost people to their local services. Building on the story within the play, the audience is also encouraged to share their own experiences, both to 'offload' and also to help support fellow audience members, if appropriate.



"... beautifully crafted, tightly written, intensely poignant and moving exploration of the effect of dementia on a mother and her daughter [...] a short dramatic jewel."

(Daily Info)

"This is a compelling play, excellently acted and tautly directed"

(★★★★ The Oxford Times)

POST-SHOW Q&A

A key feature of Human Story Theatre is that after every show we have a 20 minute Q&A, which we feel is of equal importance to the play itself. An informal atmosphere is created for the Q&A, facilitated by the two actors, with local specialists able to signpost people to their local services. Building on the story within the play, the audience is also encouraged to share their own experiences, both to 'offload' and also to help support fellow audience members, if appropriate.



The Purpose of the Q&A

- To exchange information
- To raise awareness
- To encourage responsibility for own health/social care and for that of the community
- To signpost people to services
- To create a safe environment to share feelings and experiences, where appropriate
- To create an opportunity for reflection and possible change



ABOUT THIS TOUR

This is Human Story Theatre's second national tour of libraries and community venues. Due to demand, after the Arts Council funded a 17 date tour in May 2018, we have doubled our venues and also have a second cast. Aside from practicality, the aim of this being so we can make double the impact with as many shows as possible taking place within Dementia Action Week 20 - 26 May 2019. With this current tour we are building on communities within counties we visited last year and also making new relationships in a couple of additional counties.



THE TWO CASTS



Gaye Poole
CONNIE

Gaye initially trained as a general and psychiatric nurse, but to spare lives she re-trained as an actor at East 15 Drama School and has acted for thirty years. Recent credits include two shows with Crisis members at the Old Fire Station, Oxford, and numerous parts in shows with SatMatCo before writing and acting in shows for Human Story Theatre, which she co-founded. Other plays: *Memory Exchange* for Oxford Concert Party's tours of nursing homes and *6 Women* for UnderConstruction Theatre.



Amy Enticknap
EMILY

Amy trained at The Oxford School of Drama. Her recent theatre work includes: *Collider*, *Distractingly Female* (SatMatCo); *In The Footsteps of The Mitfords* (Scary Little Girls); *Great Expectations* (Cheltenham Everyman); *The House of Bernarda Alba & The Yellow Wallpaper* (Red Dog). She has recorded numerous childrens audiobooks including: *Winnie The Witch & Poppy Pym* series. As co-founder and producer of Human Story Theatre she has also performed in *The Fourth Dog* and *Flat 73*.



Maggie Saunders
CONNIE

Maggie is an actor, voice over artist, improviser and workshop leader. She was a regular on both *Brookside* and *Coronation Street* and her most recent film work has been on *Cross*, an award winning short. Maggie's recent theatre work has been new plays at Oxford Playhouse and Southwark Playhouse. She also devises and runs drama workshops using forum theatre and storytelling for teenagers to prepare them for job, university and college interviews and encourage their interpersonal skills.



Anna Tolputt
EMILY

Anna trained as an actress at Webber Douglas Academy and studied Theatre Directing at the St Petersburg Academy of Dramatic Art. As an actress she has played roles at the National Theatre, West End, Derby Playhouse, Nottingham Playhouse, Northampton Royal and Derngate, Minack Theatre, Finborough and Polka Theatre as well as touring nationally and internationally with Chipping Norton Theatre, English Touring Opera, TNT and Tour de Force Theatre Companies.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU PLEASE

For The Show

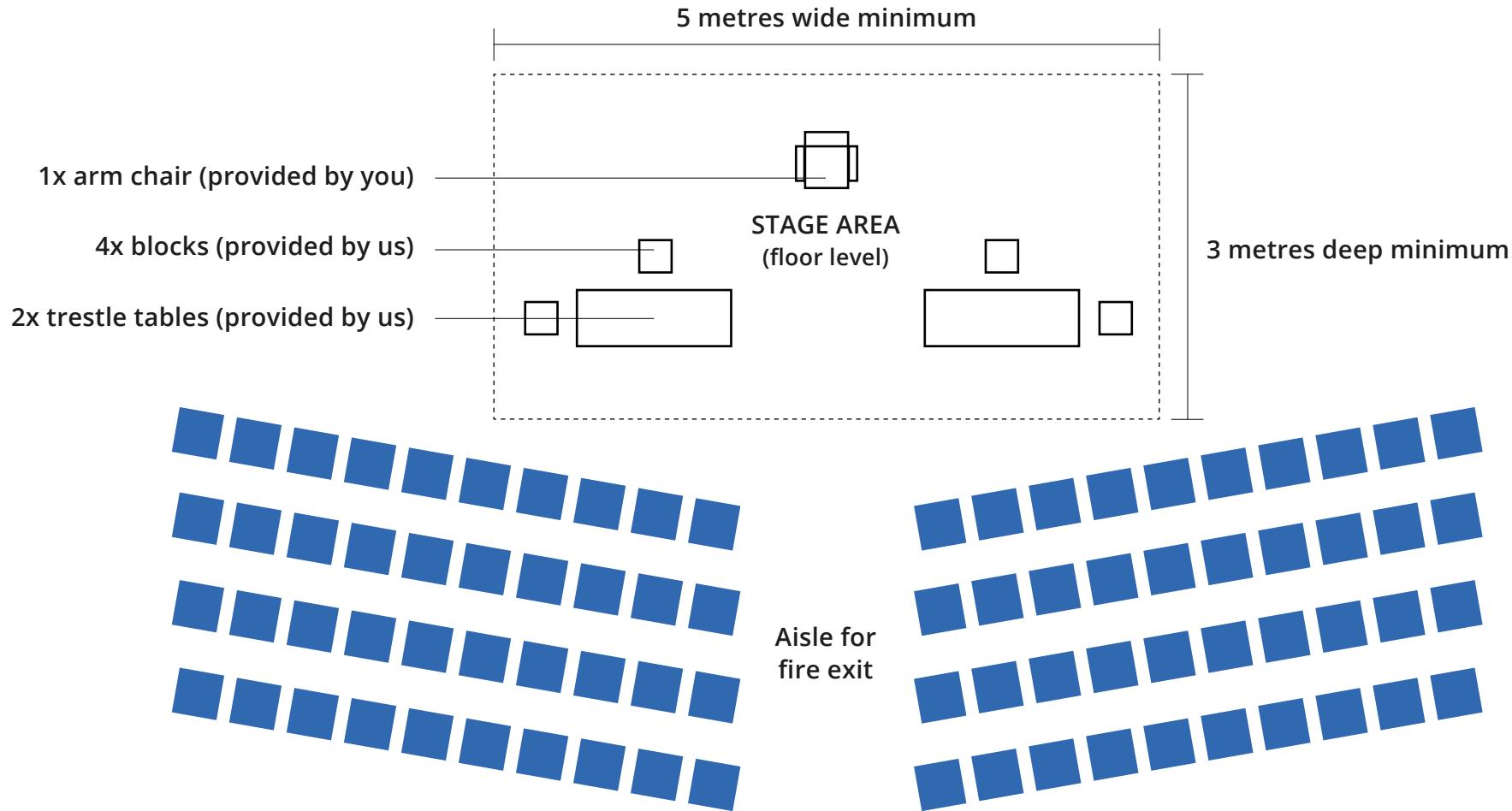
- A table for our programmes which we will be selling
- A couple of tables for our guest speakers to put their organisation's literature on display and room for their roller banners
- Somewhere to get changed and wait before the show begins - a 'green room' of sorts. Actors appreciate some 'quiet time' 15 minutes before a show just to gather their thoughts and focus on the performance
- Somewhere to fill up our prop gin and tonic bottles with water
- We are often asked about refreshments: you're more than welcome to serve refreshments for the audience before and/or after the performance
- 10 minutes before the show is due to start, or before you invite the audience in, the actor playing Connie will need to sit in her chair on stage in character
- Someone to alert the actor playing Emily it's time to begin the show



For The Show (cont.)

- A minimum performance 'stage' area of 5 metres wide by 3 metres deep
- We prefer to perform on 'the floor' with the audience, so we are as up close and personal as possible. Enabling us to give the audience the feeling of being 'in the kitchen' with Connie and Emily
- We 'pop-up' and perform in natural light (no stage lighting) with a minimal set (two of our trestle tables, 4 blocks & a bag of props)
- To borrow an arm chair if possible (normal chair will do) to use for the show
- Although we have been granted funding by the Arts Council, that was on the proviso we generate a certain amount of ticket income. We understand libraries and community organisations need to offer free events, therefore we usually manage this by providing Human Story Theatre 'pay what you can' envelopes which we put on the audience chairs. We are a registered charity (CIO)
- Space for one or two Human Story Theatre roller banners
- We will provide a performance log book and would really appreciate a member of staff recording some information on the day: number of audience, rough demographic etc.

Our Ideal Room Layout





WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU PLEASE

Marketing

- Print off copies of our show poster (inserting your venue details etc.) and distribute to your networks
- Help with online marketing of the show e.g. social media and community newsletters etc.
- Let us know of any contacts/relationships you have with local press

Marketing

Company / Credit	Human Story Theatre presents
Show title	Connie's Colander by Gaye Poole
Long copy (150 words)	<p>Connie is a retired domestic science teacher. Emily, her daughter, is enjoying hosting her first TV cookery show, Connie's Colander, bringing her mother's recipes onscreen and up to date. Sensitively, with humour and tenderness, this newly written play traces the evolving relationship throughout their lives and the impact of Connie's Alzheimer's. Can their relationship, and the TV show, survive?</p> <p>Running time 50 minutes. Plus 20 minute post-show Q&A with a dementia specialist.</p> <p>Pop-up, stripped back, no frills intimate theatre.</p> <p>An informal atmosphere is created for the Q&A, facilitated by the two actors, with local dementia specialists able to signpost people to their local services. Building on the story within the play, the audience is also encouraged to share their own experiences, both to 'offload' and also to help support fellow audience members, if appropriate.</p> <p>"This is a compelling play, excellently acted and tautly directed" (****The Oxford Times)</p>
Medium copy (100 words)	<p>Connie is a retired domestic science teacher. Emily, her daughter, is enjoying hosting her first TV cookery show, Connie's Colander, bringing her mother's recipes onscreen and up to date. Sensitively, with humour and tenderness, this newly written play traces the evolving relationship throughout their lives and the impact of Connie's Alzheimer's. Can their relationship, and the TV show, survive?</p> <p>Running time 50 minutes plus 20 minute Q&A with information and stories of living well with dementia from specialists. Pop-up, stripped back intimate theatre, the audience are in the kitchen too.</p>

Marketing

Short copy (50 words)	A 50 minute two-hander drama intertwining mother and daughter's journey with dementia. Pop-up, stripped back intimate theatre, the audience are in the kitchen too. Crammed with all emotions, even lots of laughs. Plus 20 minute Q&A with information and stories of living well with dementia from specialists.
Photography credit	A4 poster image - Judie Waldmann Cast in library image - Mike Kwasniak
Age suitability & why	10+ Not suitable for people with dementia as it may be upsetting

ONLINE MARKETING

We have a 60 second promo video showing a performance of Connie's Colander in a library, which we will use as the basis of a Facebook advert targeting the geographical areas of our tour.

We have a website which is updated regularly and our online presence through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram is strong. We also have a newsletter which goes out to over 600 people.

We will set up a Facebook event for every show and ask you to be a co-host to help promote it and further our reach.

We will link our daily tweets and posts to larger dementia and Alzheimer's organisations, libraries, county councils etc. using appropriate hashtags.

Timeline

We would like to highlight **DAW (Dementia Action Week) 20 - 26 May 2019**

We will be posting content / news about our tour on social media forums 5 times a week, so please keep an eye out and share with your followers, Thank you!

Messaging - Phrases to use on Social Media

- Arts Council funded tour coming to a library near you
- By popular demand Connie's Colander returns to your community
- Connie's Colander is back!
- "This is a compelling play, excellently acted and tautly directed" (4* The Oxford Times)
- A touching and humorous insight into dementia
- An informative Q&A after every show
- Stay for the post-show Q&A and discover local services available for you

Components

Website (for full tour details): humanstorytheatre.com

Facebook: @HumanStoryTheatre

Instagram: @HumanStoryTheatre

#conniescolander #livingwellwithdementia #humanstorytheatre #libraries #ontour #touring #theatre
#newwriting #realissues #popup #nofrills #dementia #alzheimers

Twitter: @HumanStoryOx

#ConniesColander #livingwellwithdementia #ArtsHealthWellbeing #DAW2019 #DementiaActionWeek
#culturematters #ACESupported

Twitter handles for wider connections:

@alzheimerssoc @WendyPMitchell @dementiaoxon @_Ally_Bally_Bee @DementiaFriends @YoungDementiaUK
Funders of the tour: @ace_national @ace_southeast @TVLA @drmarionlynch @bucksccgs

Libraries 60 second trailer: <https://youtu.be/tr5lG4s1lw>

More info trailer: <https://youtu.be/lgyJMB6aFo>

Images x3: <https://goo.gl/pNPn1x>

Current national press:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/oct/23/play-dementia-touring-libraries-alzheimers>



PRESS CAMPAIGN

Press Officer

Amy Enticknap
amy@humanstorytheatre.com
07801 938663

Press Release

Please share this with your local press contacts

Download and edit the document with your personal details: <https://goo.gl/mRERdX>

Mail-out Info

Please share this with your local networks

Details of the production, how to book tickets and audience quotes which you can include in your newsletters.

Download and edit the document with your personal details:
<https://goo.gl/8147PB>

Tour Schedule

9 May - 27 June 2019

36 performances across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, West Sussex, Warwickshire, Cambridgeshire.

For full tour information visit <https://humanstorytheatre.com/whats-on/>

Previous Coverage of Connie's Colander

'After the show, in a Q&A with Dr Marion Lynch, a dementia expert who works with HST and deputy medical director for NHS England South, she couldn't praise the company's work enough:

"Connie gives us permission to laugh and cry about our own situation, the roles lost and responsibilities gained when living with dementia, and notice that we are not alone." More of this would lead to "a different view on what it is to grow old and care for those who need our help".'

"The sensitivity in Enticknap and Poole's interpretation of such a well-observed script touches many memories of my own mother's dementia."

"When the play's the thing to help us talk about Alzheimer's. A show touring libraries in the south-east aims to help make people affected by dementia feel they are less alone"

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/oct/23/play-dementia-touring-libraries-alzheimers>

Danny Lee, The Guardian, 23 Oct 2018

"Connie's Colander was a truly memorable, beautifully crafted, tightly written, intensely poignant and moving exploration of the effect of dementia on a mother and her daughter [...] a short dramatic jewel."

Heather Kay, Daily Info, 5 October 2015

"An awful lot of people who are interested or touched by these issues don't feel safe in a theatre, but they do feel comfortable in their local library."

Sue Williamson, Libraries Director at Arts Council England

"Warm and witty, but with a marked piquancy, the play clearly benefits from the writer's experience as a nurse working in a psychiatric hospital, before her career change to theatre."

"This is a compelling play, excellently acted and tautly directed"

Christopher Gray, 4* The Oxford Times, 4th June 2015

https://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk/leisure/theatre/theatre/reviews/13310775.Review_Connie_s_Colander_Old_Fire_Station_Oxford/

Previous Coverage of our other Productions



"Humour, pathos, shock, pain are provoked as you watch the drama unfold. [...] Yet despite the serious nature of the subject matter, it doesn't lecture. I laughed, was close to tears, and at times also deeply uncomfortable."

"A play about alcohol that doesn't lecture."

Alison Graham, 5* The Oxford Times, in print 18th Jan 2018

DRY

By Gaye Poole

"Human Story Theatre's production of DRY was thought-provoking, well executed and certainly leaves its audience with a lasting legacy of thinking about our relationship with alcohol in a new light. As with all Human Story Theatre productions the post show talks are far more than an add on and an integral part of the production. For DRY the post show talk I attended was incredible, the audience fully engaged in the topic sharing their own experiences in a moving and inspiring way."

Lucy Askew, Chief Executive & Producer, Creation Theatre
January 2018

"Much taken with DRY by Gaye Poole, which I caught in the basement of St James's Piccadilly and which offers a salutary warning about the dangers of middle-class alcoholism. Presented by a lively Oxfordshire company [...]"

Michael Billington, Theatre Critic, Twitter May 2018

The Fourth Dog

By Zena Forster



"Witty, entertaining play that doesn't trivialise its serious subject."

<https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/feature/12428/the-fourth-dog#review65758>

Jen Pawsey, Daily Info, 12th July 2017

"While the show is very funny, it also teaches us about family life across the generations, while furthermore dealing with the tricky subject of breast cancer with a great amount of care and pathos."

<https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/feature/12428/the-fourth-dog#review65758>

Sophie Francis, Daily Info, 4th July 2017



Flat 73

By Gaye Poole

Music by ARne Richards

" [...] another brilliant show from this new and very talented troupe."

"With a minimal set, costume and lighting, the company provides accessible performances surrounding issues of health and social care."

"I would urge everyone to keep an eye on this theatre company."

<https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/feature/11571/flat-73#review64994>

Sophie Francis, Daily Info, 10th October 2016

"The staging of this piece was truly impressive, managing to invoke the boxy smallness of an inner-city block of flats on stage using only a few frames, boxes, and important personal items held by each character."

"This drama is thought-provoking, discussion-launching, and certainly for me, donation-worthy."

<https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/feature/11571/flat-73#review64994>

Rosie Bloom, Daily Info, 6th October 2016

TARGET AUDIENCE

Who we think will enjoy this production

- People with an interest in theatre, libraries and wellbeing
- People with an interest in health and dementia
- People with experience of dementia (either personally or because of their work)
- Mothers and daughters
- Not suitable for people with dementia as it may be upsetting





SELLING POINTS

- Breathes life, humanity and even laughs into the topic of dementia
- A two-hander intertwining a mother and daughter's journey
- Pop-up, no frills intimate theatre - the audience are in the kitchen too
- New writing, toured thus far to 2500 people ranging from 12 to 86 years of age across 34 venues
- Now touring nationally to another 36 venues in May/June 2019
- 20 minute Q&A with information and stories of living well with dementia from specialists
- 'Pay what you can' ticketing policy
- Technically adaptable and only 5m by 3m playing space needed
- Supported by Dementia Oxon, Guideposts, Alzheimer's UK

“ WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS SAY

"I've done a lot of 'lay presentations' about dementia. But I have yet to find a format that is better than to have a Q&A after a performance of Connie's Colander. Whether it's social work students, a mixed village hall audience, a packed room full of theatre goers, or even a conference of dementia specialists - the drama is enabling: it enables people to open up, to think in new ways, but above all to put themselves in others' shoes. It's a great vehicle to engage those for whom dementia is a real threat but who find it difficult to make that first step towards seeking help. But, leaving aside this 'function' it's also just great theatre: I cry every time."

**Dr Rupert McShane, Dementia Clinical Network Lead
Oxford Academic Health Science Network**

"Connie gives us permission to laugh and cry about our own situation, the roles lost and responsibilities gained when living with dementia, and notice that we are not alone. More of this would lead to a different view on what it is to grow old and care for those who need our help."

**Dr Marion Lynch, Dementia expert and
Deputy Medical Director for NHS England South**



“ WHAT THE AUDIENCE SAY

"The evening was absolutely brilliant, and as a 'carer' who has just been through this first-hand, I need to tell you that the content and portrayal of this condition is absolutely superb; you capture the ups and downs of the relationship perfectly. I had lots of positive verbal feedback at the door as people were leaving and it looks as though we may also be able to host a dementia support group with Kate, so very good news for our local community."

Allison Thomlinson, Manager of Thame Library, Oxfordshire

"You have certainly started something that is important and fills a need for theatre that challenges and entertains."

**Hannah Cervenka – Arts and Leisure Development
West Oxfordshire District Council**

"What an incredibly clever yet simple play. It portrayed so much more than it said in words, with the passage of time evoked by the TV episodes, and the focus on a loving relationship affected by a condition which rents the strongest of emotional ties to tatters."

Dr. Rachel Starer, GP

"The play was extremely well written and superbly acted. Thank you! I wish I had seen this play three years ago - it would have helped me to understand my father's illness."

High Wycombe Library

"As a carer I was very familiar with the relationship between Connie and her daughter. It was comforting to know that I am doing something right at times, because it often seems as though I am floundering."

Worthing Library

"The human, relational element of dementia – so powerful, and speaks to people so much more than health promotion literature."

Headington Library

"The close presence of the actors makes it seem more personal and confrontational – challenging"

Cippenham Library



humanstorytheatre.com

info@humanstorytheatre.com

01865 776 052

f @HumanStoryTheatre

twitter icon @HumanStoryOx

Instagram icon @HumanStoryTheatre



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Photography by Judie Waldmann & Mike Kwasniak

Registered Charity in England & Wales no. 1173504

