

Arts Well Community Hubs Project July 2024– January 2025

FINAL REPORT

‘I have reduced my anxiety medication by half, I think the sessions are the biggest factor because it gets me out of the house.’

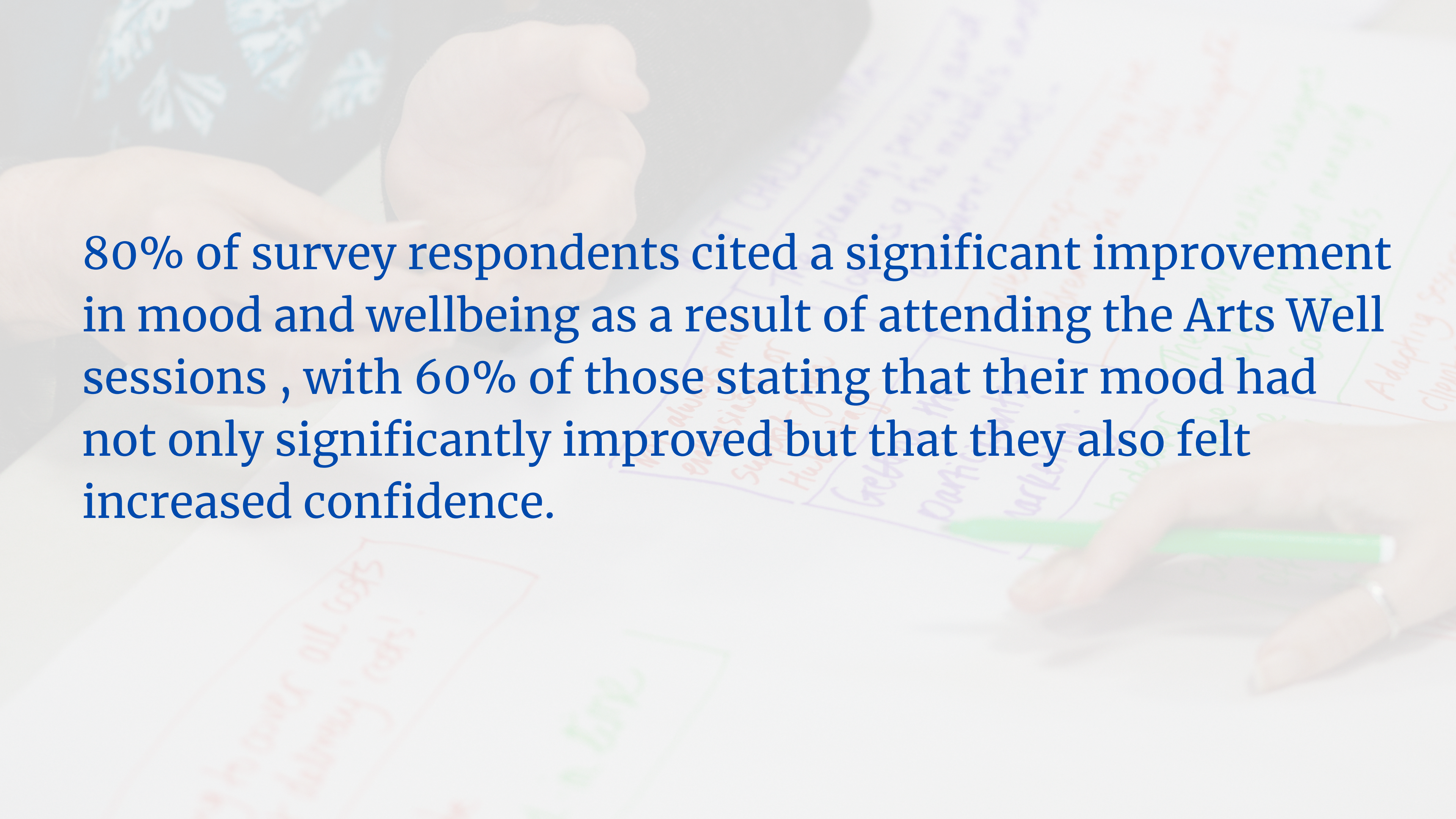
‘I've always loved crafts but my mental health stopped me from doing anything at home. These sessions have gotten me out of my shell and have lifted my spirit and confidence.’



Ceramic work in progress made by Hayle Library group working with Angela Trzaska. Photographs by Angela Trzaska.

‘I've been quite down in the past but this has really helped.’

‘My anxiety and depression has lessened. I look forward to getting up and coming to the sessions.’



80% of survey respondents cited a significant improvement in mood and wellbeing as a result of attending the Arts Well sessions , with 60% of those stating that their mood had not only significantly improved but that they also felt increased confidence.

Background

Arts Well's response to the shift in focus towards the community prevention agenda advocated by the Integrated Care System across Cornwall was to create a proposal for activity delivered directly to those most in need in our communities through the network of Community Hubs across the County. More about Arts Well [here](#).

In late 2023, the funds available through the the Community Levelling Up agenda, in line with Community Area Partnership (CAP) areas, provided an opportunity to work with partner hubs to bid for a grant to run a pilot project across Cornwall.

Arts Well built partnerships with hubs across Cornwall through the community hubs network roadshows and through delivery of training around the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and 8 hub partners were finalised ready to make a bid for funds.

A successful bid of £56,592 was awarded by Levelling Up and Arts Well found match at 10% through Cornwall ICB of £6,288 as well as funding of £25,000 to support core costs through the Cornwall Community Fund which were not covered by Levelling Up.



Families photography group Launceston Library with Kinga and Maciej Kryzysimscy

Programme timeline

Late November 2023 – end January 2024: Expression of interest submitted late November and invited to make a full application end January 2024. Original aim to start delivery Jan/ Feb 2024. Relationships with hubs and development of initial EOI project plan built late autumn 2023 from standing start.

March 2024: bid application submitted (early March) for next available funding panel date
CCF Health Improvement fund awarded at £25,000 to support overhead costs not covered by CLUP fund

June 2024: Funding decision offer letter issued CLUP 04/06/2024. Immediate start on formal recruitment process for all project artists and Project Coordinator. Set up of processes, systems, partnership agreements, project matching and volunteer programme processes and systems.

July 2024: DELIVERY BEGINS

September 2024: Sessions running regularly in most settings

October 2024: VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND START WORKING TO SUPPORT PROJECTS. PROJECT VISITS

January 2025: FINAL PROJECT VISITS AND ALL PROJECTS END BY 31ST JANUARY

February 2025: Project financial end and final claim February 14th
All exit meetings for volunteers. Collect and collate all feedback and photographs, publicity etc

March 2025: Project feedback and evaluation analysis and drafting and sharing of final report

Project aims

The aim of the project has been to run regular creative sessions in 9 community hubs venues across the county with the aim of improving health and wellbeing. For participants, these sessions gave them opportunities to meet and connect with others, learn new skills, build confidence and have fun.

Sessions were designed to support people experiencing mental or physical ill health, as well as other challenges such as isolation. 20 creative practitioners were recruited to deliver these activities and whilst each practitioner had their own locality, where possible the group worked as a team to share ideas, materials and learning and work in partnership.

Impact has also been measured specifically in relation to how sessions have affected mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes and reduced loneliness and isolation. Sessions aimed to address the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and help people to learn new skills as well as impacting on a reduction in use of primary care or other health care services for participants involved. Indicators of community cohesion impact were also measured.

These aspects have been measured through focus group surveys, case studies and feedback from participants as well as volunteers, artists and hubs partners, and are shared in the report.

People were referred by social prescribers or community health and wellbeing workers as well as other services working with the VCSE sector that support the hubs. Community hubs received funding from the [NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly](#) via Volunteer Cornwall. The hub network offers safe and warm places for people to socialise and take part in activities. Here is a [link](#) to a map of all the hubs operating in Cornwall and more information [here](#) on the Volunteer Cornwall website.

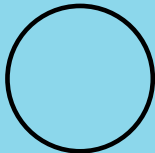


Mosaic bees from Bosavern Farm project with Tough Dough. Photograph by Olivia Beckwith

Community Hubs delivery locations



Indicates commuity hub location



Indicates delivery location for this project



What activities did people do?

- animation
- ceramics
- colour mixing and theory
- textiles, sewing and applique
- felting
- dance
- music
- mural design
- painting
- performance
- singing
- zine making
- mosaic
- wreath making
- printmaking
- photography
- collage
- journal making and writing
- wax resist fabric printing
- natural dyes and oak gall ink painting

‘ The artists include the children in deciding what they will do in the next session which is wonderful because it gives them control over their own learning.’



Ceramic work in progress made by Bosavern Farm participants working with Angela Trzaska. Photograph by Angela Trzaska.

Who benefitted?

The beneficiaries have included a diverse spread of those from the communities of Cornwall :

- Families
- Older people
- Adults and young parents with mental and emotional health needs
- Adults and children with learning difficulties
- Isolated people of all ages.
- Those living in temporary accommodation with multiple complex mental and/or physical health challenges and/or addiction issues
- Young people experiencing complex and multiple challenges
- People with dementia
- Those living with physical disabilities and impairments
- Refugees and immigrants
- People from various diverse ethnic backgrounds
- People identifying as transgender and LGBTQ+ some of whom were isolated and experiencing mental ill health
- People defining themselves as neurodiverse.



Ceramic tiles on permanent display a Bosavern Farm project with Angela Trzaska.. Photograph by Angela Trzaska

‘I have thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, the people and the new skills I have learnt. I wish it was able to continue’.’

Professional Development Programme

A programme of professional development and training was provided for volunteers, lead artists and hubs personnel

- Artist induction training session
- Artist professional development programme including coverage of detailed aspects of the Creative Health Quality Framework training and workshop sessions delivered in partnership with artist facilitators
- Quarterly Arts Well networking events
- World Mental Health Day wellbeing workshop at Royal Cornwall Showground for all
- Rice and Peas Equality Diversity Inclusion training
- Christmas networking event
- Volunteer training programme in the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and creativity
- Celebration event attended by nearly 50 people: hub partners, volunteers, artists participants and their family members



EDI training with Beresford from Rice and Peas for volunteers and artists at our Arts Well offices. Photograph by Olivia Beckwith



Evaluation session for artists with Olivia held in Carmborne. Photograph by Kinga Krzyminscy



Community hubs Matisse themed workshop for volunteers at World Mental Health Day photograph by Olivia Beckwith

Professional Development Programme

Volunteer training

Volunteers and hubs staff team members were trained in how to deliver creative activities focussed on supporting and fostering the 5 ways to Wellbeing through simple and easy to access creative sessions.

Training sessions were held in person at various hub locations across Cornwall including IntoBodmin, The Dracaena Centre, CN4C The Elms and online. Volunteers and hub staff were also invited to join artists on some of the training sessions offered as part of the project: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training, World Mental Health Day workshops, Creative Health Quality Framework Training as well as our quarterly networking sessions.



FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING



Professional Development Programme

Training for artists

All artists delivering on the programme were invited to attend monthly training sessions on the 8 aspects of the newly developed Creative Health Quality Framework.

Training sessions took place online and ran for 2 hours and over 6 months, covered the 8 aspects of the framework in detail. The sessions were focussed around interactive discussion and sharing of challenges and good practice. The focus was on moving towards a high quality approach as creative health professionals which could be taken back to sessions delivered as part of the project.



I use the Creative Health Quality Framework.



Professional Development Programme

Workshops

All artists delivering on the programme were invited to attend monthly workshops delivered by practising creative health colleagues. Sessions included the 8 aspects of the newly developed Creative Health Quality Framework facilitated by the lead artists and Arts Well Development Director. Sessions also focussed on developing new skills and approaches and sharing best practice.

Sessions were also designed to ‘refuel’ those attending and give them time to focus on their own health and wellbeing in order to go back into community delivery refreshed and with new ideas and approaches and focus on high quality delivery for maximum impact on the health and wellbeing of those they are supporting.



Professional Development Programme Network

All artists delivering on the programme were invited to our quarterly networking sessions usually held in Truro at the Hall for Cornwall and Royal Cornwall Museum.

The sessions are an opportunity to keep abreast of regional and national professional practice in the sector through our Director, Jayne Howard who is working at the National Centre for Creative Health. The sessions are also a way for those in the creative health sector to share ideas, and forge relationships and create and join up opportunities to develop and deliver creative health across Cornwall.

Our 12 Ambassadors are also a key part of this network; keeping eyes and ears on the ground in their 12 localities they share and inform Arts Well and those working in the sector on local priorities and opportunities.



Connect Event at Hall for Cornwall

Volunteers

- Recruited from: Falmouth University, Community Hubs partners networks and Volunteer Cornwall
- 2 volunteers went on to paid employment on the programme itself
- Mix of Arts and Creative Sector students and graduates, older retired professionals wanting to offer their skills and give back, including those with high level experience and expertise in health and workshop facilitation
- One volunteer has progressed to paid employment from being unemployed, as a result of the support on the programme
- A BA student volunteering on the programme is now considering a future career in creative health
- Volunteers also reported improvements in their own feelings of isolation and mental ill health as well as improved confidence as a result of volunteering
- A number of volunteers are continuing to volunteer in their partner community hubs and some are also continuing the delivery of creative sessions beyond the project



Volunteer Jules working at Camborne Cluster, All Saints parent and toddler group. Photograph courtesy of group lead artist, Nikki Bovis Coulter

‘I’ve had such a lovely time volunteering and I have developed a much needed boost in confidence for my practice in the future. Creativity is good for you!’

Summary of outputs in numbers

- 6 month delivery window
- 20 incredible artists
- 260 sessions delivered across 9 partner locations in 6 months
- 8 professional development sessions for artists and volunteers
- 5 networking events and 12 additional workshops artists delivering on the project through Arts Well
- 26 volunteers recruited, inducted, placed and mentored (outperforming our target by 130 %)
- Footfall of 4835 outperforming original target of 2,893 by 167%
- 646 estimated individuals reached

Picture of spend

£48,357 invested into hands-on delivery of sessions

£26,578 fees paid to Cornwall based artists to support cultural and creative private sector businesses in Cornwall

£12,956 invested in supporting community hubs

Investment per town

Falmouth £1,508.11

Hayle £2,696.59

St Just £3,068.98

Deviack £3,572.75

Launceston £3,636.60

St Austell £9,420.30

Redruth £ 10,560.44

Camborne £ 13,893.32

Our approach to participant evaluation

60 participants completed detailed final surveys as part of a focus group with support from artists, the Project Manager and volunteers and support was given to make the process relaxed and conversational as well as appropriate for those involved. Opportunities were also given for anonymous feedback to be shared.

The following pages show the content of the feedback and impact that were shared.

Arts Well

Use the Creative Health Quality Framework.



Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Integrated Care System

 Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

 Cornwall Community Foundation

 Funded by UK Government

 COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

 GOOD GROWTH

FEEDBACK SURVEY: SESSION(S) WITH ARTS WELL	
Please tell us the name of the session(s) you attended and location:	
How far did you travel today to attend this workshop in miles?	
How many Arts Well sessions have you attended in total?	
1	How would you rate how much you enjoyed the workshop(s). Please select one of the options below. 1 - I found it hard to participate and did not enjoy myself 2 - I participated a bit 3- I enjoyed being involved 4- I really enjoyed myself and felt very engaged
2	What did you enjoy most about the workshop(s)?

Evaluation outcomes for adult participants of the programme

96% of respondents enjoyed being involved in the workshops, with 85% reporting feeling very engaged and feeling they were prioritising self care

The highest rated enjoyment factor was the art activity/being creative, second to that was meeting/mixing with new people and the friendly and welcoming environment.

People enjoyed being able to challenge themselves whilst learning and developing new skills, the variety of activities on offer, the leading artists' approach, as well as the supportive and encouraging ethos.

What I loved most were:

‘The atmosphere in the room, getting to know new people and the help and encouragement given.’

‘Friendliness, distraction from some bad news I'd just received, and coffee!’

‘This, every week, twice a week please!’



Ceramic work in progress made by Hayle Library group working with Angela Trzaska. Photograph by Angela Trzaska.

Why did you attend?

A third of respondents cited their reason for attending was to meet people and participate in a social group. Just under a third of the reasons given were to be creative.

Almost a quarter of the respondents wanted to attend the sessions as a way to support their mental health and/or reduce loneliness or “to get out of the house”.

Other reasons that participants chose to attend were to participate in an activity specifically with their friends or family; to do something for themselves; it was close to home; and to simply do something different or develop their skills.

A number of respondents answered how they'd heard about the sessions. A few were already attending a group, some were recommended to attend, and others had seen it advertised at The Hub.

‘I've always loved crafts but my mental health stopped me from doing anything at home. These sessions have gotten me out of my shell and have lifted my spirit and confidence.’

Impact on mood and wellbeing

80% of respondents cited a significant improvement in mood and wellbeing, with 60% of those stating that their mood had not only significantly improved but that they also felt increased confidence.

‘My children are very happy and proud of themselves after a session.’

‘Initially a bit apprehensive and didn't want to try new things but with time got more involved and willing to have a go.’

‘Even if I don't feel great coming along on a wet day, I always feel better when I go home.’

‘I can be shy despite outward appearances. It is good for my self-confidence to be accepted in a new community.’

A man with a beard and curly hair, wearing a blue polo shirt with a name tag that says "Ciles" and a colorful patch, is playing an acoustic guitar. He is sitting in a room with other people in the background, some of whom are also playing instruments. The background is slightly blurred, showing a community setting with various items on a table and a person with long blonde hair in the foreground.

‘I was isolating myself and these sessions gave me confidence and sparked my creativity. I made friends in coming outside, I'm always looking forward to the next one, and I haven't looked forward to anything for a long time.’

‘The sessions increased my confidence in communicating in a diverse community.’

‘Always feel better when I leave at the end of the session – love learning new skills and ideas.’

‘New techniques and working to create a joint project we are all proud of.’

What did you get from attending the sessions?

The majority of respondents provided more than one take away from the sessions. The predominant themes that emerged through these responses were:

1. A sense of belonging and connection
2. Enjoyment, support and improved confidence/self-worth
3. Creativity/developing artistic skills

Just under a third of respondents cited meeting new people or making friends as very important. 75% of respondents included 'a sense of belonging', chatting and communication, reduced loneliness, getting out of the house and having something to look forward to or a distraction as key in motivating their attendance.

A further 75% of participants' responses focussed on the supportive, friendly and encouraging environment, having a sense of achievement and pride in creating something to take home and display, as well as investing in time for self. Others noted an increase in confidence and self-worth, enjoyment and happiness and feeling emotionally uplifted and/or relaxed.

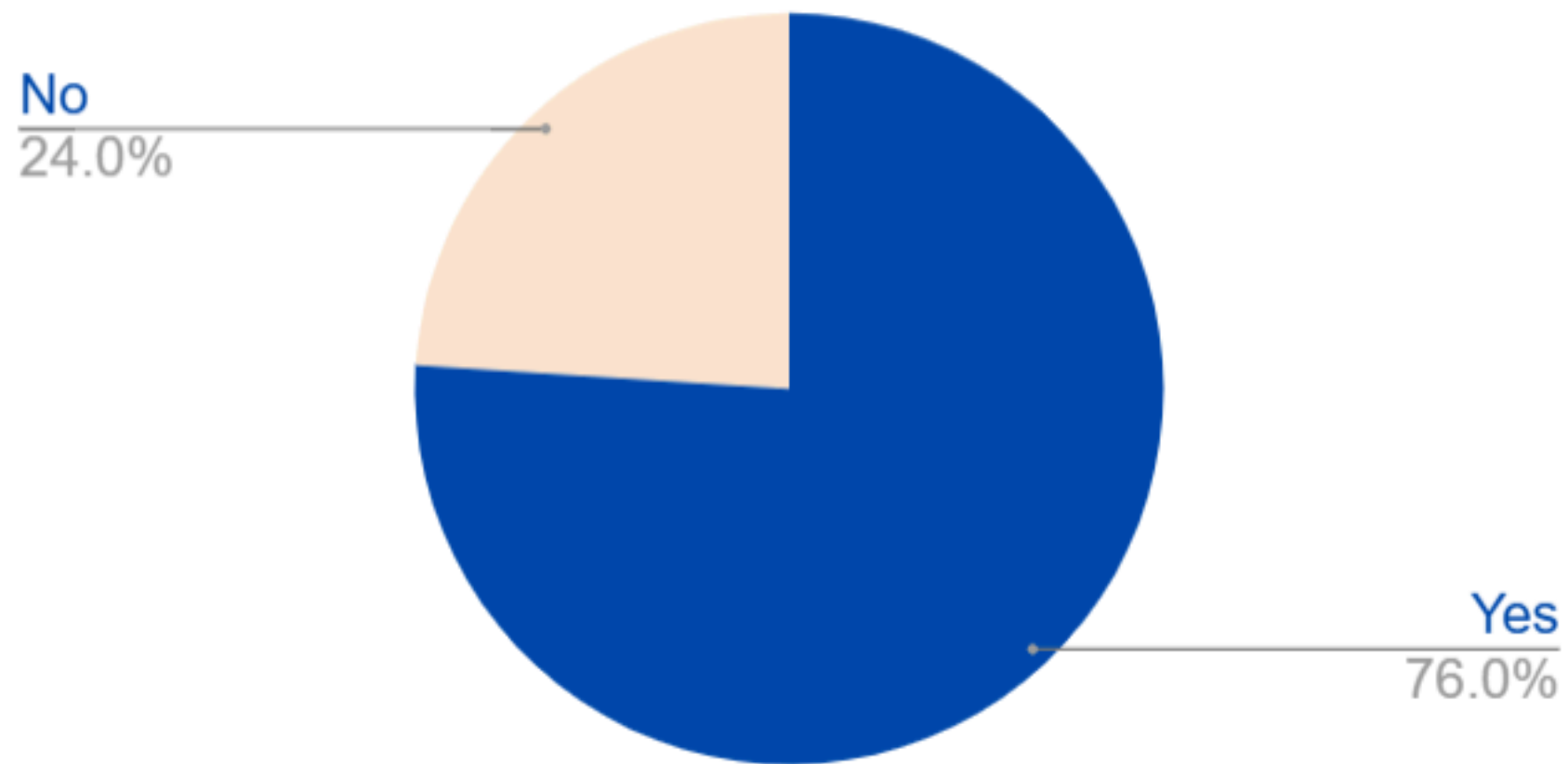


Celebration event; VIVA Group CN4C photograph by Kinga and Maciej Krzyminscy

Over half of respondents said that what they got out of the sessions was learning or improving their artistic skills. They also enjoyed being expressive and creative.

Impact on physical wellbeing

Have you been more physically active as a result of attending the sessions?



‘I walk to The Elms so make more effort to walk everywhere now.’

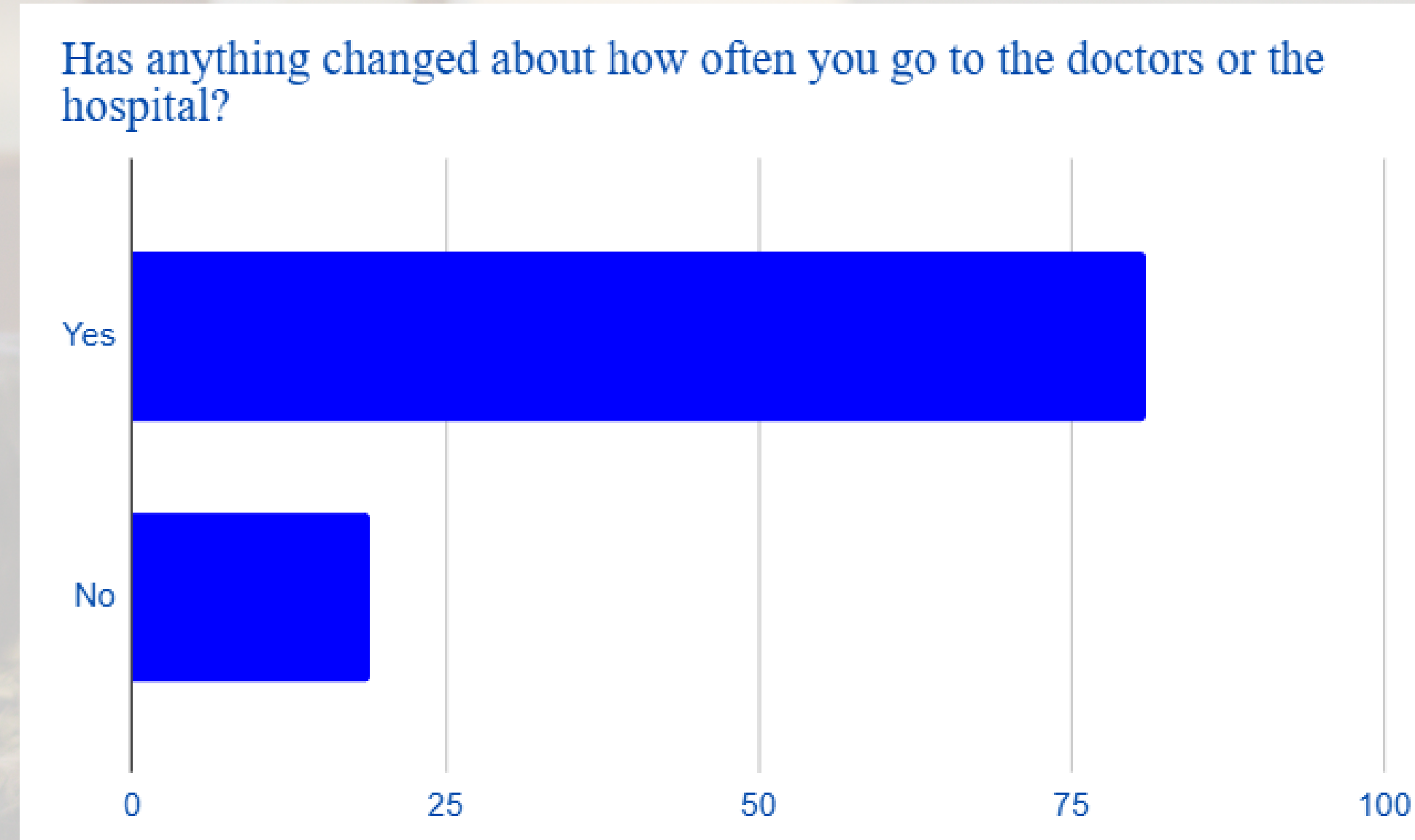
The two main reasons given for being more active were due to walking to the session and feeling empowered/encouraged to walk or do more. Other reasons included meeting up with new friends made through the sessions and having a reason to get out of the house.

‘Getting out and walking to the venue and meeting up with the friends I've made.’
The results above are taken from the 54% who responded to this question.

Impact on accessing NHS services

‘I reduced my anxiety medication by half.
Think the sessions are biggest factor
because it gets me out of the house.’

‘ I go less.’ (to the GP)



36.5% said the question of impact on them accessing NHS services was not applicable

The bar graph above represents the responses in percentages from those who felt they could be clear about whether it had impacted their use of NHS services or not

Impact on access to services in the community

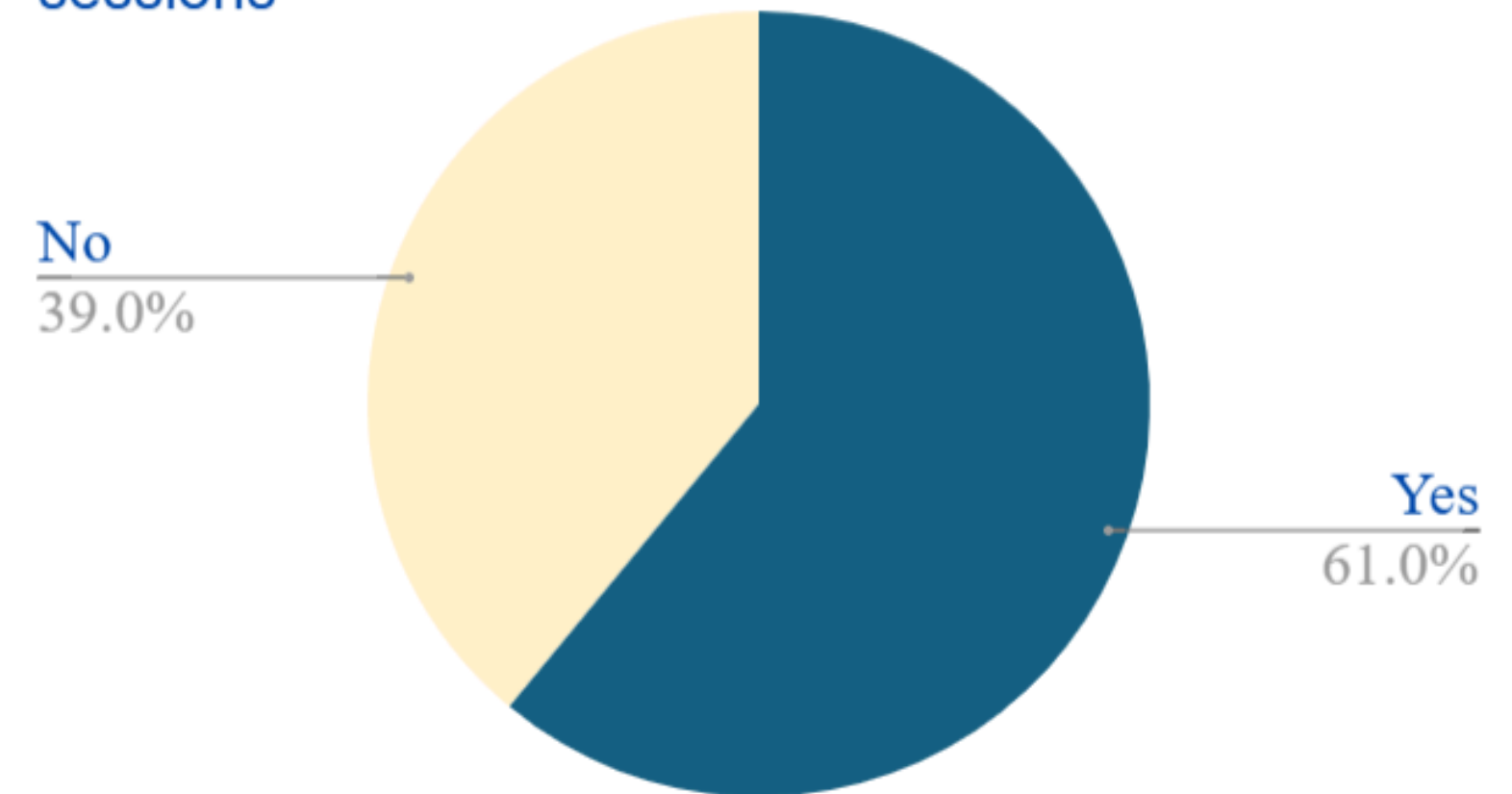
93% of respondents cited feeling an improvement in how they felt about what was on offer in their local area.

‘When you are new to an area it is really difficult to find out what is going on. Through these sessions I learnt about a local choir which I'm going to try.’

‘Yes, it's opened my eyes to things I can get involved in, encouraging me to do something for myself!’

Just over a third of respondents didn't feel the question below applied to them The pie chart represents those who felt the sessions had impacted on these factors

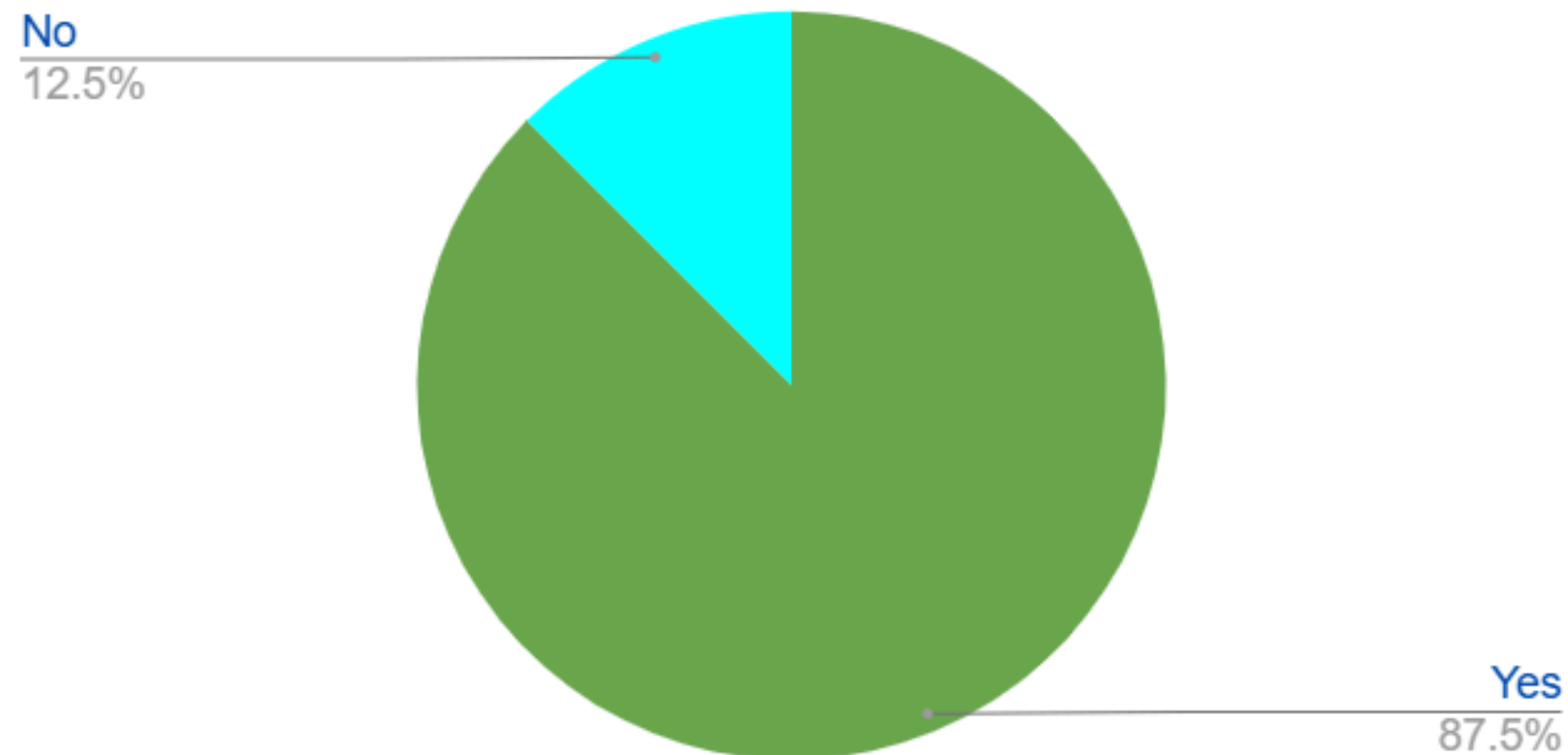
Do you feel you have better access to services/ support or help a result of attending the Arts Well sessions



The types of support or services that were cited included: mental health support, food provision, parenting/family support, training and development opportunities, other group activities, employment support and volunteering opportunities

Impact on feelings of social cohesion

Has engaging in this project made you feel more involved and proud of where you live?



“I am pleased to feel part of a small rural community and work together with my newfound friends”

Respondents' reasons for feeling this way included: having a greater sense of belonging and connection with their community; feeling proud and grateful for what was on offer and the ethos of the projects; the Hubs; the friendships they made; and having greater awareness of what's on offer.

‘I'm proud that this community allows more children access to learning new skills, no matter social status.’

Impact on connecting with others and learning new skills

100% of respondents said that the sessions had helped them to meet new people. 59% of those had made new friends from attending the sessions.

90% of respondents said that the sessions helped them to learn new skills. Almost two thirds of those respondents said that they will continue to develop those skills and attend further creative workshops.

‘It opened things up for me to speak to people I didn't previously speak to. Separate groups have come together, we've chatted more and got to know others better.’

‘I now have a community that feels safe and supportive.’

‘Because all the people's behaviour is really good I feel relaxed and confident.’

‘My children have learned different techniques and look forward to each session. They are even exploring more techniques at home.’

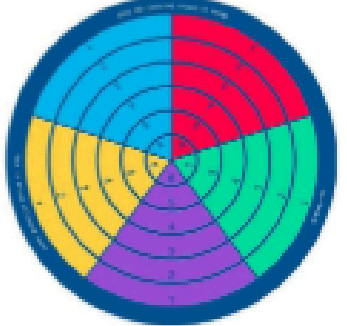


Approach to evaluation for children

Having attended training with Make it Better CIC who developed the wellbeing wheel below, we tested the wheel which is designed as an interactive way for participants to reflect on their experience and provide useful feedback and evaluation data.

We developed the set of questions and children were asked to place counters against scores for each question. The image on the following pages shows the process in action and gives feedback for groups at St Martin and St Meriadoc and Launceston Library as well as showing the survey questions.



	MITBER Ratings 1-6 1= no/ not at all 2= a little bit 3= Quite a lot/ Quite 4= Yes 5= Yes definitely/ very much 6 =A huge amount - life changing/ brilliant/ inspiring!
Blue	How much did you enjoy the workshop(s)? How much did you think you might enjoy the sessions before they started?
Red	Has attending the sessions helped you to meet new people or make new friends? What would your score be at the beginning of the sessions?
Green	How calm, happy and relaxed do you feel after you have attended the sessions? A score of 1 would represent feeling angry or tense, unhappy or unrelaxed. What would your score have been when you began attending?
Purple	Do you feel more active and alert when you are participating in the sessions/ before you attended the sessions?
Yellow	Do you feel that the sessions run by Arts Well have made you feel positive about yourself and what you can achieve? What would have been your score at the beginning of starting the sessions?
Additional Questions	Why did you attend the session(s)?
Verbal and record.	What do you look forward to most about the sessions?
Pebbles	Is there anything that could be improved?
Post it notes	Have you learnt new things from attending the sessions? Tell us more.
Word cloud	What do you enjoy most about coming to the sessions?
	Is there anything else you would like to mention?
	What has been the biggest change for you in attending the sessions?

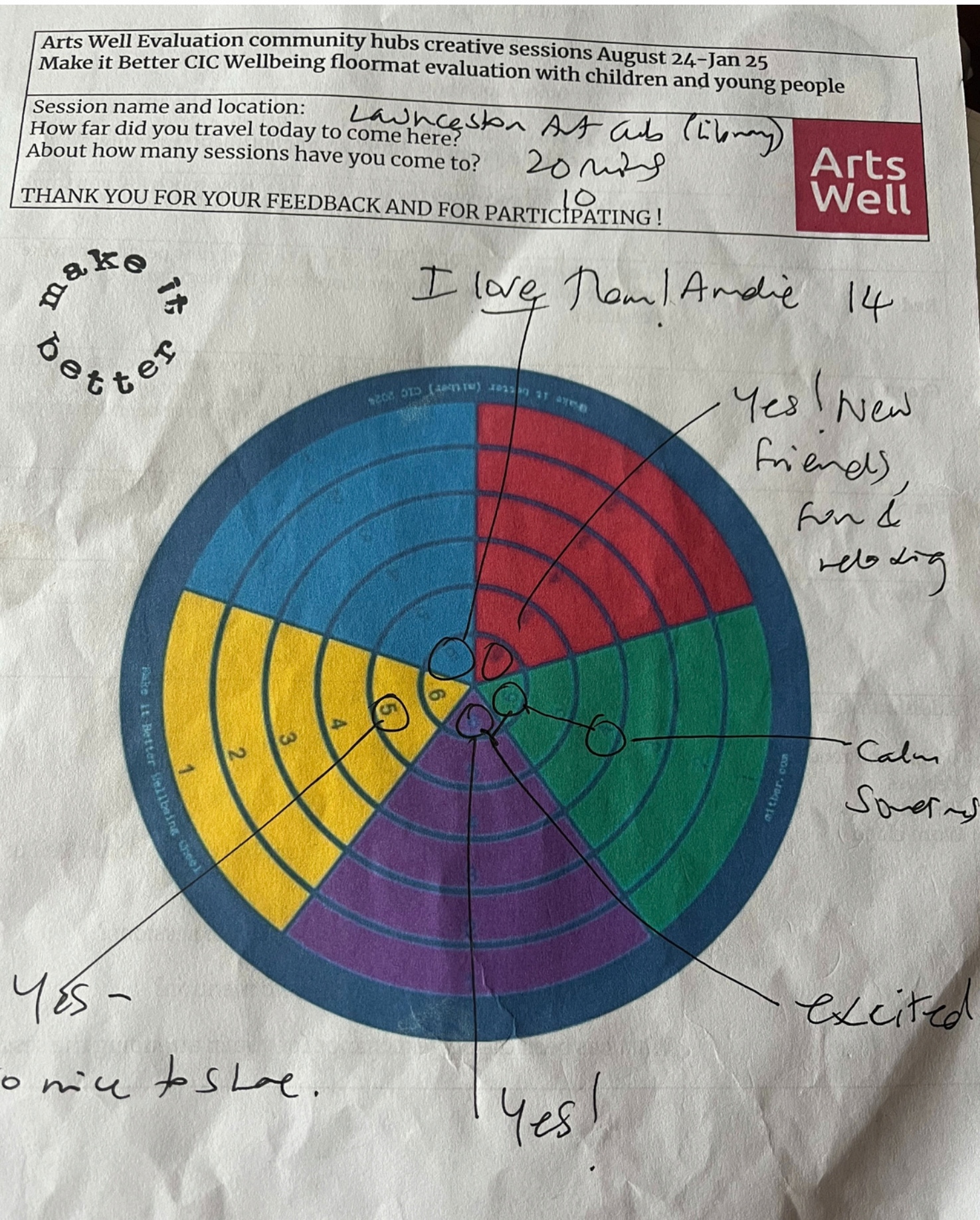


Wellbeing mat evaluation for children at St Martin and St Meriadoc after school club (Camborne Cluster of Churches). Focus group of 10 children who were regulars at the group

- Most children said they had enjoyed the sessions a huge amount, scoring 5 and 6 for this question
- Most children surveyed said they had made new friends and connections with both adults and children as a result of attending the sessions
- Children gave a mixed picture in terms of the impact of the sessions on mood. Some said the sessions made them more excited and animated and some said it helped them to feel calmer
- Children reported feeling more confident in their abilities as a result of attending the sessions. Some felt this was related to the creative sessions and some were not sure

‘I like doing the art with Steph and Rosi, it made me feel relaxed after a busy day at School.’

Wellbeing mat evaluation for Launceston Library children. Focus group of 7 children who were regulars at the group



- Most children said they had enjoyed the sessions a huge amount, all scored the sessions a 6 for enjoyment out of a total possible of 6
- Nearly all children surveyed said they had made new friends and connections with both adults and children as a result of attending the sessions and felt it had made a significant impact on them wanting to return
- Children gave a mixed picture in terms of the impact of the sessions on mood. Some said the sessions made them more excited and animated. The majority said it helped them to feel calmer
- Some children reported feeling more confident in their abilities as a result of attending the sessions - specifically in relation to what they could do creatively and wanting to do more

‘How do you feel about the sessions at the library?’ ‘I love them. I feel very proud of my print today. The art makes me feel relaxed’ A, 14.’

‘I loved the biscuits and the printmaking and drawing. I love being able to get books out of the library at the same time.’

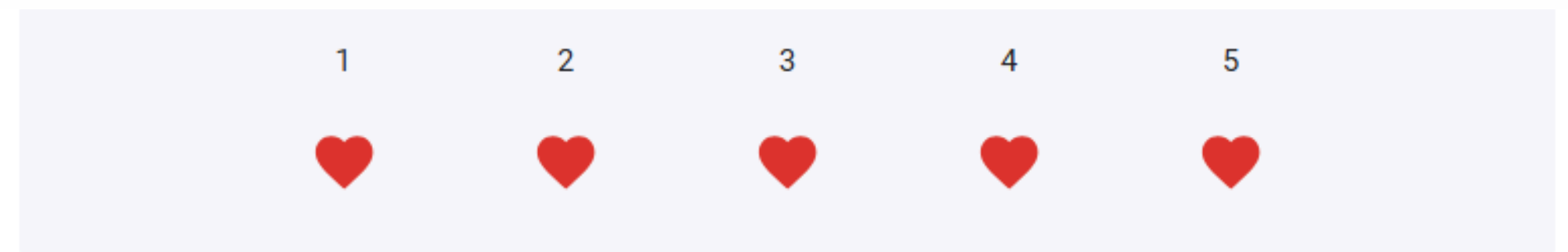
Hubs partner feedback: what was best about the project

‘Being able to offer free creative workshops to people in the local community. Something that is very rare! Also meeting and collaborating with the artists and using the environment of our community hub in the artworks.’

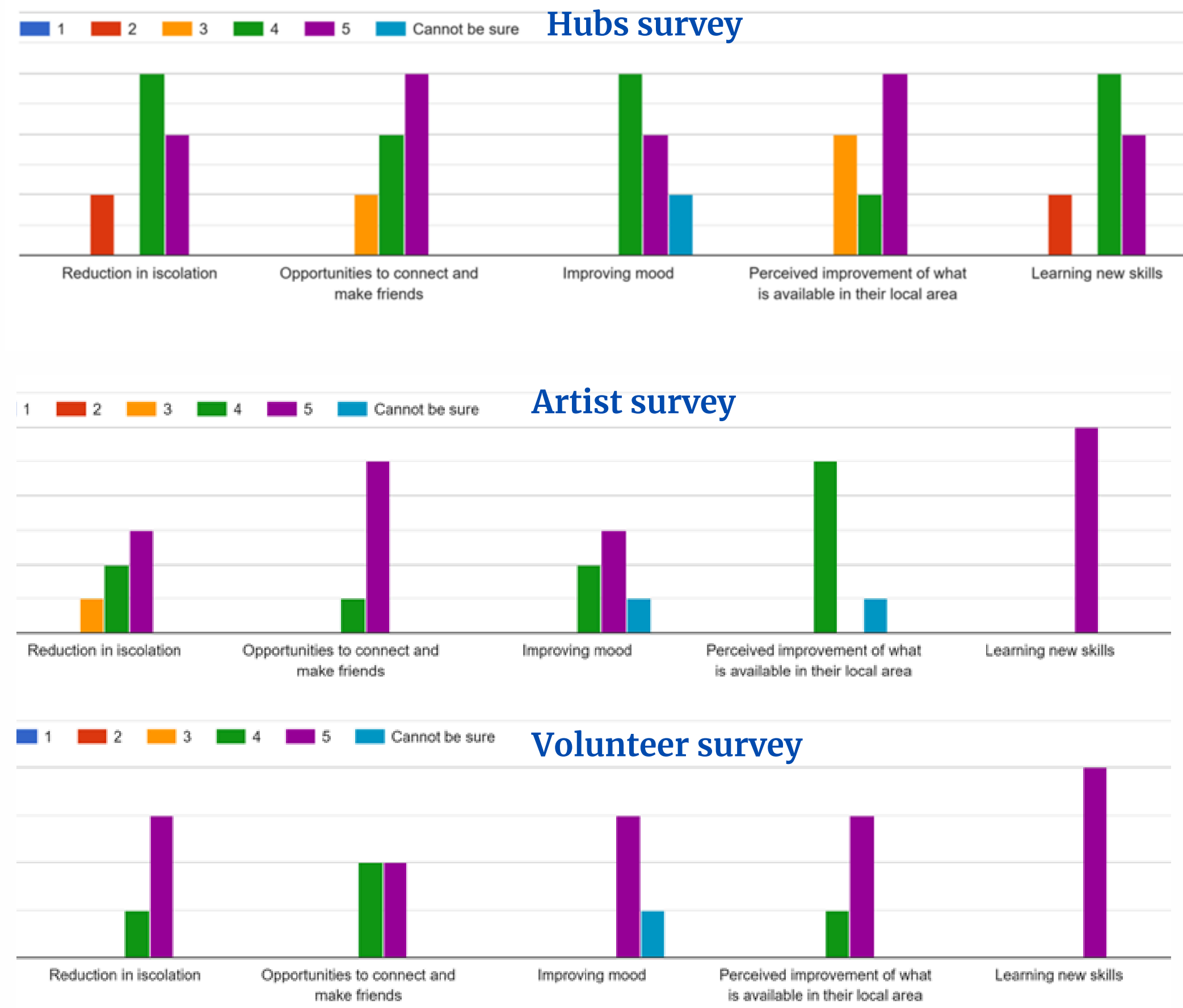
‘Thank you for an amazing 13 weeks, I wish Arts Well could continue as it has a huge impact on our community. We have consistent numbers of people attend each week and tell us how much they love coming and trying the new skills Steph taught them.’

‘Having sessions set up for us. Appreciate all the leg work to select artists, dates, promos , procedures etc. It’s a massive project with incredible outcomes, able to provide resources to the community we could not have funded without this. The ability to offer new skill opportunities, like photography, which hadn’t been offered locally before. And the Arts Well support to collect feedback was massively appreciated by artists and host.’

In response to our question asking partners how they had felt about being involved in the project all survey respondents scored their involvement a rating of 5 out of 5.

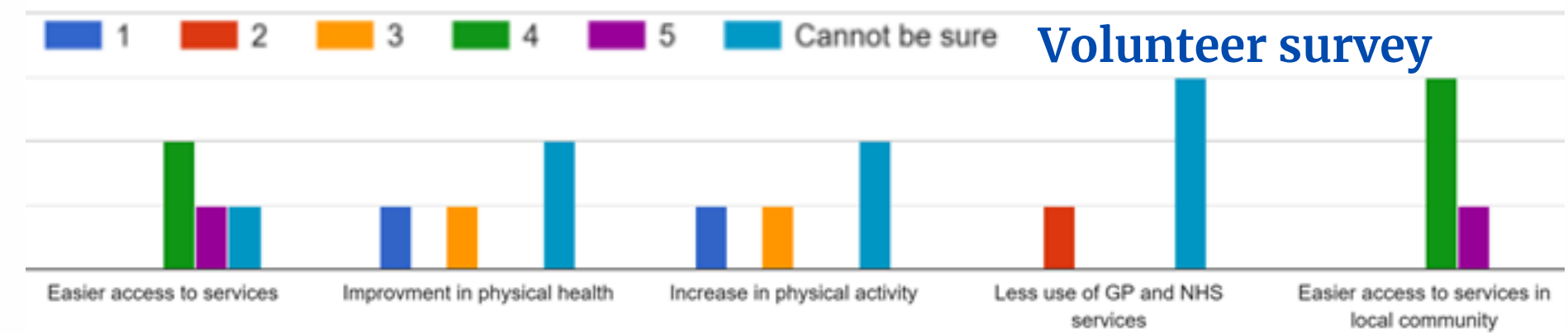
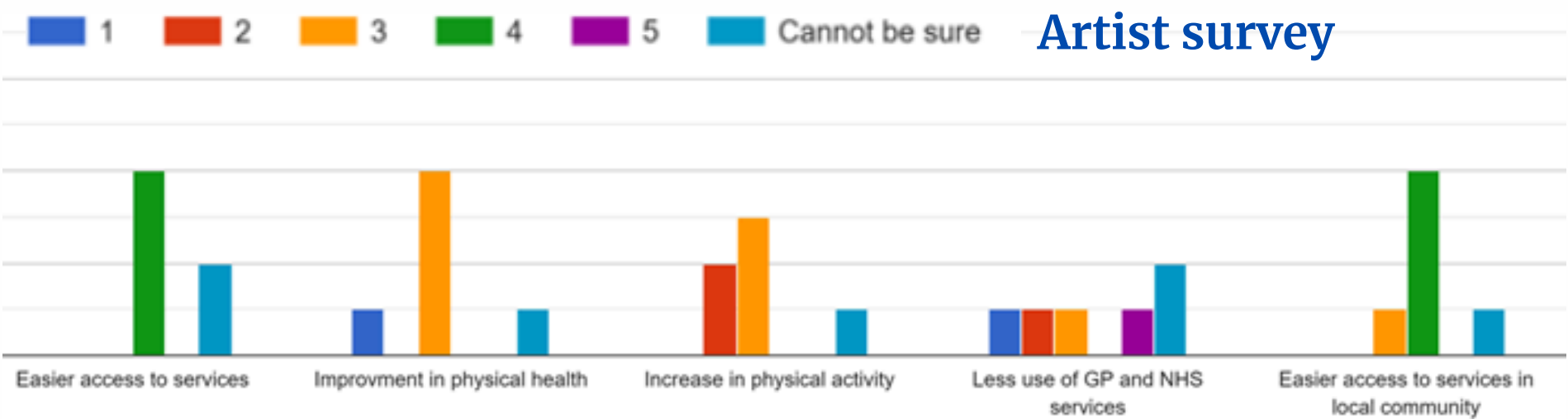
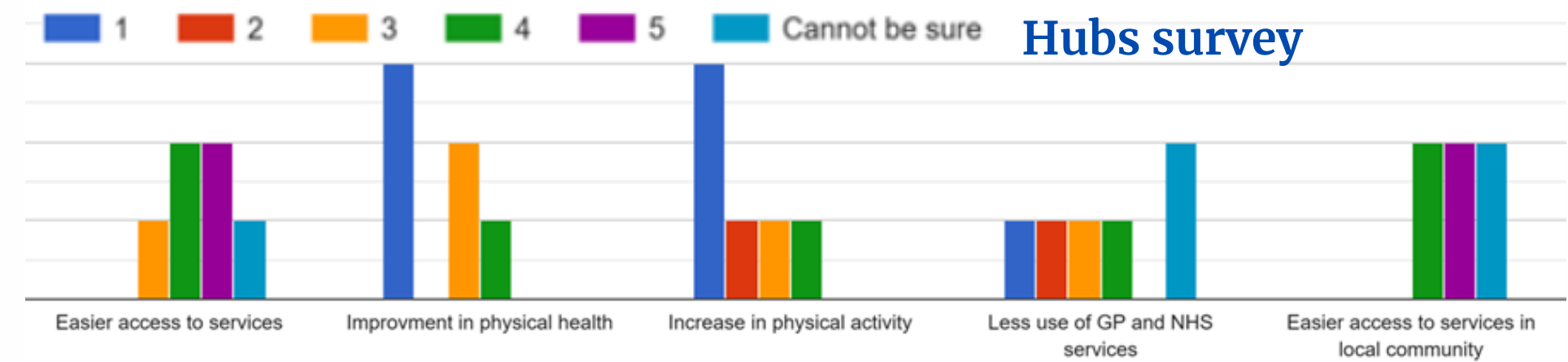


How much do you feel that the project has impacted on the following for participants? 1 = not at all 5 = Significant impact



Of community hubs, artists and volunteers that completed our final survey, most felt that a significant impact was made in terms of a reduction in isolation, opportunities to connect and make friends and improvement in mood as well as learning new skills. These were also the main reasons why all three groups surveyed felt that participants attended sessions. Respondents also felt that participants had an improved perception of what was available in their local area.

How much do you feel that the project has impacted on the following for participants? 1 = not at all 5 = Significant impact



Of community hubs, artists and volunteers that completed our final survey, it was felt that sessions impacted less on physical health and respondents gave a mixed picture in terms of a reduction in the use of GP and NHS services and access to services in the community. It was also felt by some that it is hard to be sure about the potential impact on use of services.

Artist feedback: what was best about the project?

‘Seeing the participants who fully engaged with the project gain a sense of achievement, make new friends and have fun.’

‘Developing an ongoing creative relationship with the project participants and having access to communities and groups who have established trust with hubs leads really helped.’

‘Well done to Olivia and Jenna for supporting artists to deliver their projects. Arts Well organising venue, groups and marketing meant I could focus on delivery.’

‘The opportunity to share passion for creativity and space away from home for people to be messy and explore and that felt safe and welcoming was fantastic. Being a positive creative adult role model for teenagers also felt like a really positive gift to be able to give to teenagers.’

‘I have loved it and cannot thank Arts Well enough, it has changed me as an artist and also given me the confidence to do more.’

‘Loved working on the project, even with the challenges. Improved my mental health as well as those of the participants. Hope to do more work with the hubs in the future, if we can get funding. Currently researching what grants are available, with aim of submitting bids with the hub charity as lead organisation.’

Artist feedback: what was best about the project?

‘The consistency of the groups meeting every week built trust and a reliable and safe place for people facing trauma to come and feel connected.’

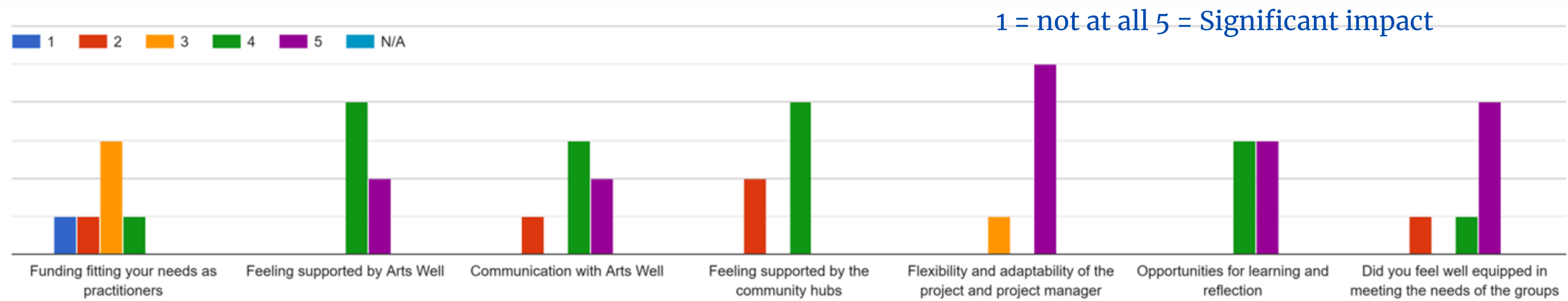
‘Sharing food each week and eating together made it feel like a family you have chosen.’

‘Conversations can be deep when you have something to focus on in working creatively with your hands.’

‘Being able to be process led without a focus on producing a finished outcome each week created a feeling of freedom to explore.’

‘Gaining more experience working with diverse groups of people, building strong relationships with participants over time, sharing my passion for creativity with others and valuing other people's creativity. Seeing participants grow in confidence and make connections and friendships with each other. Sharing food and conversation as well as making different creative projects. Expanding my facilitating practice into visual arts.’

How satisfied were artists in working with Arts Well and the funding requirements?



Artists reported generally feeling supported by Arts Well and and the community hubs with some exceptions. It was felt that the project was able to flex and adapt to their needs adequately . It was felt that there was a mixed picture in terms of the funding fitting well with what practitioners need with feedback from the in-person evaluation session suggesting that an approach to fee payment and calculation that was inclusive of admin and evaluation time, preparation and report writing etc was needed. This was challenging within the structure of the CLUP funding due to payment being directly tied to session delivery but is a recommendation for future projects.

It was felt that there were opportunities created for learning and reflection but not all practitioners felt well equipped in meeting the needs of their groups. The needs of the groups varied enormously in size, mix and complexity and there was a lot of learning for artists and us as project managers about the best approach and support needs of the artists where groups had multiple complex needs. Hubs supported well but also needed additional training and support in some cases in these areas. These training needs being supported through trauma-informed practice would be a further recommendation for future projects.

Artist feedback: what needs to be improved?

‘Maybe shorter projects for teenagers or swapping artists around with the young groups to keep energy up.’

‘A tablet that can be used to record participants, hold information, monitor impact and take pictures would be great. It solves the issue of using private tech and is gdpr compliant. The young people can also take photos, giving them greater agency over the documentation of their work.’

‘A longer window for evaluation.
Appropriate evaluation tools.’

‘Very clear and agreed roles and responsibilities between hubs and artist from early on. Some hub leads were brilliant but clearly others did not support artists consistently or enthusiastically.’

1. Core funding costs to allow Arts Well to dedicate more time to supporting the project.
2. Monthly meetings (online fine) between Hub staff, Arts Well, Artists and Volunteers.
3. A monthly support and networking group for all artists involved to share experiences and offer solutions and/or support.
4. Extra funding to cover admin, evaluation and session preparation time for artists. Also time built in for supporting and managing volunteers.

‘More lead in time for everything. Having volunteers established before the start date would have been better. (but I understand this wasn't possible with this project's timescale!)’

Volunteer feedback

‘Thank you for this lovely opportunity! It has been great to see the positive impacts of the session on the children and teens, and it has also been a wonderful opportunity for me to explore art in a workshop and creative health setting, all new to me at the start of this! I am keen to explore future options for working in creative health as a future career.’

‘I have continued to volunteer at the hub, I am seeking paid employment in Arts/ community arts and wellbeing projects (in Bristol) and also in Cornwall in the next few years.’

‘Great to be part of a group of people having some quality creative time together. Just in the moment without judgement or analysis.’

‘The best part was getting to connect with such a welcoming and kind local community in Cornwall, especially one that may not have the best access to artistic and creative health activities for children and young people! It was also an invaluable experience to learn from Steph, an artistic and creative health practitioner, in a practical environment and to see some tangible positive impacts that artistic activities can have on a community. It helps to create a space for children where there are no rights or wrongs, and not everything is black or white. The images of curious smiling faces, hands covered in paint and glitter, beautiful large painted flowers and an amazing mandala for a mural are what spring to mind when thinking of moments the children let their creativity run free!’

‘Thank you for the opportunity. Please could I contact you in the future for a reference for similar work?’

Case Study 1

J had already been coming to the group previously. It suited her because it was after the community lunch and she would stay on afterwards for company and to make things.

When I first met J she was quite low in self confidence and reluctant to try anything new. I was told that she wouldn't participate if it was something unfamiliar, and there'd be no convincing her. She has some learning barriers and mental health challenges and also at the time had some difficulties with her housing (damp and mould) which was impacting her mental and physical health. I spent a bit of time chatting to her at the first session, as I did with all the participants, to get an idea of her interests and things she enjoyed doing and what she might like to try in the future. J enjoys knitting and crochet. I found out that she has two budgies, likes birds and owls and she would like some pictures for her wall.

Apart from the occasional missed session when she was unwell, J attended the whole series of sessions from early September till the end of January. As time progressed her confidence grew and she was more willing to have a go at the variety of activities I brought along to the group. She began to trust me and I was able to gently prod her to try new things, with the understanding that nothing she did would be 'wrong'. You could always tell when she was pleased with something she had made because she would ask to have her photograph taken, holding it, and would tell me who she was going to gift it to.

Case Study 1 continued

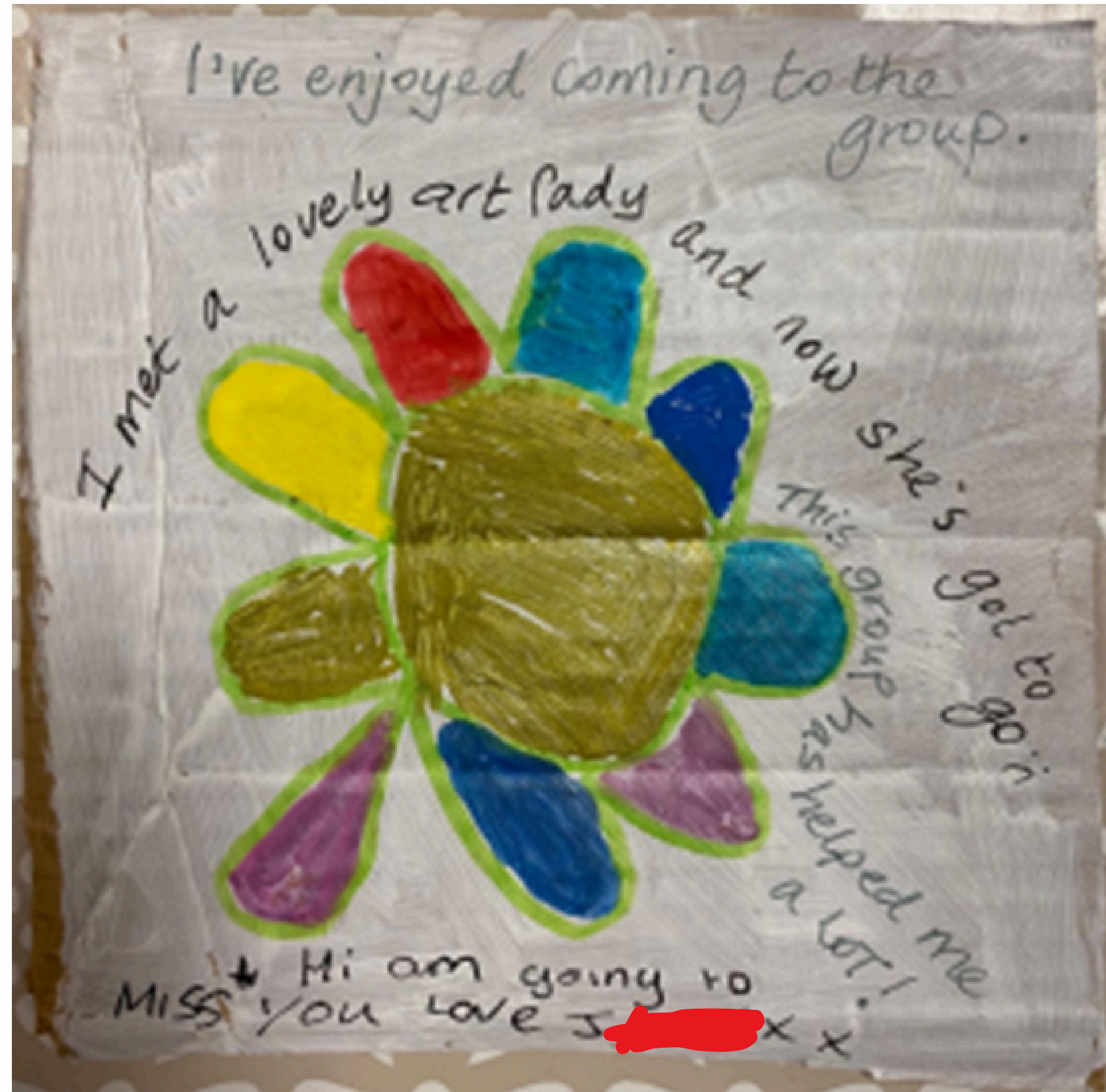
A knock on effect of attending the sessions and the increased confidence meant J was more assertive in getting other areas of her life more organised. She would excitedly tell me, when I arrived to set up, what she had achieved in the intervening week.

She had managed to get the mould tackled in her flat and it had been decorated. She had managed to go online and sort out her council tax account. In the past she had relied on other people to do these things for her. She was so pleased with herself. “I did it myself!” She exclaimed and proceeded to tell me that in future she would have a go to sort things out herself first and if she couldn’t manage it, only then would she ask for help.

J decided to come along to the Saturday sessions I was running. These put her firmly outside of her comfort zone. No crafting or making specific items but abstract mark making with a more academic focus. A deeper dive into materials. There was no way she would have attempted this when I first met her, when she’d sit with her arms crossed and say, “I’m not doing that. I can’t do that.” She willingly joined in with the sessions. Whenever she faltered or drifted off, I’d sit with her and encourage her to keep going. I was very proud of her for the progress she had made.

At the end of the project the group made individual cardboard tiles and were asked to include words or phrases that summed up the experience. J struggles with reading and writing so whenever there was an element of it in the sessions I would transcribe for her. I did this for her on the tile. When I turned away she grabbed a pen and wrote a few words herself. I was very touched. She also gave me a hand written thank you card and a gift of a notebook, at the end. She shed some tears. She was very sad that I was leaving. It really hit home the importance of sustainability and legacy with these projects. I encouraged her to keep coming to the sessions and that I would come back if and when I could. Funding research has begun in earnest!

Case Study 1



What went well and what we learned from it

- £6,000 match funding from Cornwall ICB was a fantastic win for the project to be able to deliver outcomes which contribute to the ICB communities focussed agenda and meet the requirements of the CLUP match required.
- Core costs were not covered by the CLUP fund. This is unrealistic and unsustainable. The funding from Cornwall Community Foundation, Health Improvement Fund to cover core costs was absolutely invaluable in being able to deliver this project.
- Some hubs were exemplary in their approach to understanding the collaborative nature of working together on the project to the benefit of participants. One recommendation would be to be able to run a live, interactive session to develop a key set of agreed principles with partners including those that work operationally and strategically from early on in the project as some hubs were not able to provide the same level of support and this made a difference to success and engagement.
- The artists working on the project were all very committed and professional. They were hugely flexible and passionate about supporting and empowering their groups. The careful recruitment and selection process is key in finding the right professional artists
- Having a professional and supportive project facilitator from the CLUP team in Cath Collier made a huge difference to navigating the project requirements with funders and being supported to succeed.



The Why Don't You Saturday Group from CN4C working with Hannah Jacobs. Image from celebration exhibition, photography by Olivia Beckwith

Challenges

Timeframe and short term aspect of funding

- The timeframe of 6 months delivery window and the uncertainty of funding from CLUP not being secure until 1–2 months before project delivery had to begin has been a huge challenge on the delivery of this project. The lengthy decision-making process to award of the fund severely impacted on the project delivery window available.
- Recruitment of the project delivery partner artists and Project Coordinator plus development of all paperwork, processes and systems as well as all contracting and finalisation of plans for delivery had to take place within a very tight 6 week window in June and July 2024. This put pressure on the Project Management team and had a knock on effect on hubs and artists in terms of the short timescale. It also impacted the start dates of activity due to the delivery needing to start during the August holiday, again a result of the delayed funding decision and absolute project end date required by CLUP funders. We would suggest a window of a minimum of 3 months of planning and preparation time before project starts plus a clear year of delivery time plus 2 months evaluation time is more realistic, manageable and impactful. A lead-in to project planning prior to that of 6 months to build relationships and develop the project is also recommended.
- Project Coordination required more than 1 day per week. We were able to reallocate funding in the project to allow for this. A 0.6 Project Coordinator role to manage paperwork, funding, administration and event delivery is the recommendation for future delivery.



Participants of the Family Photography Sessions, Launceston Library working with Kinga and Maciej Krzyminscy. Photograph by Kinga Krzyminscy

Challenges

Timeframe and short term aspect of funding continued

- The longer term benefits of building and securing a joined up approach and witnessing the benefits of longer term delivery were hard to measure in such a short project. The short time frame also put pressure on artists and the project team in managing to consistently have a meeting between hubs leads, lead artist and Arts Well well ahead of delivery commencing. This was not ideal practice for all involved.
- Hubs, participants, volunteers, artists and the project team have all felt that the short term nature of this funding opportunity has been very challenging in multiple ways. From feedback, there is much appetite for the groups to continue but a funding gap causing lack of time for proper forward planning or appropriate possible funds has meant delivery has had to stop in many locations who have not been able to identify ways for the sessions to be funded to continue.
- The success of recruiting volunteers on the project was very much down to both the personal connections of the Project Manager and the community hubs communities due to the short delivery window. A more strategic approach takes longer to deliver so a longer time frame would be more beneficial in making these relationships pay dividends on the ground. The time frame also put pressure on recruitment of volunteers needing to be put on hold whilst the project set-up was done. It would have taken pressure off artists if volunteers could have been in place right at the start of the project.



Participants of the Hayle Library and Day Centre group working with Tough Dough.
Photograph by Alessandra Ausenda.

Challenges

Cost structure of the funding

- The way in which activity was directly tied to payment in the funding structure required by the CLUP fund meant that it was difficult to allow for administration and attendance at induction, professional development, evaluation and reporting plus resource preparation for our project artists. Artists felt that the session rate paid did not adequately cover time spent on the project.
- Artists expressed the need for more sharing of ideas and approaches that are suitable for one off group attendees and regular group members as well as an ideas exchange for activities between artists and how to adapt to the needs of different groups.
- CRB checks were overcomplicated and time consuming. There were delays and unnecessary bureaucracy in the process.
- The paperwork involved in delivery of the programme took considerable time to gather and complete and was not always manageable for artists alongside delivery. Some were more consistent with delivery of the paperwork required than others which made things more challenging for the project team in final evidence collection. Working with the Project Facilitator we managed to evolve some of these systems to make them more manageable.



Participants of the Hayle Library and Day Centre group working with Tough Dough.
Photograph by Alessandra Ausenda.

What we learned or would do differently: recommendations

- Ensure the time frame allows for relationship-building, 3 months lead-in time and a minimum of 1 year delivery time
- Project Coordinator role to be 3 days per week and recruited at least before start of delivery
- Flat fee structure for artists to include time for administration and attendance at induction, professional development, evaluation and reporting as in our Arts Lab Project. Collaborate with artists at funding stage to agree a fee structure which reflects the full costs of their engagement. Work with funders ensure these are accommodated in the budget.
- Advisory group to support the project team on future projects taken from partner hubs, Arts Well Director, ICB and CVSF and including potential participants and deliverers of groups
- In future projects, build in resource to support a mentoring programme focussed on seeding new talent in the sector
- WhatsApp communication group for artists to share ideas, challenges, cover illness etc
- Trauma-informed training, further training on detailed aspects of the Creative Health Quality Framework built in, particularly around boundary setting and protocols for working with people with complex needs. Support to address diverse and complex needs in mixed age groups.



Camborne Cluster children's summer clubs, run by artists Nikki Bovis Coulter and Stephanie Thomason

Legacy

- 2 volunteers on the project progressed into paid delivery with Arts Well on the project. They are both continuing to run workshops in the community in Bristol and Cornwall
- One volunteer has progressed to paid employment from being unemployed as a result of the support on the programme and experience they gained as a volunteer
- A BA student volunteering on the programme is now considering a future career in creative health
- A number of volunteers are continuing to volunteer in their partner community hubs and some are also continuing the delivery of creative sessions beyond the project
- CN4C are working with lead artists to identify possible funding to continue delivery. They are also looking at a possible Arts Council bid jointly with Arts Well to continue further work
- Hayle Library and Day Centre are also working with lead artists to identify possible funding to continue delivery
- A number of artists are maintaining relationships with the groups that they worked with on the project



Conclusion

This pilot project has demonstrated:

- A positive impact on mental health, mood, wellbeing and building confidence as well as tackling isolation and creating more of a sense of community cohesion that creative wellbeing projects bring for uniting and benefitting diverse communities.
- The value of doing this work in community settings and importance of community hubs as partners and collaborators in addressing the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and reducing pressure on NHS services.
- Collaboration requires time and resource to build trust and learn and develop through agile project management approaches as well as the need for consistent longer term funding to deliver benefits
- Measuring the impact of creative delivery on whether health services have been used *less* is challenging to measure and needs further consideration and collaboration on a longer term focussed evaluation. This pilot needed a longer timeline to demonstrate consistent impact and to be able to partner with Exeter University on the evaluation of the project. Exeter were on board with an offer of support but working together was not possible due to the enforced tight delivery window.
- The need for projects to be consistent and regular in their delivery and availability to build trust and continued impactful benefits for those involved
- The importance of offering training, mentoring and development opportunities to volunteers, hubs personnel and artists to increase potential impact through higher quality provision being delivered and well as investing in the sector and in communities.
- The number and range of talented and committed professional creatives we have in Cornwall is an asset that we need to capitalise on in building our communities and helping to tackle health inequalities. It is also important to ensure artists are paid fairly for their work.
- The value and impact that volunteers can bring to projects and the benefits that creative health projects bring for volunteers
- Co-designing the creative health provision with participants and artists working together from early on is powerful and meaningful in creating positive relationships which can drive change in health outcomes
- The ongoing demand from groups to be involved is far greater than we or our hubs partners can currently meet in terms of the funding we have available. This shows that the programme has gained traction. There is an encouraging appetite for sessions to continue amongst participants, volunteers, hubs and artist as a result of recognising the huge value that creative interventions can have

Thank you to the wonderful artists and project team



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Nikki
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John
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Maciej

Artist
colleagues
not in this
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Noah
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Matt
Karen
Kitty



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- Tom Roucoux
- Angela Davies
- Tabi Nutt
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Thank you to the brilliant community hubs partners



Cornwall
Neighbourhoods
for Change



Charley CN4C
Charlotte CN4C
Emilie CN4C
Emma CN4C
Tarn CN4C
Victoria CN4C
Rachel CN4C
Sue DAG



Hayle Town Council
Konsel an dre Heyl

DAG - Deviock Activities Group

Viv DAG
Emma Hayle Library
Lileth Bosavern Farm
Katie Bosavern Farm
Becky Camborne Cluster
Andi and Caitlin Launceston Library
Siobhan The Dracena Centre
Tamsin Hayle Day Centre

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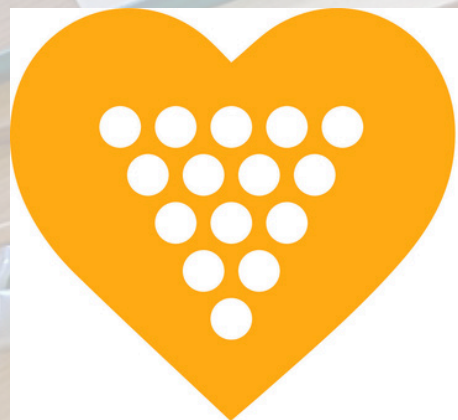
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