

ART JOURNAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT



CREATIVE WELLBEING IN DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY | 2022



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FOREWORD

OutPost Arts Chair | Jason Railton

As Chair of OutPost Arts, I'm thrilled to present our report - *'Art Journal Development Project - Creative Wellbeing in Dumfries & Galloway'...*

This has been the culmination of fantastic partnership working, delivering an honest appraisal of the creative wellbeing picture in Dumfries & Galloway. Across our region, many individuals and organisations are working hard to deliver support in new ways against a difficult backdrop. Through sharing learning, forming new relationships, and identifying common ambitions, we have been able to understand how we can start to make an effective and long-lasting difference to many people's lives.

We are living in a time of rapid, unprecedented change. The challenges we collectively face are diverse: increased social tensions, geopolitical conflict, global health crises and an untenable economic condition. This is the era of 'more for less', where public resources are at a minimum and there is overwhelming pressure to deliver services that existing capacity often can't meet. However, the appetite for doing things differently is strong - not just in our creative sector but across the board. There's recognition, as clearly outlined in this report, that the vibrant communities and people of Dumfries & Galloway require access to a new form of support. A key focus of the last six month's research and development has led us to design a service that supports people's wellbeing through consistent, guided creative practice.

At OutPost Arts, we recognise the transformative power of creativity. Art and culture should be accessible for everyone, not just those with the resources to participate and reap the rewards. Over the last four years, we have built a strong foundation to enable the development of a different approach. Our participatory creative programme has allowed people of all ages to engage in numerous different forms of artistic expression - and in that time we've learned that we have the tools to motivate social change. In this area of work, we want to raise the esteem and build the credibility of arts and culture to make impactful, visible and sustainable change to the lives of people that need it most. That's why the second part of this work focuses on developing a creative wellbeing network, composed of a mix of practitioners, beneficiaries, specialists, enthusiasts and doers. Bringing people together under a shared mission of improving the opportunities and access for culture-driven change will support the growth of a new form of wellbeing in our area.

I'm grateful to everyone that participated in this research - your voices have been heard and I hope you see them reflected in this report. Thanks also to our project Steering Group, comprising a range of different experiences and expertise who have helped to guide us to where we are now. Lastly, a huge vote of thanks and appreciation to our Creative Director, Lucy MacLeod, who worked tirelessly to bring this work to fruition. Lucy's research is extensive and brings together perspectives and knowledge from a broad spectrum of people - hopefully galvanising us all into positive action in the very near future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JRailton', located at the bottom right of the page.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. NEEDS

The pandemic has impacted on our collective mental health and wellbeing. In our very rural region, people in need often face barriers accessing creative and cultural opportunities which could benefit their wellbeing and prospects.

D&G has a strong creative sector with highly skilled creative practitioners and arts/cultural organisations, but many struggle to connect with referrers and potential participants. Healthcare, social care and third sector organisation lack capacity and specialist skills to deliver long term creative wellbeing activities.

3. VALUE

There is a wealth of evidence relating to the health and wellbeing benefits of participation in stimulating creative and cultural activity. There is also a strong economic case for increased investment in preventative creative wellbeing and social prescribing services, which can remove the need for clinical intervention.

By creating new networks and platforms for relevant sectors to collaborate more easily, we avoid duplication and add value. By increasing capacity, we can collectively reach more people who could benefit from being supported to connect with creativity.

2. SOLUTIONS

Creative wellbeing projects such as Art Journal Project (AJP) allow people to develop self-management tools that improve mental health and wellbeing and create pathways towards personal and professional development via skills development. By increasing the scale of AJP and by supporting similar initiatives through cross sector collaboration, sharing and networking, we will widen impact.

In the wake of the pandemic, we have an opportunity to leverage existing momentum around creative/cultural prescribing to open up access, increase participation, and embed art into healthcare.

4. NEXT STEPS

We will deliver a next phase Art Journal Project with graduate pathways that is flexible and adaptable to respond to the needs of different service users, and safeguards participants and staff.

We will initiate a cross-sector D&G Creative Wellbeing Network, that supports collaboration and promotes training and learning.

We will raise awareness of creative wellbeing related activities, learning and existing national strategies, lobbying for more formal links to be established between art, culture and healthcare in D&G.

BACKGROUND

OutPost Arts

OutPost Arts (OPA) is a progressive arts organisation based in Langholm that believes rural arts can be ambitious, contemporary and diverse. Since OPA's inception in 2018, we have quickly established ourselves at local, regional and national levels as an innovative organisation with the skills and track record to deliver meaningful and impactful work; thus far supporting 325+ people of all ages to engage with the arts and harness creativity as an agent for personal and professional development and transformation.

OPA has three main aims - to positively affect wellbeing, learning and placemaking by connecting individuals and communities with art, culture and creativity. We are fueled by a belief that people should have equal access to high-quality creative opportunities that enhance their mental health, build skills, widen perspectives, boost confidence, and that through connecting with art and culture, we create vibrant, robust communities.

With anxiety and depression on the rise, OPA has made a long-term commitment to improve wellbeing, with a particular focus on building resilience. As a result, we have developed Art Journal Project, which focuses on engaging with guided participatory art as a gateway toward developing skills, coping mechanisms, self-management tools and mindful practice techniques. The transformative powers of art and its impact on health is strongly supported by evidence - leveraging this is a cornerstone of our future direction as we look towards post-pandemic community recovery.



BACKGROUND

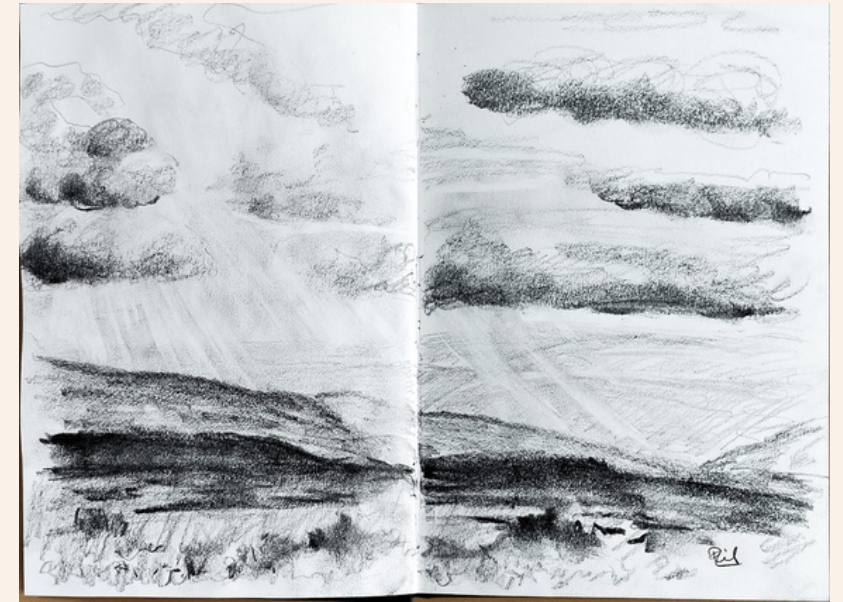
Pilot Art Journal Project

Art Journal Pilot Project - Connecting with your creative self...

Art Journaling is a creative well-being tool, where we put our internal selves onto the page, allowing honesty and freedom to explore emotions; providing a safe space for self-care, discovery and self-development. It allows us to have a 'visual conversation' with ourselves, distracts us from negative thoughts and feelings, and offers an accessible, flexible and portable platform to express, escape, reflect, take stock and re-calibrate.

During the first lockdown of 2020, at a time of acute national anxiety, the pilot 'Art Journal Project' - funded by Scottish Government Supporting Communities Fund - was a 'community well-being' focused programme of guided workshops, bespoke tuition and specialist support from professional artist tutors. Aimed at adults during lockdown who may be struggling to manage stress or to 'make space' for creativity in order to achieve balance and well-being, the project particularly targeted carers, key workers, people suffering from physical or mental health issues, and people struggling with loneliness, isolation, grief or trauma.

Through observation and application, participants explored their relationship with themselves, their environment and with others - discovering new, constructive channels of self-expression and developing self-management tools to maintain their own well-being. A private Facebook page offered a safe space for the group to come together, share ideas and inspiration, and access feedback and support from both their peers and the project's tutors. The programme's sessions were designed and delivered by experienced tutors with input from a wellbeing professional.



Art Journal Project - Highlights

During lockdown 1, OPA commissioned four professional artists to design and deliver a programme of recorded sessions covering eight different themes - Flora & Fauna, Landscapes, Domestic Life, Composed Life, Portraiture, The Figure, Pattern & Texture.



Through observation and application, participants explored their relationship with themselves and their environment over 12 weeks, discovering new constructive channels of self-expression whilst developing self-management tools to maintain their wellbeing.

Zoom and email allowed 1-2-1 interactions with tutors and offered sharing opportunities for those less comfortable sharing work with the group. Guidance and support was provided via a private Facebook group page.



"It's taught me that Art is as important in my life as eating, drinking & sleeping - supporting both my inner and outer wellbeing."

- June, Art Journal Participant

Fifteen people aged 19-65 referred themselves into the project for a variety of reasons - from grief and carer stress, to isolation and unfulfilled creative goals.

By sharing and celebrating their journeys, the participants' confidence levels were boosted significantly, and many have continued developing their work - with the help of informal OPA mentoring.



The project culminated in an exhibition, showcasing curated samples of the art journals and larger scale pieces that graduates had worked towards by developing their skills.

TESTIMONIAL

Art Journal Project Pilot | Diane Hay

On the 24th May this year my world came crashing down on me when my husband suffered a cardiac arrest and died, literally before my eyes. We had been married for almost 29 years, together for 33 and in that time rarely separated, sharing the same hobbies. I had no idea how I was going to continue. But continue I had to...

I loved Art at school and always dreamed of going to art college and carving a career from it but life doesn't always go the way we want it to and at 16, I entered the world of office work and have remained there ever since.

I was told about the Art Journal Project in June and that it might benefit me. I thought why not, I need something to take my mind off everything else. I had no idea what to expect but if honest, didn't expect it to be more than a pleasant distraction.

I was halfway through Frank's workshop in week one when I realised that I was getting a lot more out of the project than just a pleasant distraction. All the videos were very informative; I learned confidence building techniques, better ways to hold the pencil, drawing quickly so I wasn't trying to take in all the detail and I found myself becoming relaxed, tense muscles easing and headaches disappearing. It gave me something else to focus on, I looked forward to each new tutorial to see if I could complete it, sometimes with success and sometimes not, but it didn't matter, I was in a better headspace.

My twin sister also did the project and when Covid-19 allowed, we spend part of the summer together drawing, no talking needed, just relaxing into our own headspace.

I'd never tried a lot of the techniques before the project only really using charcoal, pastels and pencils at school, perfecting portrait art with great detail. I found I loved watercolour and started to watch YouTube videos to learn more and now I'm hooked. So much so that Lucy is helping me to develop it into what will hopefully, become something that I can earn from. I'm taking it slowly, the plan is to build up a portfolio and research the market between now and next August with the intentions of then selling my art on various products. I'm currently, again with Lucy's help, trying to design my own wallpaper, making my home unique to me.

It's hard to put into words what the Art Journal Project has given me but six months ago I was broken, a jigsaw in a thousand pieces, with no idea how the hell I was going to, or if even wanted to for that matter, piece myself back together. And now, I'm still broken but the pieces are starting to come together. Whenever I'm down and believe me, I'm often down, I can go to my happy place and forget for a while and for that I will always be grateful to the project and what it has given me. It's a bit like when you put your favourite song on, full blast, and just listen to it from start to finish - halfway through the endorphins take over your brain and you're lost in the pleasure.



"I really hope that OutPost Arts can reach out to more people who for whatever reason are not in a very good mindset and give them the same help I have received - it has definitely been a godsend to me."

- Diane Hay, Pilot Art Journal Participant

MISSION

Art Journal Development Project

For participants, creative wellbeing activity has the potential to develop skills and confidence; access pathways towards further training, qualifications, enterprise; and crucially, lead to long-term health & wellbeing...

D&G is home to a large network of creative professionals and established arts organisations, many of whom have the skills and experience to formally deliver activity that impacts positively on people's wellbeing and promotes social change.

At a national level 'creative prescribing' is becoming more commonly on offer for people experiencing mental health problems and/or isolation, helping people in their recovery through access to arts/culture/crafts and increased social engagement. Although these schemes are varied in their approaches and settings, the common themes are that there are referral processes, and that activities take place in the community, facilitated by artists rather than therapists. Access depends on geographical location and referrers' understanding and awareness of the benefits of art, and knowledge of accessible opportunities.

There is momentum towards partnership working within our region's arts and culture sector, with The Stove Network's 'What We Do Now' project piloting a placemaking network (see Page 32). OPA aim to complement this inter-connected, community-led model, by initiating a grassroots, cross-sector 'Creative Wellbeing Network' to support collaboration and share learning, and to create more accessible pathways with clearer referral/evaluation processes as a result.

With a connected vision, we can galvanise existing relationships, foster new partnerships and alliances, and collectively access greater investment to facilitate wider-reaching, innovative and ambitious programmes of creative wellbeing activity. These developments would allow our region's arts & culture sector to better support the needs of people and communities affected by Covid19 and create more formal links between arts, culture and healthcare/social care, which has been successful in other regions (see National Case Study, Page 36)

By building a cross-sector vision, we will expand the capacity of existing organisations and work together towards achieving a socially aware and resilient 'wellbeing economy' in D&G that confronts and addresses existing obstacles, barriers and inequalities.

STRATEGY

Art Journal Development Project

With partnership support from SOSE, NHS Endowment Fund & Holywood Trust, from August 2021 - March 2022 we carried out a research and development project that aimed to strengthen and significantly scale-up our current Creative Wellbeing programme, and initiate a cross-sector 'Creative Wellbeing Network'. The project's main directives were to:

Actions & Objectives

- Establish a diverse steering group with specialist advisors and representatives to drive forward the development project
- Carry out desk-based scoping to identify key strategic and delivery partners and other stakeholders
- Research examples of relevant 'good practice'
- Map local, regional and national organisations, groups, networks and policy makers linked to Creative Wellbeing
- Identify key questions and carry out a series of targeted 1-2-1 interviews with stakeholders and decision-makers
- Facilitate a programme of engagement events/workshops with groups of key stakeholders to co-design Phase 2 programme
- Identify stakeholder needs, barriers and opportunities
- Create an accessible evaluation tool/strategy that helps evidence the benefits of Creative Wellbeing practices
- Develop a Phase 2 Art Journal Project model to reach greater numbers of people with specific needs
- Initiate a potential cross-sector Creative Wellbeing Network and collect feedback on next steps
- Identify funding opportunities to take Phase 2 forward
- Report research findings and resources in a report / learning document

DEFINITIONS

Wellbeing & Social/Creative Prescribing

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing encompasses the environmental factors that affect us, the experiences we have throughout our lives, recognising the aspects that we determine ourselves: through our own capabilities as individuals; how we feel about ourselves, the quality of our personal relationships, how supported we feel, and our sense of purpose.

These psychological needs are an important part of what makes us human, along with our ability to feel positive and negative emotions. It matters how often and for how long we experience positive emotions, such as pleasure and a sense of purpose, or potentially negative emotions, like anxiety or stress.

Wellbeing refers to the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy. Even though happiness is an integral part of our personal wellness, wellbeing includes other things - the fulfillment of long-term goals, and how in control we feel in life. It is an active process of becoming aware of and making conscious choices toward a healthy and meaningful life. The New Economics report on measuring wellbeing includes a clear description of its holistic nature: [1]

“Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole.”

What is social & creative prescribing?

Social prescribing - often known as 'community prescribing' - occurs when health professionals, care managers or link workers refer patients for support in their community, enabling them to make their own health choices and develop skills and social networks to improve their personal health and well being.

People who might benefit from being part of a group, becoming more active, exploring an interest or developing a skill, are referred to a range of (mainly) local, non-clinical services, often provided by the voluntary sector. This can help individuals to experience a better quality of life, improved mental and emotional wellbeing, and lower levels of depression and anxiety. Social prescribing is a model that can achieve significant health benefits, sometimes where other support and intervention has not been able to achieve success.

There is clear evidence that social prescribing is an area which can help relieve increasing health and social care pressures. In the UK, up to one fifth of patients see a GP for a problem that isn't medical [2] - the root issue may relate to loneliness, financial pressure, or poor housing issues, for which a social prescription may prove beneficial and address any affects.

In April 2021, a report was published by The Post-Covid-19 Futures Commission, which was established by the Royal Society of Edinburgh in partnership with Support in Mind Scotland, calling for decision-makers in Scotland to adopt a social prescribing approach to healthcare as a priority.

DEFINITIONS

Creative Wellbeing | Positive Impacts

The report - 'A Desk Review of Social Prescribing: from origins to opportunities' states that non-medical approaches could alleviate pressure on the NHS and other public services in the wake of Covid, if community partners are adequately resourced and supported to deliver tailored support across Scotland. [3]

The report's findings also suggest that traditional views of social prescribing should be challenged, as many referral routes exist beyond GPs and primary healthcare, including self-referral. NHS Health Scotland, for instance, view social prescribing as: [4]

“Any means of connecting people to non-medical sources of support or resources in the community that help them address their own, self-defined health priorities.”

The arts and creativity are agents of wellness - supporting resilience, aiding recovery and fostering a more resilient society... creative prescribing builds on this notion, confronting issues such as isolation, low confidence/self-esteem, anxiety, depression and trauma through creative intervention. Projects and activities may be facilitated in healthcare settings, but they often take place in the community. Accessing cultural opportunities can also be part of creative prescribing - for example, visiting a gallery, museum or library can increase social confidence, spark new interests or creative inspiration, and challenge people to step out of their comfort zones.



A social return on investment of between £4 and £11 has been calculated for every £1 invested in arts on prescription. [6]

In 2017, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing published the report of a two-year inquiry into practice and research in the arts in health and social care. This found that participating in the arts is essential to healthy ageing - mentally, emotionally, and even physically. [5]

Arts in health programmes at both national and international levels are using diverse and dynamic disciplines in a variety of health, care and community settings for expressive, restorative, educational and therapeutic purposes. Some work preventatively, some enhance recovery and others improve the quality of life for people with long-term or terminal conditions.

The creative arts help make sense of our human condition, making room for the inner self to be expressed and heard. Arts participation encourages active engagement with our environment, helps people to keep learning, connects people with each other and contributes towards community development.

In our current political and economic climate - which has forced a reassessment of human priorities, and where wellbeing has become a declared government priority - creative wellbeing activities and projects offer a meaningful, value-for-money contribution to mainstream health care.

[1] <https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/measuring-wellbeing.pdf>

[2] <https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/social-prescribing-could-empower-patients-to-address-non-medical-problems-in-their-lives/>

[3] <https://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/news/social-prescribing-covid-19-rse-report>

[4] <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2068/social-prescribing-for-mental-health-guidance-paper.pdf>

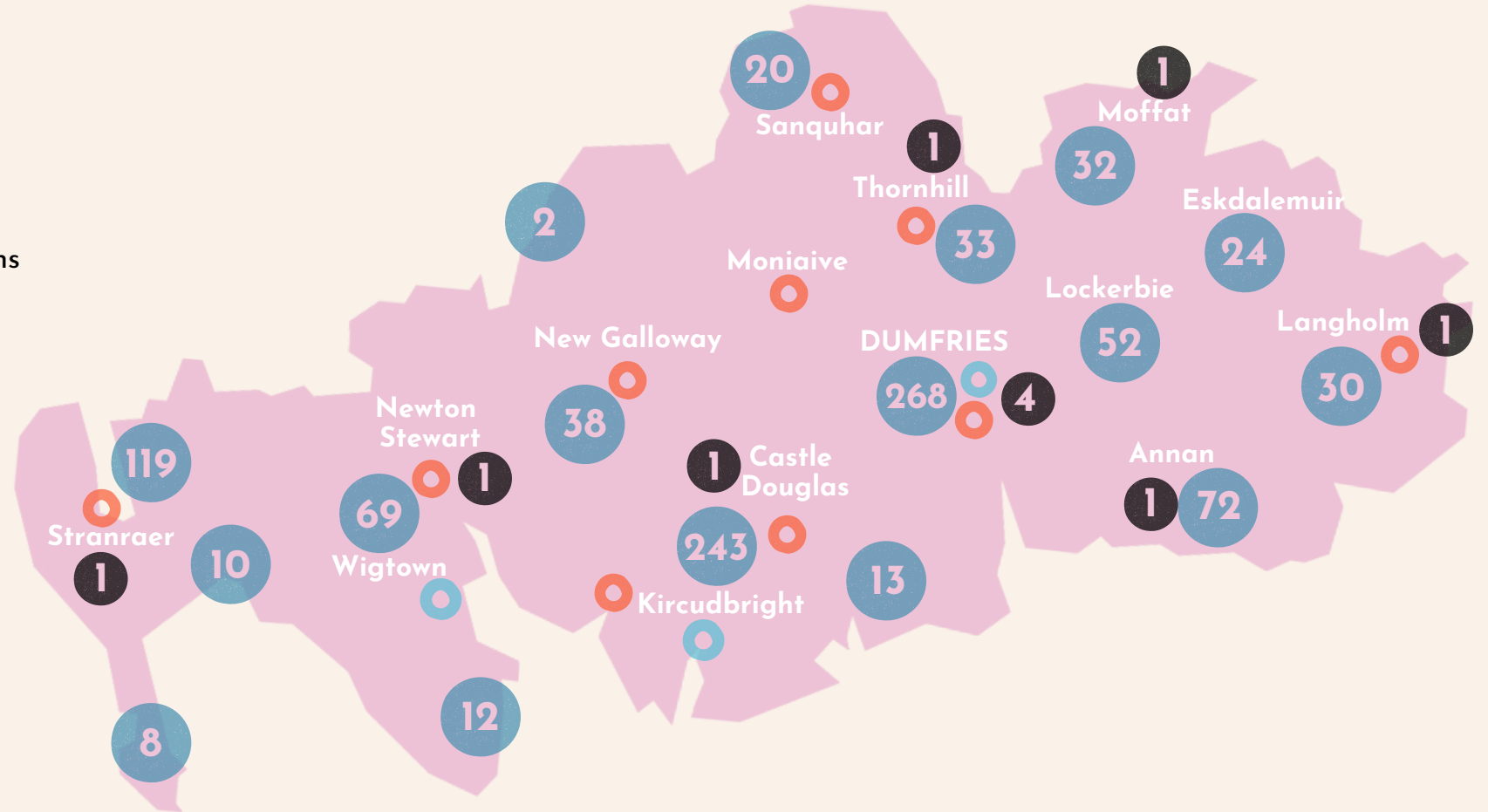
[5] <https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/>

[6] <https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/key-themes/social-prescribing>

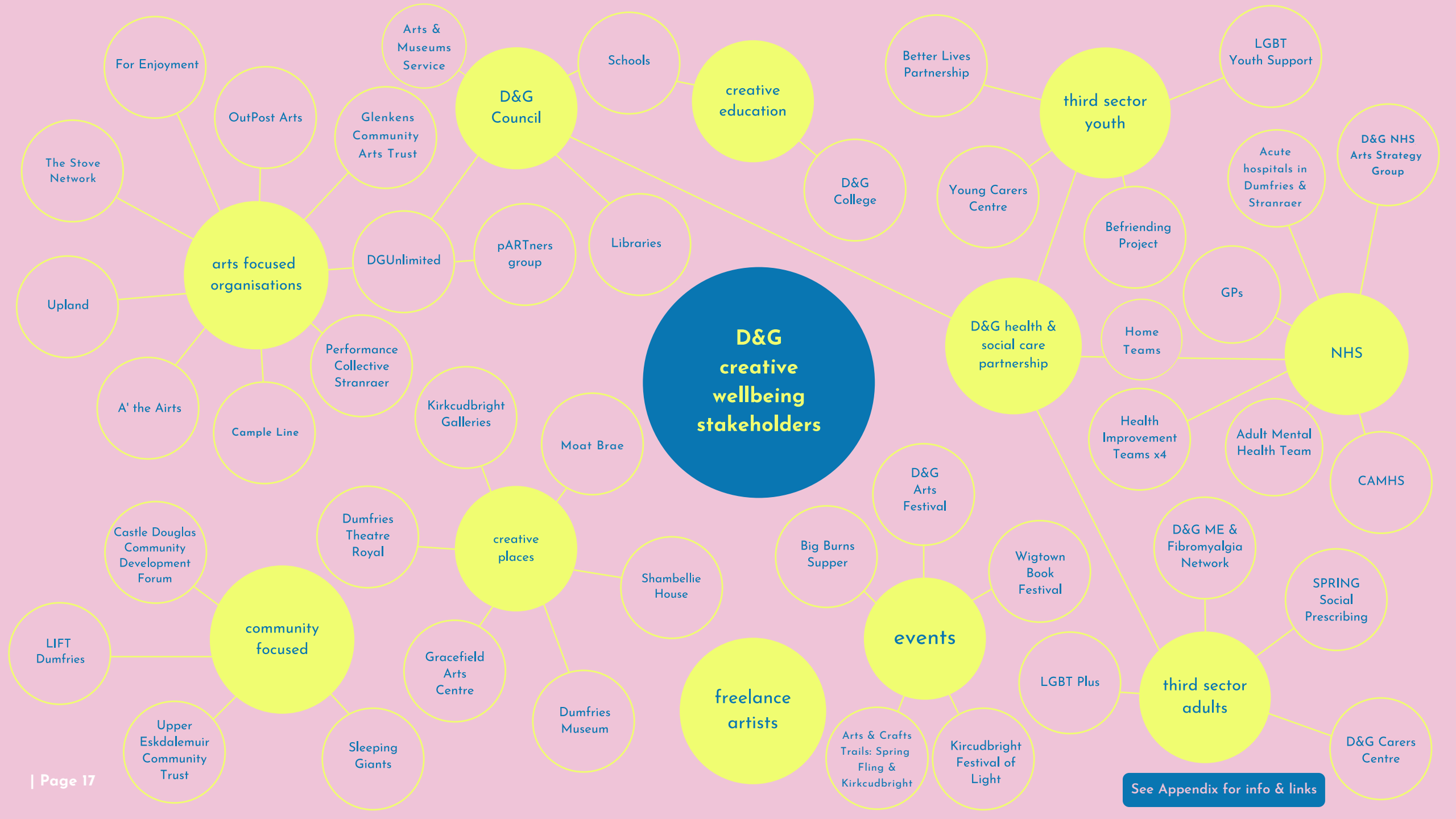
REGIONAL RESEARCH

Regional & Stakeholder Map | Engagements | Reflections | Case Studies

REGIONAL MAPPING



*Number & location of third sector organisations via dglocator.org.uk



REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

We interviewed 28 key (primarily D&G based) stakeholders including freelance artists, service users, arts/cultural organisers, strategic partners, funders, mental health improvement specialists, community link workers, clinical care managers and third sector workers.

Using the key questions outlined on Page 19 as a conversational guide, the 1-2-1 interviews allowed us to gather direct thoughts and opinions around the current challenges and barriers faced by our region's communities, creatives and decision makers, and identify potential opportunities. We also learned about relevant wellbeing-focused work previously delivered, currently being delivered and at the planning/development stage, leading to a greater understanding of our potential service user's needs, our partner's roles, and their sector's working structures. The process also resulted in firm agreements to work collaboratively moving forward. The '*Regional Reflections*' section (P20 - P28) includes direct responses and a diverse mix of views - creating an important 'snapshot' of work and attitudes around creative wellbeing in the wake of Covid-19.

Interviewees:

Amy Marletta - Upland CIC

Matt Baker - The Stove Network

Peter Renwick - Glenkens Community Arts Trust

Helen Keron - Glenkens Community Arts Trust

Frank Hayes - For Enjoyment CIC

David McDonald - DGUnlimited

Katie Anderson - Freelance Creative Practitioner

Sophie Jarzyna - Freelance Creative Practitioner

Diane Hay - Pilot AJP Participant

Sheila Sadler - Pilot AJP Participant

Marsali Caig - Non Exec & Chair, NHS Arts Strategy Group

Liz Forsyth - NHS Strategic Planning

Elaine Lamont - NHS Public Health Improvement

Susan Grant - Tonic Arts (NHS Lothian)

Lesley Bradley - Non Exec Director, D&G NHS

Alison Telfer - NHS, CAMHS

Dawn McGeorge - SPRING Social Prescribing Hub

Fiona Barr - D&G Carers Centre

Gillian Corbett - D&G Carers Centre

Alison Hotchkiss - Counsellor (private & schools)

Niomi Brough - Third Sector D&G

Gill McMinn - Befriending Project

Eva Milroy - Dumfries & Galloway College

Lauren McLean-Gill - Langholm Academy

Mary Morrison - RISE / CABN, Scottish Borders

Rebecca Coggins - DG Council, Arts & Museums

John MacDonald - SCVO

David Martin - Skills Development Scotland

KEY QUESTIONS

Art Journal Development Project

1

What pathways already exist for graduates of Art Journal Project, and how can we enhance this?

2

How do we ensure our participant's safety by managing severe emotional difficulties or mental health crisis?

3

How can we train and safeguard our project's artists and peer mentors to deliver art for wellbeing?

4

How should we communicate and advertise creative wellbeing services to communities and potential referrers?

5

How should we offer support and mentoring to achieve personal and/or professional goals and to maintain wellbeing?

6

How can we help young people to access higher learning and accreditation via Art Journal Project?

7

How can creative wellbeing-focused work have a wider impact on rural communities?

8

How could stakeholders more easily access information about the benefits of creative wellbeing activity?

9

How can we connect and communicate more effectively across relevant sectors?

10

How can we encourage health & care providers to refer service users into Art Journal Project? (and similar projects)

11

How can we collectively promote creative wellbeing & prescribing activity in our region?

12

How can we confront health inequalities via creative wellbeing projects/work?

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

- **Stakeholder Needs: SERVICE USERS**

OLDER PEOPLE - Following retirement, people's worlds can 'shrink', with previously busy lives becoming less stimulating. This can be compounded by rurality, poor transport links and disability/illness, or being forced into caring roles, causing further isolation, stress, anxiety and low confidence - contributing to ill health. SCVO, who partner with a range of NHS organisations to deliver 'MPower' in D&G - a social prescribing project for people 65 years old and over, have witnessed the impact on older people accessing activities digitally, which has become crucial for many due to Covid-19:

"Getting people online opens up the world to older generations – they often feel left behind as things change so quickly and it can be so incredibly difficult for them to keep up..." - John MacDonald, SCVO

YOUNG PEOPLE - Young people have struggled to maintain existing relationships and forge new connections during the pandemic, causing a detrimental effect to self-esteem, confidence and the ability to self-manage stress and anxiety:

"We've been seeing behavioural incidents plus social isolation and exclusion due to the over-reliance of mobile phones and technology as a direct result of school closures, with young people stuck inside not being able to be social." - Lauren McLean-Gill, Langholm & Canonbie Cluster Head

Despite this, young people don't necessarily want to access opportunities online, and we have to be careful not to project preconceived ideas. What they've missed most is the interaction they received before the pandemic, when referred to services such as the Befriending Project:

"They really missed getting out of their own houses... some live in a stressful home situation and that's why lots of young people didn't want to facetime their befriender as they don't want people to see their house or their space."

- Gill McMinn, Volunteer Coordinator, D&G Befriending Project

In 2017, DGUnlimited commissioned research to gather views around the formation of a regional youth arts framework and their report provides valuable insights into the provision of creative activities for young people: [6]

"... we did find gaps in geographical provision and some areas would benefit from an improved and joint focus to improve the position. Much of the youth arts activity is focused around the Dumfries area and transport across the area is an issue for almost everyone. It can be more challenging for young people in the more rural areas..."

With young people becoming harder to reach and lacking confidence to connect with opportunities, organisations developing projects need to be mindful of how they engage and present information, and the language used. Platforms should be appropriate for the age group - e.g. Instagram and Tik Tok, rather than Facebook, and visuals needs to appeal to young audiences:

[6] https://www.dgunlimited.com/uploads/1/1/5/2/115229761/youth_arts_framework_for_dumfries_and_galloway.pdf

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

"How things visually look is important, especially to young people – if you post or share something online, you need to be mindful of that... Using illustration and design carefully, with young people's involvement in the process." - Alison Telfer, Participation Lead, CAMHS D&G

CARERS - From 2020-2021, Carers Trust Scotland carried out research to understand the challenges that the pandemic has caused for unpaid carers in Scotland and consequently carer support workers and services. Their research revealed that 66% of Carers say their physical health is worse than pre-Covid, 89% feel more tired, 84% say their mental health is worse than pre-Covid, 91% say they feel more stressed than pre-Covid, 77% feel more lonely or isolated. [7] Creative participation can give carers an identity away from caring duties:

"Carers live in an isolated world anyway, so Covid has obviously added to that. Being in our groups, they build confidence and friendships are made. The ability to socialise and get together has deteriorated with Covid – carers have lost the ability to get together with people who understand in a safe place and just be themselves." - Gillian Corbett, D&G Carers Centre

D&G Carers Centre supports carers aged 7+ with three support groups - young carers, young adult carers and adult carers, with activities tailored to respond to specific needs. Sessions include creative arts and crafts. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, workshops were moved online, which immediately reduced engagement, although it did also allow new people to take part more easily.

• Stakeholder Needs: ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR

The Cultural Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway 2022 - 2030 recommends that art and culture's wellbeing benefits be prioritised, and that their ability to positively affect health be more widely communicated and promoted. Key issues have been identified that match our project's research results: [8]

"A shared voice has percolated through, identifying three enablers – capacity, connectivity, communication. These enablers summarise what people told us needs to be improved so that the creativity, culture and heritage sector can make a bigger difference and realise its full potential."

While this is a most encouraging and welcome step forward, much of the strategy's consultation phase took place pre-Covid. In light of the considerable impacts of the pandemic, as a strategy delivery plan is formed, it could be argued that creative wellbeing should be further underlined by supporting specific outcomes that position art and culture as central to our region's recovery, e.g. a cross-sector network; a roadmap to embed arts/culture into health/social care; a strategy to achieve a wellbeing economy: [9]

"A Wellbeing Economy would be designed to prioritise those things that make life worthwhile: the joy of connecting with our friends and families, the peace of walking among the trees, the satisfaction of contributing to fair and strong communities, the security of knowing we are looked after, and the feelings we express through our songs and artworks."

[7] <https://carers.org/downloads/scotland-pdfs/covid-19-in-scotland.pdf>

[8] <https://dumfriesgalloway.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s37978/Cultural%20Strategy%20-%20Appendix%20-%20Final.pdf>

[9] <https://scvo.scot.nhs.uk/48147/2022/01/10/the-role-of-the-third-sector-in-a-wellbeing-economy>

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

By dissecting commonly held perceptions around what art/culture is 'for', how we interact with it and who has access to it, we can address health inequalities and design strategies that confront mental and physical illness with preventative approaches, allowing people to explore their lived experiences and environments in ways that support personal and collective wellbeing:

"We need to bring back a 'mass participation' model of delivering culture - focusing on wellbeing, education and community development, and then invest in that properly, with a localised system of delivery that supports creative freelancers through organisations on the ground who really understand their communities." - Matt Baker, Orchestrator, The Stove Network

Arts organisations such as Upland CIC (who coordinate Spring Fling and support visual and crafts practitioners across D&G) recognised that it's become difficult to maintain meaningful relationships artists, partners and contacts:

"Covid has made things harder because there aren't the things on the ground where you can connect with people and this has stumped progression - the connections made before Covid can easily fall away when you're not able to attend things and meet people to keep relationships going."

- Amy Marletta, Creative Director, Upland CIC

For practitioners and organisations delivering sessions/projects focused on achieving wellbeing outcomes, access to training and guidance on mental health crisis, trauma, safeguarding policies and evaluation strategies is crucial:

"Training for artists is also really important to make sure everyone is safeguarded. If an artist is working with young people for example, there's a risk of creating a bad experience for both parties without the proper support. Getting the right support in place is really key."

- Amy Marletta, Creative Director, Upland CIC

- **Stakeholder Needs: CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERS**

EDUCATION - With teachers under additional pressure due to Covid-19, it's become increasingly difficult to facilitate external creative opportunities.

"Teachers have been so up against it, they've had to focus on the basics which has affected the ways in which we access young people."

- Gill McMinn, Volunteer Coordinator, D&G Befriending Project

Re-establishing extra curricular activities that enhance social skills and wellbeing have become a priority for education managers:

"Extra curricular activities direct them into whatever they're passionate about or interested in - figuring out what they enjoy, being sociable and letting off steam." - Lauren McLean-Gill, Langholm & Canonbie Cluster Head

At a further education level, the pandemic's impact has prompted D&G College to put in place specific support to counteract the detrimental effects of long spells working in isolation:

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

"The mental health of students and staff has become noticeably affected and we've invested a lot in support for staff and students including a programme called 'I Matter' - allowing them to take time out to talk in a safe space - I definitely think projects like Art Journal Project could also help those who accessed that programme" - Eva Milroy, Account Manager, D&G College

THIRD SECTOR / CARE SERVICES - For D&G's Befriending Project, who support young people aged 8-18 by matching them with a volunteer adult befriender, the pandemic has had a significant effect on the delivery of their service, which aims to improve their service user's self-confidence through positive adult interaction:

'It's been very difficult for the befriending service to do what we did before the pandemic. Young people don't necessarily want to do something online... what they've missed is that personal interaction that they get, being referred to us. Using Zoom or Facetime, lots of people live in cramped spaces and don't want people to see what goes on at home.'

- Gill McMinn, Volunteer Coordinator, D&G Befriending Project

Organisations have faced the challenge of developing creative approaches to access service users and support them whilst adhering to Covid protocols... During lockdown, D&G Carers Centre distributed grants for people to support their wellbeing. Notably, large numbers bought art materials with the funding. SPRING social prescribing hub also explored new, innovative ways of reaching

out to people at the height of the pandemic using digital means:

"It's not normally what we do, but we got some extra funding during lockdown and to help people, we sent out craft boxes and held Zoom workshops including paper making crafts and natural skin care, and the project had important wellbeing outcomes."

- Dawn McGeorge, SPRING Social Prescribing Hub

HEALTH & CLINICAL SERVICES - There is a wealth of evidence that people experiencing emotional and clinical issues benefit from accessing expressive outlets - enabling them to take ownership of their health and wellbeing. D&G's public health management team across all four D&G localities are invested in developing clearer pathways for people to incorporate creativity into their lives:

"How do we encourage more people, particularly young people experiencing poor mental health, eating disorders and so on - how can people use art to express their feelings or cope, and importantly, develop self-management tools." - Elaine Lamont, Public Health Improvement Lead

D&G's health improvement teams understand that by supporting a partnership approach, people will benefit from receiving additional specialist input and guidance, enhancing any benefits. The teams are also particularly well placed to advance creative prescribing/referral with their holistic, person-centred ideology that empowers people to achieve and maintain wellness:

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

"We're moving away from a medical model of health – good health is about working with people so they have the tools and ability to take control and take care of their own health. We must work with people and communities to identify health needs and work with partners to develop solutions and support that meet these needs." - Elaine Lamont, Public Health Improvement Lead

D&G's health improvement team is restructuring - forming new strategies and relationships which could widen access to creative wellbeing opportunities:

"There's a lot of change happening – the public health improvement team will all be part of the Health & Social Care directorate so we'll be looking much more at what we do, how we do it and who we need to be working with to develop a regional public health improvement plan. Communities need to be at the heart of this as do partners such as the Arts."

- Elaine Lamont, Public Health Improvement Lead

D&G's Cultural Strategy Project Team led by D&G Council liaised with with NHS decision-makers, identifying priority issues surrounding the development of collaborative wellbeing initiatives:

"From talking with NHS colleagues – they need to know what's out there, and what arts/cultural organisations are doing, so they're informed, and can more easily work with creative services. Communication is key."

- Rebecca Coggins, Principal Officer, Arts & Museums, D&G Council

• BARRIERS & OBSTACLES

ACCESS - As noted in the D&G Cultural Strategy Engagement Report, 'there is a lack of accessible provision and the cost of participation can be prohibitive'.¹⁰ Other participation barriers for service users include caring responsibilities, mobility/disability issues, illness, a lack of time, social anxiety, digital exclusion, a lack of access to transport or transport links, and poor connectivity.

For facilitators of creative wellbeing projects/activities, it can be extremely difficult to identify and connect with the right people, particularly when dealing with large bureaucracies such as educational institutions or the NHS. Additionally, access to referrers or project partners has been made more difficult by Covid-19, with extra pressures placed on frontline workers, core education, health and social care staff and decision-makers.

"The NHS can be a chunky bureaucratic machine and they can struggle to talk to community-based or third sector organisations in a productive way as a result." - John MacDonald, SCVO

COMMUNICATION - Due to the separation of sectors, communication networks and platforms are narrowly focused on engaging with specific audiences - namely their key service users (or patients), their employees, and the wider sector workforce. Without a cross-sector network, there are few opportunities for the creative sector to share information that could positively influence partner's decision makers.

[10] <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/22710/Cultural-Strategy-for-Dumfries-and-Galloway-Engagement-Report/pdf/Cultural-Strategy-Engagement-Report1.pdf>

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

The D&G Cultural Strategy Engagement Report also strongly states that there is 'poor connectivity between groups and sectors'. [10] A lack of shared communication channels and platforms has increased the likelihood that project plans and strategies inadvertently work against each other; further preventing the formation of a joined up vision that allows organisations to work in tandem:

"I don't want to make projects that duplicate or tread on the toes of other organisations – by sharing information openly we could find connections and compliment what each other are doing rather than duplicate."

- Amy Marletta, Creative Director, Upland CIC

PERCEPTIONS & AWARENESS - Despite a wealth of compelling evidence, and the support of several key stakeholders, in D&G there is a general lack of understanding and acceptance in regards to art and culture's wellbeing potential, and the benefit of embedded approaches to deliver health/social care strategies. The economic case for utilising the arts and culture to support health and wellbeing is not being communicated strongly enough, and the power of the arts/culture to mitigate the effects of social disadvantage is also not widely recognised:

"The problem is people sitting around the table deciding on bids for funding don't always 'get' the arts – for example trained clinical professionals are often focused on clinical pathways, safety and standards."

- Marsali Caig, Chair, NHS Arts Strategy Group

The difficulty lies in several places, not least of all the lack of creative wellbeing training in clinical education. One area we can realistically influence is though, is communication. Due to the separate way sectors operate, communication is narrowly focused on specific audience engagement - targeting key service users (or patients), and staff. The lack of opportunities to share wider ideas, evidence, learning and good practice has created 'blind spots' in understanding which could be confronted through open dialogue and knowledge sharing.

• OPPORTUNITIES & WAYS FORWARD

CROSS SECTOR STRATEGY & NETWORK - Through Art Journal Development Project, OPA has made important connections with clinical, care, education and third sector services and strategic partners such as the Health Improvement Team, NHS Arts Strategy Group, CAMHS, SPRING, The Carers Centre, D&G Befriending Project, D&G College, schools, Third Sector D&G, Skills Development Scotland and SCVO. Alongside our strong arts/culture sector connections, the foundations of a cross-sector creative wellbeing network have been formed - a significant development and strong starting point to build upon and strengthen by linking with additional key groups/orgs. It has also allowed us to develop and design a wider reaching Phase 2 AJP than was originally planned, increasing our creative wellbeing programme markedly.

With our region's public health and social care decision-makers increasingly aware of the positive influence of arts and culture on development and

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

wellbeing, it's essential that we continue to open up new networks to enable us to share evidence and positive impacts to encourage more formal cross-sector collaboration, and strategies:

"In developing a regional public health improvement plan we definitely need to be working in partnership with the arts sector..."

- Elaine Lamont, Public Health Improvement Lead

For arts and culture organisations and freelance practitioners, linking with cross-sector partners and pathway-building has been particularly difficult during the pandemic. With a dedicated alliance and network of relevant services, partners and representatives, we will see a significant breakthrough:

"We need to work out how we connect with these different sectors so more people can benefit - working in collaboration ensures everything is thought of between the creative org and the referrer - travel money built in, a support worker to support the person if necessary."

- Amy Marletta, Creative Director, Upland CIC

To achieve wider goals, open dialogue and regular communication is key, building on existing communication networks. Established in 2018, SPRING's national social prescribing network has 23 community partners. The majority of referrals into D&G's service are from link workers, but adults can also self-refer to be connected to a social activity/group relevant to their needs and location.

There is scope to develop a stronger relationship with SPRING, increasing access into a range of impactful creative projects and services as a result:

"On social prescribing - generally there's an increasingly better organised network in Scotland so it's worthwhile tapping into that network. They've been meeting quarterly and in last few months have formed a committee. Like-minded people meeting virtually every 3 months. SPRING project is leading on that." - John MacDonald, SCVO

By identifying and approaching existing networks as well as individual organisations and services, we can access their communication platforms to raise awareness, increase understandings across sectors and reach new audiences of potential service-users.

With a grassroots approach, focused on building bridges with front-line staff who are working directly with clients/patients/service users, as well as strategic partners, we can build an organic network of invested stakeholders and a more meaningful, realistic forward strategy:

"In hierarchical organisations people look to the leaders, but art for wellbeing should start with frontline staff with a grassroots approach - you could wait forever to get permission from the top."

- Marsali Caig, NHS Arts Strategy Group

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

ART IN HEALTHCARE - As we move away from purely medical models to give people the tools and ability to take better care of their own health, there is a national momentum towards integrating creative programming and public art in clinical settings, mainly funded by endowment funds and foundations. Often this action is activated via management and curation of NHS art collections.

Connecting arts and culture to non-community based NHS structures and working collaboratively with clinical teams is a complex matter, with buy-in depending on the amount of time, energy and funding trusts are willing to invest. Culture change is required to accept that the integration of art and creative practises into clinical spaces and services, significantly improves the patient experience, which impacts directly on health - strongly aligning with the D&G Cultural Strategy Engagement Report's key finding that '*increased awareness of the health benefits of taking part in cultural activity, closer working between the cultural and health sectors, and better promotion of what's available would increase participation in cultural activities and contribute to wellbeing*'. [10] Significantly, D&G NHS Arts Strategy Group is hoping to develop a dedicated role to create firmer connections:

"The Arts Officer role would be multi-faceted and would probably rely on lots of other people to get things done, but there's so much evidence about the impact of the arts on inequalities and prevention/treatment and recovery that the role has all sorts of potential."

- Marsali Caig, NHS Arts Strategy Group

INCLUSION & PARTICIPATION - With the development of a regional cultural strategy, youth arts framework, and initiatives promoting creative participation, there is also a strong synergy between sectors to address issues around access and inclusion. Covid has taught us that participating in the arts and culture can transform, empower, support recovery, and help self-manage wellbeing. Following two years of pandemic-related difficulties, organisations are tackling exclusion by delivering blended models of activity, with a combination of face-to-face and digital techniques, and ensuring that barriers are minimised:

"A curated box of materials can help make sure the young person has no materials-based barriers to taking part. With access to artists, sharing their work and receiving feedback, then showing their work in an exhibition - they would really benefit from that." - Gill McMinn, D&G Befriending Project

Building creative skills promotes personal development and connects us to wider opportunities including training, skills development, employment and creative enterprise:

"The talent development and retention story is really important with OPA's work and particularly Art Journal Project... It's about entitlement; empowerment; the development of self, and what it means to be in the world - creating function and force through artistic inspiration and expression to realise more in life."

- David Martin, Creative Industries Key Sector Manager, Skills Development Scotland

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Creative Wellbeing | D&G

STRENGTHENING ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR'S POSITION - It's crucial to encourage longer term investment in more strategic projects in order to fulfill potential. It's also important to examine how we currently support our creative leaders and organisations - many of whom are financially insecure. Third sector organisations are forced to continuously source short term funding whilst delivering and evaluating services and projects. Developing networks, strategies and programmes is intensive work, and success is built on continuity, momentum and relationship-building. This work is often taken forward by a small number of 'energy keepers' - particularly in rural regions. Investment in new posts to support sector connectors and their work is essential.

"Creative prescribing could reach more people who have more complex needs – there is undoubtedly loads of potential. It just needs that capacity to make things happen....Identifying where funding to support that comes from, and who should make the case for it, is what needs to be worked out next" - Rebecca Coggins, Principal Officer, Arts & Museums, D&G Council

By carving out and investing in roles with specific remits, strategic aims are more likely to be delivered due to increased capacity around relationship-building, project development and evaluation:

"It only works if there is dedicated capacity to deliver it. If nobody has the actual job to manage and facilitate an alliance/network it can fall down. It needs capacity. It's a job." - Matt Baker, Orchestrator, The Stove Network

"Even fantastic projects can be fragile – by giving them a bit of foundational investment and support they can truly flourish and develop."

- Mary Morrison, CABN & RISE Project Leader

OPA is sharply focused on strengthening our own capacity and enhancing our specialist creative wellbeing knowledge and abilities in order to better support our stakeholders. With careful development, OPA could become an anchor point for creative wellbeing in D&G, and position itself to advise, support, consult - identifying opportunities to tackle issues around creative wellbeing's relationships with inclusion, health, wellbeing, social care and community/economic development - ensuring D&G is in alignment with national strategies and recommendations (see National Overview, Page 35).

"Between the region's community-embedded placemaking and creative wellbeing projects, we could potentially end up with a sector full of skilled practitioners with all these amazing strings to their bows – they could get involved in delivering projects focused on wellbeing or placemaking and also develop their own personal practice, with an increased income to enable that."

- Matt Baker, Orchestrator, The Stove Network

Our creative sector is already the envy of neighbouring regions, with our innovative and progressive arts and culture organisations, our regional festivals and our army of skilled creative producers and practitioners. Imagine what we could collectively achieve with a shared vision and focused investment.

CASE STUDY

For Enjoyment CIC

"After researching the arts in South West Scotland for a number of years it became apparent that a large proportion of the population, for a number of reasons, didn't have access to truly inclusive art workshops." - Frank Hayes, Director, For Enjoyment CIC

For Enjoyment CIC is a creative movement that nurtures artistic ability and improves mental and social health and wellbeing through the power of creativity linked with community. Coordinated by its founder, Artist and Educator Frank Hayes, For Enjoyment (FE) is an arts organisation that focuses on prioritising participation - facilitating accessible drawing, photography, printing and painting workshops and events rooted primarily in D&G, but also across other areas in Scotland. Its programme of online and in-person workshops attract people of all ages and abilities, and from all walks of life.

In 2016 For Enjoyment piloted, developed and refined an accessible model of art workshops alongside events such as public exhibitions that improved confidence. Following its formal launch, they were shocked by the numbers of people wanting to take part. Feedback reflected that historically, many attendees felt excluded from participating in arts activities for reasons including a lack of previous experience and a difficulty connecting with the creative/culture sector's language, triggering a 'that's not for people like me' response. Through word of mouth and via its strong connections with other arts and third sector organisations in D&G and beyond, FE grows from strength to strength. Alliances with groups such as Whizz-Kids, D&G Carers and Better Lives are testimony to the FE programme's welcoming, grassroots approach.

FE utilises the transformative power of art on many levels, from providing a space for someone to take time out of their busy week, to supporting people dealing with mental health issues. They are breaking down barriers of social isolation and re-connecting people to their love of art, building a hugely powerful resource. The community FE has created is at the core of its strategy - crucially, three of the Directors started as participants of FE's workshops, allowing the organisation to



CASE STUDY

For Enjoyment CIC

understand and therefore directly respond to the motivations and needs of attendees. Participant feedback and personal experiences are fed back into FE's strategy and programming, with information gathered via informal 1-2-1s and group dialogue, alongside more formal evaluation tools such as forms and surveys. There certainly seems to be a broad consensus by attendees that FE has become a creative touchstone, a highlight of their week, and for some, a lifeline - particularly during the Covid19 pandemic. For a majority, the social aspect of gathering with others in a creative, supportive environment is FE's main attraction - the people leading the sessions and those who come along to online and/or in-person workshops often comment on the warm, welcoming atmosphere and it's impact on their wellness as a result of feeling 'part of something'.

FE's direct impact on wellness has been underlined over the past two years, when activity was moved online and many who struggled with social isolation and/or mental health issues turned to the community for support. This collective experience of 'getting through Covid together' has strengthened the sense of joined ownership and forever changed the organisation's direction as a result.

By responding flexibly to the difficult circumstances the pandemic produced, the transition to an online platform - mainly utilising Zoom coupled with Facebook for sharing outputs and discussing progress/results - has galvanised the community. It's led to increased engagement from audiences who were experiencing barriers such as poor transport links, social discomfort/anxiety or caring duties.

"Art should be for everybody without any barriers or exclusivity, if somebody feels they need to be creative amongst a supportive community of like minded people then they should be able to access a service that fits their needs..." - Frank Hayes, Director, For Enjoyment CIC

Frank's aims for FE's future are to maintain a high quality provision of workshops, events and partnership projects, ensuring that standards remain high and that accessibility remains at the forefront of the organisation's ethos. He aims to add capacity by connecting with other groups and organisations; and continue to work in partnership to provide opportunities for a wider number of people in D&G who have historically been excluded from participation.

"I feel that For Enjoyment is more than just a community - it is a family."
- Workshop attendee

One issue FE is working to address is their regional profile - as a smaller scale organisation (from the POV of human resources and core structure) in a region where a small number of large creative agencies and organisations dominate, it can be particularly challenging competing for funding, and therefore increasing awareness is key.

Organisations like FE perhaps have more agility to deliver person-centred work, compared to larger-scale institutions and anchor organisations, as they have the ability to flexibly respond to changing circumstances. Through partnering with others, they can also increase capacity without over-stretching their existing resources. Evidence of FE's long term approach to their organisation's development is FE's recent partnership with Moray Wellbeing Hub, which saw Frank delivering a series of creative workshops in tandem with a programme of peer training sessions - creating a new framework for MWH to deliver their own creative wellbeing programme.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

CAMHS Young People's Mental Health Forum

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service's (CAMHS) 'Young People's Mental Health Forum' are a small group of young people who are currently accessing services (or have in the past) within D&G, who are passionate and interested in using creative arts to express themselves, tackle mental health stigma and raise awareness, and work alongside Mental Health Professionals to make positive changes to the service together.

The group wanted to share their ideas, advice and experiences of mental health with other children and young people. With funding from the See Me Anti-Stigma Art Fund, they worked with a local artist Hope London and CAMHS Participation Lead, Alison Telfer, to produce the 'Be Kind', short mental health animation and educational booklet.

Watch the "Be Kind" Mental Health Awareness animation, produced by CAMHS D&G Young People's Mental Health Forum, supported by artist Hope London [HERE](#)



CAMHS D&G Facebook Page: [HERE](#)

Better Lives Partnership - Bridge to Creative

Funded by the Creative Communities fund, 'Bridge to Creative' offers young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders the means to explore and develop creative practices across sites in Dumfries, Castle Douglas and Stranraer. The programme features weekly practical sessions alongside the opportunity to engage in creative practice as an individual task. Participants work with professional artists, offering a person-centred approach. Group sessions compliment this by allowing for peer support and encouragement. BLP have also partnered with Paragon Music to deliver session which will provide opportunities for our young people to explore music. An exhibition of work will showcase the work and allow the participants to share their progress with their friends, family and community.

As part of the programme, a wide-reaching series of community-based artist-led workshops will invite anyone aged 12+ facing additional barriers to take part and explore creative themes including storytelling, decoupage and felting.



Better Lives Partnership website: [HERE](#)

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Stove Network - What We Do Now Project

'What We Do Now' (WWDN) is a pioneering experiment working with creative freelancers, places and communities across the South West of Scotland as part of Creative Scotland's Culture Collective national programme, taking place across Scotland from 2021-2022.

Operating as an anchor organisation, The Stove Network (TSN) is working with five towns/areas across D&G over 12 months (Langholm, Sanquhar, Castle Douglas, Northwest Dumfries and Stranraer), partnering with 'place hubs' in each location to help steer local themes and activities and connect the artists to the community in meaningful ways. WWDN supports x2 freelance creative practitioners in each town (x1 emerging and x1 established) to platform and celebrate under-represented sections in their communities through place-specific, community-led artistic projects, with an overarching ambition to ignite and inspire new imaginative possibilities for the places that we live - supporting individual and collective wellbeing and resilience as a result.

Each of the five 'place hubs' are working with communities experiencing disadvantage and took part in TSN's research project - 'Embers: Creative Placemaking for the South Scotland'. All have identified sections of their own community where COVID has accentuated existing disadvantage and exclusion and have experience of working culturally.

Inclusion, empowerment and creative freedom are at the heart of WWDN, reflecting TSN's and others continued practice in community arts and creative placemaking.



The Stove Network's website: [HERE](#) | Embers report [HERE](#)

NATIONAL RESEARCH

Stakeholder & Regional Map | Overview | Case Studies



NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Creative Wellbeing | Scotland & UK

CULTURE STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND - A Culture Strategy for Scotland was published by the Scottish Government in 2020, informed by a wide-ranging national conversation across the culture sector and beyond. It asserts '*the centrality of culture and creativity to the future wellbeing and prosperity of Scotland: cultural, social, economic, and environmental*'. The report also recommended the formation of a National Partnership for Culture '*to work with individuals and organisations across culture and other sectors to continue the national culture conversation - identifying opportunities and synergies, advising Ministers and building on the (national culture) strategy.*' [10]

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR CULTURE - An independent group of practitioners was formed in late 2020, creating a bold strategy across a number of themes. The group's report was published in March 2022, featuring three key recommendations relating to art and culture's potential to create more powerful, social, health and wellbeing impacts across Scotland: [11]

3.1 *The Scottish Government should be charged with ensuring that culture is employed as a key part of delivering Health and Social Care priorities and contributing to an overall wellbeing economy.*

3.2 *Scottish Government should make connections at Ministerial and policy level to highlight the impact that social prescribing can play and identify the role of culture in nurturing and scaling work in this area.*

3.3 *A dedicated funding stream for culture initiatives should be developed within the health portfolio.*

Much of what OPA has scoped and developed relates to the report's recommendations - recognising plurality, the need for access, attainment, equality, diversity and inclusion, and exploring how this could lead to a talent retention strategy for Scotland. Our organisation's intent is echoed by large strategic national structures, so moving forward the key question is - what does this mean for the large agencies, particularly around the exciting new space of social prescription and art and culture's links to health and wellbeing?

"In a post pandemic world, what are the values that are going to be important, and allied to that what are the economic changes which will be wrought as a consequence of shifting to the notions of the twenty minute town, localism and wellbeing – thinking about community wealth building – how do we build platforms and avenues for all that to happen?"

- David Martin, Creative Industries Key Sector Manager Skills Development Scotland

MAPPING ARTS & HEALTH PROVISION - Creative Scotland commissioned a national study to understand the scale and scope of creative practitioners and organisation's involvement in Scotland around the area of health and wellbeing, and to explore Creative Scotland's role in supporting this. The Mapping of Arts & Health Provisions report was published in Dec 2021 and recommendations included CS investment in funding partnerships to promote growth, increased art-for-wellbeing advocacy and promotion of creative wellbeing concepts from CS, investment in innovative practice, evaluation and impact support, support for the development of relevant skills for creative practitioners, and lastly a national strategy for art and wellbeing. [12]

[10] <https://www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland/>

[11] <https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-report-national-partnership-culture>

[12] [Creative-Scotland-Arts-and-Health-Mapping-Report.pdf \(creativescotland.com\)](https://www.creativescotland.com/creative-scotland-arts-and-health-mapping-report.pdf)

CASE STUDY

Tonic Arts | Art in Healthcare

"We're very fortunate here because Edinburgh & Lothians Health Foundation have made the arts a strategic priority; following through by establishing and funding the Tonic Arts programme." - Susan Grant, Arts Manager, Tonic Arts

Tonic Arts - Edinburgh & Lothian Health Foundation's 'Arts in Health & Wellbeing' programme - plays a crucial role in helping to support the health and wellbeing of NHS Lothian staff, patients and visitors through the carefully managed provision of high quality, meaningful and impactful arts and creativity.

The core team, led by Arts Manager Susan Grant, consists primarily of freelance creative industry professionals with specific expertise who work in partnership with the NHS, specialist creative organisations and cross-sector partners towards developing programmes of art and design commissions, art collection provision, exhibitions, artist residencies, participatory arts activities and performances across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Initially focused on coordinating the healthboard's extensive art collection and bringing this together with a cohesive management plan for existing participatory creative activity, their remit has grown, developing responsive environmental, commissioned and experiential projects and activity programmes. Presenting as a sophisticated and confident contemporary arts programme, Tonic Arts activities are integrated into the public health apparatus, with their operational/staff budget coming directly from the healthboard's endowment fund (Edinburgh & Lothian Health Foundation), unlike in many other regions where equivalent programmes operate independently, and are forced to source ongoing funding to survive. This stability and continuity has allowed Tonic Arts to establish and nurture it's wide-reaching programme and develop a strong identity.

The Tonic Arts programme's holistic approach, which harnesses the power of arts and creativity to positively impact on health & wellbeing, includes improving patient's experiences (e.g. reducing the need for pain medication), shortening in-patient stay times, reduction of anxiety and depression, and the improvement of patient and staff morale. Tonic Arts accomplishes this by coordinating live sessions, training opportunities and events, and the curation of an evolving exhibition and artist residency



Above: Life Under Lockdown Commission by Emelia Kerr Beale

CASE STUDY

Tonic Arts | Art in Healthcare

programme that responds to specific needs, people and places. By working with patients, staff, communities and artists to co-direct commissioned programmes, Tonic Arts ensures that both processes and outcomes fully engage key audiences; encouraging them to build positive connections and relationships with art and creativity - unlocking the potential to address and confront issues that negatively impact on wellbeing.

By nurturing and developing relationships with patients and staff in specific healthcare settings, (such as Dementia Care at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and Liberton Hospital) in partnership with specialist delivery partners such as Artlink, Tonic Arts have explored ways in which families, nursing staff and artists can work together as a team, and learn from each other in order to make positive changes within the wards. This work explores concerns such as low motivation, social isolation and boredom - ensuring relevance and greater impact of longer-term approaches.

The management of NHS Lothian's impressive art collection (partly gifted and partly purchased with the help of charitable bequests) and Tonic Arts' exhibition programme also ensures that both the art and the artists are embedded into traditionally clinical spaces, providing stimulation and inspiration for patients, staff and visitors at six gallery spaces across five NHS Lothian hospital sites. The exhibition and residency programmes aim to showcase a dynamic and diverse range of artworks including patient and staff work alongside professional and commissioned work.

Responding directly to the pandemic in 2021 the 'Life Under Lockdown' exhibition at the Anne Ferguson Gallery at the Western General Hospital saw seven commissioned artists - each from a different decade of life - carrying out 'micro-residencies' before coming together to create a unique snapshot of personal experiences of these unprecedented times. A film was also screened at NHS Lothian hospital sites, complimenting the exhibition. For many people, exposure to art in hospitals



Above: (from top) Music in Hospitals & Care
The Museum of Memory and Myth by Hans Clausen

CASE STUDY

Tonic Arts | Art in Healthcare

or other clinical settings is a unique experience, and as a result can have a profound effect, allowing them an opportunity to reflect and find meaning. The Tiled Corridor at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital (focused on patient's mental health) by artist Frances Priest, The Museum of Memory and Myth by Hans Clausen and community members surrounding Pennywell All Care Centre, are examples of site-specific pieces of work developed via sensitively handled creative engagement and development processes, resulting in displays of thought-provoking work that connect clinical spaces to the human experience.

The high quality of Tonic Arts' work, the calibre of artists/creative practitioners they work with, and the approach behind the organisation's presentation is no accident:

"We put forward the case for funding to sub-brand the programme and develop a microsite... By communicating 'artistic quality' we attract artists who will bring about a more impactful benefit to patients as a result of their work. It also allows us to connect with national organisations more easily." - Susan Grant, Arts Manager, Tonic Arts

With funding in place to increase its capacity, next steps for Tonic Arts include the development of clearer evaluation methods and the much needed expansion of its core team in order to further meet people's needs and fulfil the organisation's potential, particularly around developing its community-based work and supporting social prescribing in Edinburgh & Lothians.

With a clearly defined remit, a history of delivering high quality, meaningful work and a strong strategic position within their region's network, Tonic Arts are perfectly placed to champion the creative prescribing movement and support collective wellbeing at all levels of society as a result.

Below: (from top) Life Under Lockdown Commission by David McCulloch
Artlink Edinburgh & Lothians



Tonic Arts website: [HERE](#)

CASE STUDY

RISE Borders | Arts & Wellbeing Group

RISE Arts & Wellbeing Group is an informal collective of creatives, arts organisations, health professionals and policy makers from across the Scottish Borders. The network was a key action which developed from a one-off RISE Arts and Mental Health symposium in 2018, co-ordinated by the Creative Arts & Business Network (CABN). Since its inception in 2009, CABN has been led by Mary Morrison - a practicing visual artist with extensive knowledge of the creative sector.

"CABN's priority is focused on supporting creative professionals across all artforms, many of whom work in or seek to work in, the context of wellbeing and socially engaged practice. In order to support their individual practice and make connections between potential local commissioners of work, we were keen to host a symposium which brought creative practitioners, healthcare professionals and policy makers together." - Mary Morrison, Project Lead, CABN

CABN and Scottish Borders Joint Health Improvement Team identified a clear opportunity to join forces to highlight existing good practice/learning and gather momentum around forming new, productive connections. This collaborative approach meant that the event and the partnership which developed from it included senior people from NHS Borders, the local Council and Live Borders who had shared remits:

"In a perfect synergy of timing and intention, Steph MacKenzie, a Health Improvement Specialist (Scottish Borders Council/NHS Borders) had the same idea coming from the perspective of health. It all happened very quickly – Steph introduced herself to the team and our ideas matched. The timing was driven in part by the NHS funding requirements and also to coincide with the national Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival in May 2018."

- Mary Morrison, Project Lead, CABN

Although many people see CABN as an independent arts organisation, technically it sits within the public sector as part of the Live Borders Arts & Creativity team. Live Borders is the culture, sport and leisure trust for the Scottish Borders. Established to connect, signpost and advocate, CABN has become an anchor point of the region's creative landscape, facilitating planning/consultation and advocacy, networking, professional development, learning and funding opportunities for the sector. The Joint Health Improvement Team leads and supports work across the Scottish Borders to improve health and reduce health inequalities, providing a specialist health improvement service for the whole of the Borders - working in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders, Police Scotland, voluntary organisations, local



businesses and the community. By joining forces, Mary and Steph established a mutually beneficial and complimentary relationship which enabled attendees/participants to tap into current thinking around creative wellbeing and explore, discuss and shape future approaches for collaboration across boundaries:

"The key thing was to establish a network and connections so these actions and conversations could be continued... We were wanting to shine a light on what was going on in the Scottish Borders but also look at what was going on elsewhere with break-out sessions... then there was a final report. There was talk of a strategy as well, but it came down to who takes that on..." - Mary Morrison, Project Lead, CABN

The RISE Arts & Wellbeing Network met three times before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and the network's initial meeting led to the development of a programme for the 2019 Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (SMHAF) with 550 participants - the first time that there had been a local programme from the Scottish Borders for this national event. A Facebook page was established for the network, with communications facilitated by the two key partners.

Difficult issues around 'energy keepers' and project ownership were underlined when, due to the strain placed on existing workloads of the key partners by the pandemic and without a clear remit around the development of RISE Borders, both Mary and Steph were forced to prioritise their central role's workstreams, placing the network on hold until 2022. One initiative was successfully delivered during this time, however - 'Creative Writing for Wellbeing' (via Live Borders Libraries service, funded by the Scottish Borders Joint Health Improvement Team and Creative Scotland) was designed to reach people with mild to moderate needs at risk of experiencing social isolation/loneliness, helping participants to manage their own health and wellbeing and prevent more serious issues related to their mental health.

Having navigated the pandemic, in February 2022 CABN delivered one of the events initially planned for SMHAF 2020 by the key RISE partners and developed by CABN's Advocate for Public Art & Community Engagement, Lara Greene - The 'Gathering Perspectives' event, aimed at creative practitioners, reflected on the experiences of the last two years, and recognised that the pandemic has led to a stronger understanding and recognition of the life enhancing outcomes that engagement with the arts can deliver. A subsequent informal meet-up of the event's attendees took place in April 2022, to continue the connections.

CABN and the Joint Health Improvement Team have laid a crucial foundation stone but it's future is fragile. The ability of RISE to fulfill its true potential relies on the network's continued facilitation - currently a challenge with CABN transitioning out of Live Borders, who cannot support it due to a change in priorities. Efforts continue to be made to ensure that relevant funders and policy makers fully appreciate creativity's contribution to health and wellbeing, understand the economic case for the integration of art into healthcare, and consequently invest in strategies/initiatives that support progressive and preventative approaches. RISE's success in pulling together and connecting stakeholders, and initiating and supporting new strategies and pieces of work is clear evidence that it has been a hugely valuable catalyst for positive development through connecting individuals and organisations with shared interests.

RISE Network Facebook: [HERE](#) | RISE 2018 symposium report: [HERE](#)

ART JOURNAL PROJECT RESEARCH

Creative Engagements | Questionnaire

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Art Journal Project | Background

Workshop Process

The creative engagement workshops were designed and delivered by For Enjoyment Director Frank Hayes, supported by AJDP's lead, with an objective to investigate the barriers, needs, aims and creative ambitions of key target groups. They took place via Zoom and lasted for x2 hours. The young people and carer groups received materials kits to ensure they could easily take part and follow the session's exercises, whilst providing them the means to take part in further creative activities. As well as allowing OPA to collect stakeholder feedback, the sessions were also a chance to give potential participants a taste of Art Journal Project. The session's programmes and conversation starters were identical for all workshops, making the results easier to collect and analyse. Follow-up questions were dictated by the direction and flow of the conversations.

- PROJECT INTRO - Art Journal Project background, personal introductions and disclaimers
- MATERIALS INTRO - Guidance about using materials, checking everyone has necessary equipment
- AUTOMATIC DRAWING EXERCISE | Remembered Landscapes - Warm up exercise to relax eyes, minds and hands followed by brief conversation around current barriers and issues, especially effects of Covid-19
- CONTINUOUS LINE EXERCISE | Drawing objects/scenes from room you're in - Exercise focusing on observation followed by discussion about wellbeing priorities, creative development ambitions. Follow up questions around current creative activities and what skills everyone would like to improve
- ZENTANGLES - Mindfulness & relaxation focused exercise followed by conversation about long term ambitions and goal
- REFLECTIONS & SHARING - Personal experiences of taking part in the session, with follow up questions about how to model AJP around the group's specific needs and schedules

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Art Journal Project | Young People Feedback

Young People

Youth sessions were facilitated by key contacts - Alison Telfer, who coordinates the CAMHS Arts Participation Group, and Langholm Academy's Head Teacher Lauren McLean Gill, supported by the school's Art Teacher Adam German.

Two separate sessions were organised to ensure the groups felt comfortable and at ease talking about potential difficulties and negative experiences. Alison was present during the CAMHS engagement session for additional support. In total eleven young people aged 11-17 participated.

- **CURRENT CREATIVE INTERESTS** - Animation, Anime, Drawing, Painting, Gaming eg Minecraft, Lego, Writing
- **WOULD LIKE TO TRY** - Murals, Gaming-related Art/Design, Printmaking, Photography
- **WIDER AMBITIONS** - Exhibiting work, sharing work online, go to college to study Graphic Design or Illustration
- **POTENTIAL CREATIVE RESEARCH TRIPS** - Zoo, Beach, Museum, Castle
- **PREFERRED PROJECT STRUCTURE** - Regular but weekly is too much, working in groups with similar issues and interests, enjoy the 'Create & Chat' format via Zoom, working in mixed age group works well (11-17), using Youtube to record workshops and then discussing them in person via Zoom would help, two people needed to support online sessions is required, be aware not all young people on social media



"I've never seen my work framed and put on a wall..."

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Art Journal Project | Adult Carers Feedback

Adult Carers

Adult carer sessions were facilitated by key contacts - Fiona Barr, Claudine Brindle and Gillian Corbett who work at D&G Carers Centre. They invited participants, organised invitations to take part and ensured the delivery of materials to participants.

Fiona was also present during the session for additional support. In total 5 adult carers took part in the session.

- **CURRENT CREATIVE INTERESTS** - Drawing, Painting, Crafts, Flower Arranging, Textiles
- **WOULD LIKE TO TRY** - Printmaking, Clay, Photography, Collage, more creative mindfulness exercises
- **WIDER AMBITIONS** - Exhibiting and sharing work, improving digital skills
- **POTENTIAL CREATIVE RESEARCH TRIPS** - Art in nature, locations with accessibility in mind
- **PREFERRED PROJECT STRUCTURE** - Carers often prefer to take part in timetabled live sessions rather than access recorded tutorials in their own time - timetabling gives them more reason to take part and they're more likely to ring-fence the time; extra support and guidance needed to build confidence and use online platforms; many prefer face-to-face workshops over online, although online sessions can overcome the issue of finding someone to take over carer duties - a blend of in-person and online preferred overall



"I'd love to try watercolours again and expand my painting skills"

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

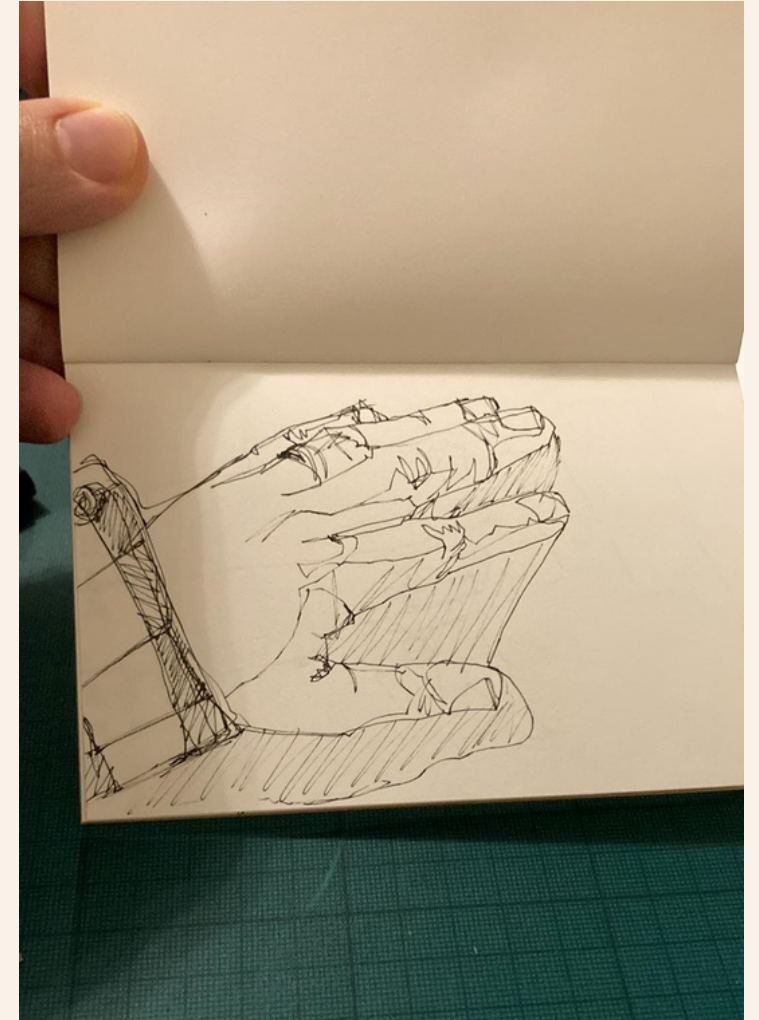
Art Journal Project | For Enjoyment CIC Feedback

Adult - For Enjoyment

Two groups of adults took part in the adult workshops, pulling participants from the For Enjoyment community. Recruitment was facilitated by Frank Hayes, and participants were from a wide age range (23 - 60+).

In total 20 people took part over two sessions. Their motivations for taking part in creative activities included chronic pain management, anxiety and isolation. Some participants had additional needs such as ADHD, Asperger's and Autism.

- **CURRENT CREATIVE INTERESTS** - Mixed media, Painting Drawing, Photography, Printmaking, Illustration
- **WOULD LIKE TO TRY** - Murals and other public art projects, large-scale painting / spray painting, printed textiles, projections, screenprinting, book-making, clay, sculpture, animation, film-making, watercolour painting
- **WIDER AMBITIONS** - Exhibiting and sharing work, improving digital skills, professional/personal development
- **POTENTIAL CREATIVE RESEARCH TRIPS** - Drawing wildlife, art in nature, adventures/walks, locations with accessibility in mind
- **PREFERRED PROJECT STRUCTURE** - Some people still shielding and many live in rural locations, so online/digital access remains crucial but people are keen to have some in-person workshops



"Online access has been crucial during Covid & lockdown..."

QUESTIONNAIRE

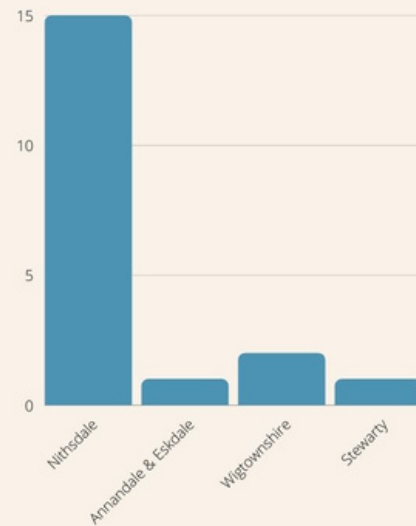
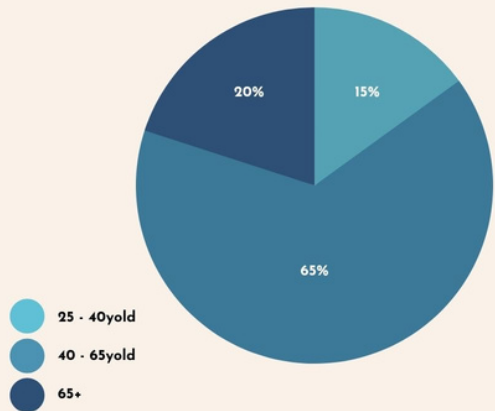
Art Journal Project | Results

Background & Demographics

In order to develop services which best fit the needs of our intended audience, we distributed an online questionnaire following the creative engagement sessions, attracting 21 responses. This summary will give an overview and analysis of the responses and feed into the design of the Art Journal project.

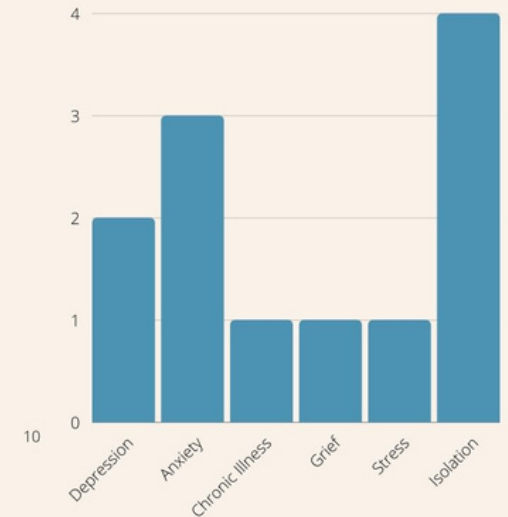
Please note that answers from the age cohort 11-17, are included in analysis of our Young People's engagement sessions (below left).

Most of the participants were aged between 40-45 and living in the Nithsdale region of Dumfries & Galloway (below right).



Challenges Faced

A wide range of challenges were presented by the participants, with anxiety the most common among the group. Participants were encouraged to select or input as many challenges as they felt were necessary (below left).



Interestingly, although anxiety was the primary issue faced by the cohort, more people highlighted 'isolation' as their priority issue to focus on, followed by anxiety (above right).

QUESTIONNAIRE

Art Journal Project | Results

Current Support

Few participants (5) shared any services they were currently engaged with, but those who did highlighted that the Carers Trust (3) was a primary source of support. It is unclear from the data whether participants were unwilling to share which services they currently access for support, whether they are not currently supported by any service, or whether they weren't sure how to input the service. It will be important to understand referral routes as the project progresses.

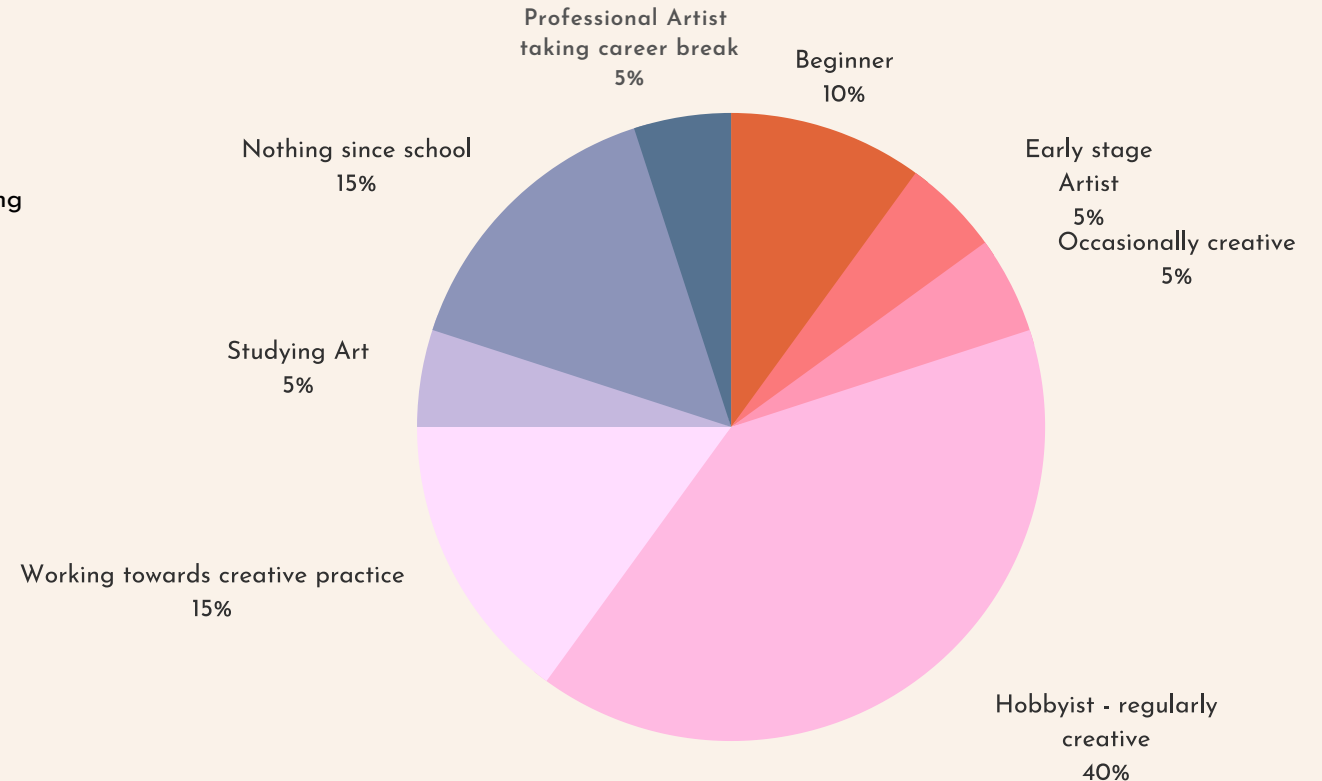
Creative Development Goals

Understanding motivations for participation in terms of personal, creative development goals showed a clear ambition toward exhibiting work and integrating creativity into daily life. Both of these can have strong mental health outcomes in terms of improving confidence and supporting mindful and creative practice (below).



Art & Creativity Experience

The participants had varying levels of interest and experience in art and creativity. The overall picture demonstrates that most of the cohort have some previous or current experience, with a majority of participants taking part in regular creative activity.

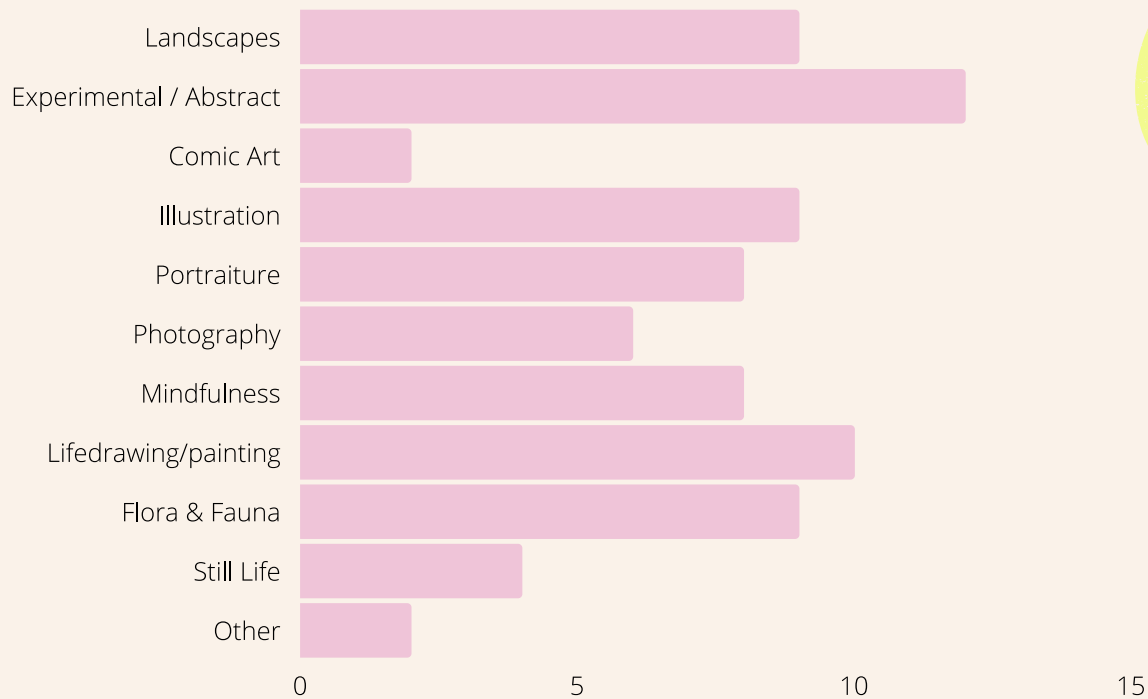


QUESTIONNAIRE

Art Journal Project | Results

Programme Content

We also asked the cohort about the different subject matters they would be interested in covering as part of participating in a creative wellbeing project, with Experimental Art and Lifedrawing/painting being the most popular activities to explore (below).



Previous Participation

Most of our cohort had never, or weren't sure if they had, participated in a creative wellbeing project before.

But for those who had, some key takeaways included:

"Taking part in the online For Enjoyment creative workshops have helped with my own mental health. When I was isolating and too anxious to leave my house, I still felt connected to the outside world"

"Gave me some time to clear my head and space to be me"

"Is very absorbing and so a way to de-stress"

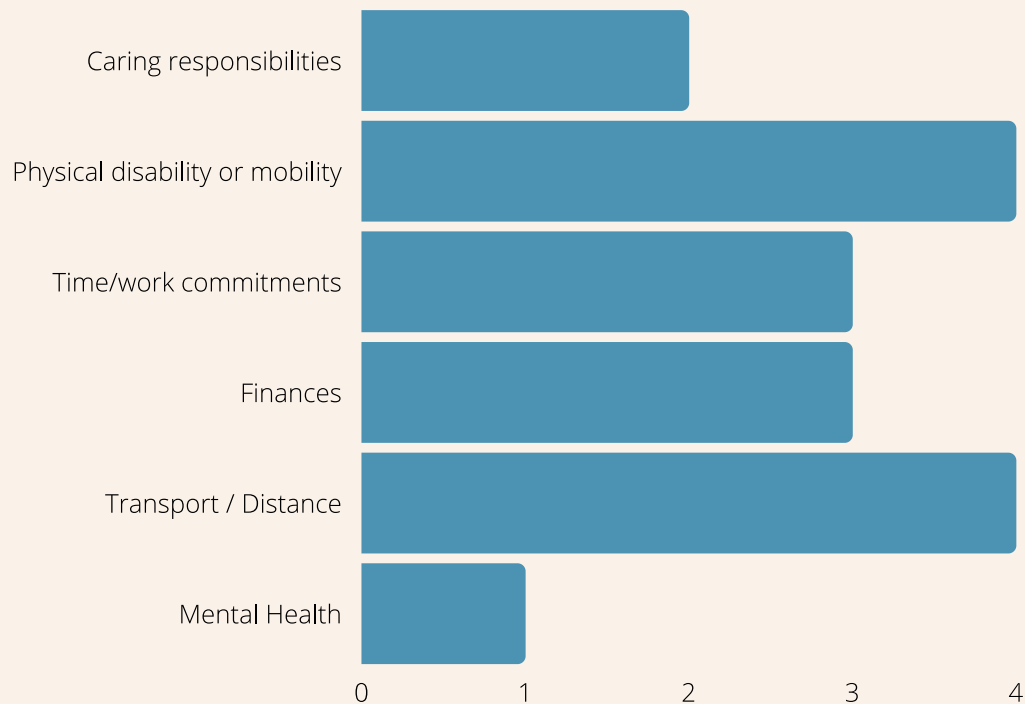
"The creative activities helped me to relax and focus on something I enjoyed and could pursue independently"

QUESTIONNAIRE

Art Journal Project | Results

Barriers

Not surprising for a rural region, transport and distance is a significant barrier for some of our cohort. Similarly, physical impairment has meant that some have not been able to participate (below).



Attendance

We asked our cohort if they would attend sessions hosted online, via Zoom. Although the answer was overwhelmingly yes (70%), some respondents provided caveats to their answer as below:

"Yes but not the best solution. That'd be getting transport to meet other people and experience nature"

"Yes although access to Internet is sometimes an issue"

"Yes but sometimes I would struggle"

"Occasionally yes"

"Not uncomfortable with the idea but they can be very draining when using video calls for work all day"

Although Zoom offers the best cross-section of audience across the widest possible geographical area, we must also consider two things: digital exclusion and 'Zoom fatigue'. There would need to be a balance between online and in-person support for the project that doesn't exclude people who are uncomfortable or unable to use the Internet for various reasons. Given the nature of this project, digital skills and digital accessibility will have to be a key consideration.

When asked if face-to-face delivery would be acceptable, the group were largely in favour, but did express concerns around COVID.

CREATIVE WELLBEING NETWORK RESEARCH

Engagement Event | Event Scribing | Questionnaire | Next Steps

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network Event

Interviewees from the project's initial 1-2-1 engagement phase, alongside wider networks, were invited to participate in an evening 'Creative Wellbeing Network Event' facilitated by OutPost Art's Chair and Art Journal Development Project's Lead, with the 30 attendees representing relevant sectors: Arts & Culture, Health, Social Care, Education and Third Sector. During what became an extremely constructive discussion, the wide spectrum of voices allowed for insightful and well-rounded responses to the key points/questions raised.

The network event took place remotely, via Zoom - allowing maximum numbers of people to attend. Delivery was supported by a data-capture platform (Menti), recording written responses alongside verbal dialogue. All of the group's responses were preserved and have been published in the report's Appendix. The following pages contain a summary of key emerging themes and ideas.

Three questions were put forward to the cohort:

- ***What problems exist in D&G, in relation to Creative Wellbeing***
 - Identifying and understanding the barriers to creative wellbeing practice in D&G
- ***Ideas – what could we do to address these problems?***
 - Identifying how we can work collectively and avoid duplication
- ***A network for Creative Wellbeing?***
 - Identifying the potential for a collective response to issues and ideas

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

What problems exist, relating to Creative Wellbeing?

Eight clear themes arose as the group discussed the issues that orbit creative wellbeing in D&G. All perspectives were considered - the participant/service user; the rural community potentially isolated from arts and cultural opportunities; the organisation or group coordinating projects; the artists delivering creative wellbeing related activities; the private counsellors and arts therapists, and the public institutions responsible for both staff and pupils/student/patient wellbeing...

1. PERCEPTIONS / ATTITUDES TOWARDS ART & CULTURE

Misconceptions and misunderstandings exist about what art and culture IS, how it relates to them as people and as communities, and how they might benefit from participation:

"There is a thing in this country about how culture is 'done' in this country, which is basically the way we understand it - it is produced by a professional sector and then consumed by an audience. Compare this to sport where it's split into two models - people taking part in sport, and then an elite sport which is funded. In culture, we haven't got that participation element..." - Arts & Culture professional

It was agreed that looking towards the Sport & Leisure sector, which is generally better resourced, could be beneficial, and that although physical exercise and creative/cultural activities are both extremely beneficial for the mind, body and soul, art-for-wellbeing has yet to attract the same understanding and investment - due to a perception that art is only 'for' certain people, or that unless a person possesses talent, there is little point in taking part. Evidence around creative wellbeing is also less accessible:

"Not enough people in the right positions/places understand the benefits of art in wellbeing." - Public sector professional

"There's a complete lack of understanding as to the value and power of the arts and culture in terms of wellbeing and prevention. I guess it reflects the focus on a treatment/medical model the NHS is good at, but getting engagement is difficult." - Public sector professional

People working in the creative sector particularly feel that art is intrinsically undervalued as a potential driver for collective wellness:

Art/Culture still considered an add-on, not a fundamental in improving overall community health & wellbeing." - Freelance arts professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

Despite these underlying attitudes, following the Covid-19 pandemic - which helped underline the healing and therapeutic nature of arts as people participated in creative pursuits to deal with anxiety and isolation - there is a palpable sense that the timing is right to take advantage of and harness existing momentum connecting creativity to health and wellbeing:

"I've seen the power that the arts and wellbeing have and I think Dumfries & Galloway needs some of that... our communities, and especially our staff after dealing with the epidemic - the time is now!"

- Health sector professional

2. STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

There are clear concerns around the stigma that people experience in relation to personal mental health, and the reluctance this breeds to engage with services/projects. Younger generations in particular are victims of pressures to maintain a 'perfect image':

"Young people often don't like to put themselves forward for projects relating to mental health and wellbeing due to perceived stigma attached. Peer pressure is huge now, with social media taking over and young people feeling so much pressure." - Mental Health professional

"There's so much peer pressure because of social media, people are seen to look perfect, living the perfect life. Young people feel so much peer pressure they're unlikely to come find help for mental health issues."

- Education professional

3. SOCIAL ANXIETY

Social anxiety, worsened by Covid-19 was also pinpointed as a plausible reason why people are reluctant to engage with creative projects. People working with young people have particularly noticed a drop off in engagement. Many people also still fear viral transmission:

"We're seeing a real rise in social anxiety across the board."

- Arts & Culture professional

"It's now harder to find young people who want to take part and maybe we've planned (art) projects without being fully able to understand how much this has impacted people. Things are taking longer than expected to return to 'normal'..." - Arts & Culture professional

"There's still an awful lot of anxiety around face to face delivery and contact. Covid also hasn't gone away so people are still worried about catching it." - Health Professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

4. LACK OF LONG TERM FUNDING & INVESTMENT

The most agreed-upon response when identifying key barriers in unlocking the potential of creative wellbeing in D&G, was a lack of appropriate financial investment. The consequence of this is that organisations who have the expertise lack the necessary resources to deliver meaningful interventions, achieve longer term goals or meet the true potential.

Commonly, organisations/groups spend valuable time chasing smaller project funding that doesn't allow for work to be properly shaped, evaluated, enhanced and embedded, resulting in a culture of 'here today, gone tomorrow' project delivery, which can cause real damage to participants and communities who have become invested or reliant. A short-term funding approach has become endemic across the Arts & Culture sector in particular, leaving organisations vulnerable and less able to support people and communities in sustainable ways.

"The major problem in the arts has been a lack of long term funding which means that people can't really plan or achieve strategic objectives because they're constantly chasing project funds. If we're trying to build these bridges with the healthcare sector, then they need to invest in partnership-building with the arts and trust in the arts sector, rather than think up small projects for artists to deliver... We need to work together on a long-term basis." - Arts & Culture professional

"Often with projects, you get to the end and it feels like you're at the beginning - for example, the participants who require additional support to meet their potential, but the funding isn't there. Without those resources, that work is lost" - Arts & Culture professional

"There is limited capacity/funding to link in with wider/multi-agency projects at times with running core services." - Third sector professional

"So much energy has to be spent every year finding funding and the emphasis is on novelty rather than sustainability from funders." - Arts & Culture professional

For third sector organisations whose service users could benefit from arts participation and creative intervention, a lack of investment in core staffing has resulted in an inability to guide people towards appropriate activities and support attendance:

"We're aware of a lot of great creative wellbeing work out there but we're not able to fund staff to have the capacity to support people doing the project - often they want to go, but not alone. We're not able to accompany them along to that project and build that bridge - people are really missing out." - Third Sector professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

5. LACK OF CROSS-SECTOR WORKING & COMMUNICATION

Attendees from all sectors mentioned a difficulty in creating a joined-up, connected vision and strategy to improve access for potential beneficiaries, and highlighted a need for investment in platforms and infrastructures that would allow for communication and pathway-building.

"We are working in silos - not sharing or understanding enough of how what we do individually could benefit and bring additional understanding to what others do. This relates particularly to creative & culture work." - Arts & Culture professional

"There doesn't seem to be much resource to help make connections that are needed." - Local govt professional

"The NHS is quite fixed and often slow/cumbersome at innovation. It's also driven by political necessities/performance and there's not much room or space to think outside the box and consider the massive evidence base for the arts in a health context." - Health professional

"We're a creative org - we have the creative expertise, good links to artists and makers but do not always have the links to the health sector, or right orgs to partner up with. We need help to find participants and ensure the right support is in place." - Arts & Culture professional

The importance of sectors working in tandem at both strategic AND grassroots levels to design an apparatus that allows the delivery of accessible wellbeing services for rural communities was pointed out:

"We need to be honest about who participates and make it available where they are - which means we need the support to develop those ideas together, and work out how that infrastructure could be 'seeded'. It should be long-term thinking and it's important for us to work together in that long term thinking - not the artist just brought in at the end. It's artists and culture workers in those conversations at Council level, in the NHS - really cross-pollinating." - Arts & Culture professional

6. TOKENISM / LACK OF INCLUSIVE APPROACHES

A lack of inclusive development processes was highlighted in discussions, marking an important distinction between surface involvement and genuine consultation and engagement. This consideration is particularly crucial when considering groups often excluded from decision-making:

"When dealing with young people, it's often quite tokenistic - projects that seem to be co-designed or co-produced sadly aren't - often a young person or a parent is just brought in at the end"
- Mental Health professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

7. HEALTH / ACCESS INEQUALITIES

The distinct needs of people facing barriers in accessing wellbeing opportunities was raised, such as young people, older people and people living in rural locations:

"Art not being accessible for young people who may not feel confident enough because of their mental health to participate in art/performance projects is an issue." - Education professional

"Solutions need to acknowledge the specific needs of our rural region." - Local Govt professional

8. LACK OF APPROPRIATE TRAINING & RESOURCES

Issues surrounding access to training for artists/creatives/facilitators and necessary resources to safely deliver creative wellbeing activity around the region provoked several responses:

"Lack of high quality training in the region for people who engage their active older communities in creative wellbeing activities" - Unknown

"There is a lack of safe inclusive space in our region to facilitate creative wellbeing activities." - Freelance creative practitioner

Ideas - What could we do to address these problems?

As conversation moved towards potential solutions to address problems and barriers, four main themes emerged...

1. BRIDGE BUILDERS

Much discussion centred around the importance of 'link workers' who create crucial connections between people and projects. Generally speaking, a link worker is a non-health or social care professional based in primary care practices or community and/or voluntary organisations, who support access to a range of community-based resources and supports for health and social care.

The development of 'arts & culture buddies' or 'creative bridge-builders' to promote wellbeing by introducing people to creative activities/projects and accompanying them to build confidence was put forward:

"I like the culture buddy idea - lots of people come back with the 'I can't draw a straight line' and are intimidated by the idea of getting it wrong. SO a buddy might help them feel less intimidated in trying new things" - Arts & Culture professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

"There's a role for connectors or buddies, for example - you need a support structure around you to make a difference."

- Local Govt professional

"Invest in cultural buddies or tap into the ones that exist already."

- Education professional

"Agree trusted 'connectors' are important for social/creative prescribing, also continuity - needs investment of resource."

- Public Health professional

Likewise, the notion of 'champions' to draw attention to the wellbeing benefits of creativity and culture was seen as a feasible and positive step in the right direction - potentially channeling people towards participation who may ordinarily be missed when using traditional recruitment processes. Importantly, it was noted that the champions themselves should represent specific key target groups (age/gender etc):

"Identify one or two key voices to make the case for culture within emerging approaches to healthcare delivery or have a regional champion for Culture & Health." - Unknown

"Young health & arts champions. 'Who knows best but the ppl themselves' - Pauli Freire..." - Arts & Culture professional

"Culture wellbeing ambassadors of all ages." - Arts & Culture professional

2. JOINED UP APPROACHES & COLLABORATION

Discussions revealed a strong appetite for a more strategic, connected and collaborative cross-sector approach that formally integrates arts and culture into health and social care settings in a sustainable way - embedding creative wellbeing into education and the public sector; information and resource sharing, and the linking of initiatives that share common goals:

"Key connections between art & healthcare would be important, developed relationships rather than repetition for each project needing to build connections/trust." - Third Sector professional

"Share our ideas regularly - be supported to develop them." - Unknown

"Forward planning for multiagency/joined up projects." - Unknown

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

"A well-connected map of localised projects that utilise local intel and really meet the needs of individuals within a community but provide and encourage linked opportunities with neighbours."

- Third Sector professional

"I'd like to see a more collaborative approach to these projects - stronger opportunities for participants to be able to work with both arts and healthcare connections, rather than relying on upskilling of one or other parties." - Freelance creative practitioner

"Develop a regional strategic framework looking at Culture and Children and Young People's Mental Health." - Mental Health professional

The timing of a collective move towards a common vision to pull together relevant sectors was underlined. It was commonly thought in the wake of Covid, there is an increased desire to place wellbeing at the core of forward planning, and that there is a rich potential for arts and culture to play an integral role. With a regional move towards network-building and partnership projects focused on socially engaged creative practice, many people felt that much of this work could align.

"Joined up policy thinking between placemaking - eg twenty minute

neighbourhoods) and art in healthcare." - Arts & Culture professional

"The pandemic presents a real opportunity I think for joining up wellbeing, education and community development with culture. "

- Arts & Culture professional

With neighbouring regions moving towards developing cross-sector creative wellbeing initiatives/networks a coordinated effort could help:

"Convene an annual conference for culture & health in South Scotland"

- Arts & Culture professional

3. LONGER TERM FUNDING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Based on previous responses around funding, it was unsurprising that when prompted for ideas and actions that might affect positive change, a request for more impactful and meaningful investment was raised by many attendees:

"Longer projects can lead to participants being more confident and developing new skills to go on and potentially be art buddies themselves." - Freelance creative professional

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

"We shouldn't rely on artists pulling 'new ideas' out of the sky - it takes time and experience to understand what works. We need to build up this knowledge, invest in developing what works and the people who are making in work." - Arts & Culture professional

"We need more continuity of projects and arts-based services, not just one-off events - the arts can literally be a life-saver when it comes to mental health." - Freelance creative professional

"I'd like to see long term multi level projects that allow for participants to then become facilitators/mentors themselves - embed it in the community through participation and empowerment" - Unknown

4. AN INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE - TRAINING ARTISTS & VOLUNTEERS

The possibility of pulling non-professional artists and volunteers into projects was discussed - proposing pathways towards training to increase confidence and build skills, plus add capacity. Many people believe there should be more training available for artists who wish to deliver or lead creative wellbeing-focused activity in community or healthcare settings:

"Artists with more experience in a variety of contexts could mentor or

collaborate with artists new to working in emerged practice
- Arts & Culture professional

"Value and train volunteers to assist artists." - Third Sector professional

"We need training in understanding & stimulating group creative processes." - Freelance creative professional

"Invest in training and skills for practitioners in arts/health." - Unknown

It was pointed out though, that there is a danger in placing too much pressure on artists to deliver all aspects of wellbeing-focused projects, and we should instead work collaboratively with health/care workers. Mental health training alone may not be enough to meet a participant's needs.

A network for creative wellbeing?

Having agreed that many of the potential solutions focused on the promotion of a cross sector, strategic approach, the notion of a collective response to the issues and ideas raised via a regional Creative Wellbeing Network was put forward for discussion, and two key themes came into focus.

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

1. RADICAL THINKING & CREATIVE APPROACHES

The cohort examined the notion that a network with creativity at its core could harness valuable skills and experience to reinvent traditional models and processes, and approach things differently to suit our region's needs:

"Get smart about how we gather evidence of success. Be creative about that." - Freelance creative professional

"Treating network building as a creative project itself - we need creative approaches!" - Arts & Culture professional

"At the start, you do need to be radical and revolutionary and advocate for the need. We all know that if the support isn't there, if there isn't the resource then it will burn out, so we really need to push for what's needed, build a solid foundation and then (the network) might change shape completely." - Arts & Culture professional

"A network needs genuine buy in from big agencies - we need to be a campaign group first in order to lever this support." - Unknown

"Can we also consider our rurality a strength - the relationships (and understanding) we have within communities, and ensure that we are advocating for understanding and working practices that are relevant

to rural places and communities." - Arts & Culture professional

2. POSSIBILITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

The idea of a regional network with buy-in from decision-makers and stakeholders which could inspire and instigate new collaborative ways of working prompted excitement among attendees:

"We could bring people together to share best practice and make connections - invite the top movers and shakers to hear what's possible." - Freelance creative professional

"We need a South of Scotland 'movement' for something to really have impact I think there needs to be a bold strategy." - Health professional

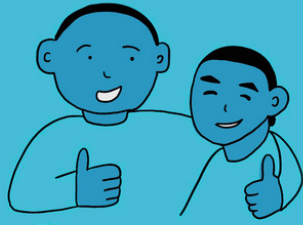
"Yes please - to connect the creative/cultural and health practitioners and to identify shared challenges and thinking creatively together on solutions" - Health professional

"A network leads to more partnership working and trust-building with other orgs - if we work with other orgs, it allows our young ppl to feel more confident in engaging with those partners in the future..." - Health professional

A RISE IN SOCIAL ANXIETY

VS

A DESIRE FOR SOCIAL CONTACT

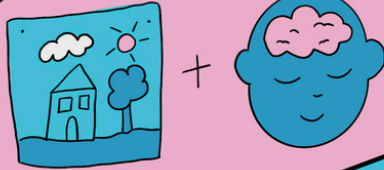


PROBLEMS



MORE OPPORTUNITIES NEEDED FOR THOSE LIVING IN RURAL AREAS.

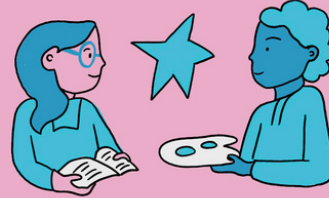
CREATIVITY IS GOOD FOR THE MIND.



FORWARD PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL

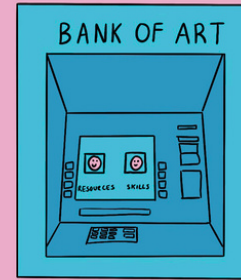


CULTURE BUDDIES



SHARING SKILLS AND INFORMATION

IDEAS



SHARING CREATIVE RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

THE ENERGY SHEPHERD



A NETWORK FOR CREATIVE WELLBEING

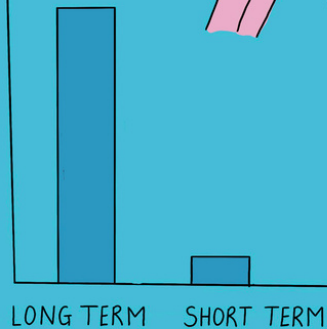
MENTAL HEALTH

ART

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

MORE FUNDING NEEDED FOR CREATIVE WELLBEING OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING

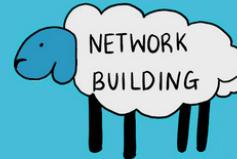


NETWORKS NEED TO BE NURTURED

BUILDING BRIDGES



NETWORK BUILDING



ART IS IMPORTANT

ADVOCATE FOR THE NEED

CREATIVE WELLBEING NETWORK EVENT

THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS INITIATING A NETWORK: THOSE INVOLVED BEING POTENTIAL 'STAKEHOLDERS'

NETWORK EVENT SCRIBE

Borderlands Illustrator Izzy Carroll was invited to 'scribe' the network event conversation, visually representing key points raised by attendees.

The image was shared online as a tool to engage a wide audience, including young people who are less likely to access a formal report or understand industry 'jargon'.

OPA will commission artists, animators and designers in similar ways to visually communicate with audiences and stakeholders as the project develops.



NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

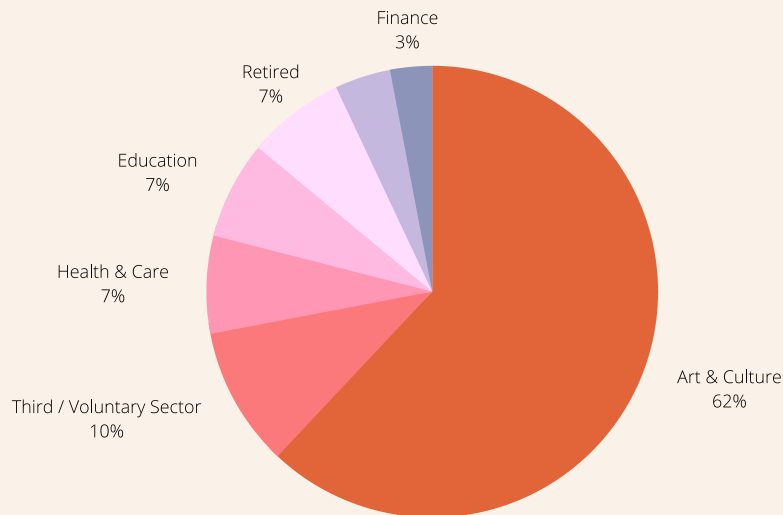
Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

Background & Demographics

The online questionnaire followed the Creative Wellbeing Network event, complimenting the responses gathered via open conversation and dialogue, and attracted 29 responses.

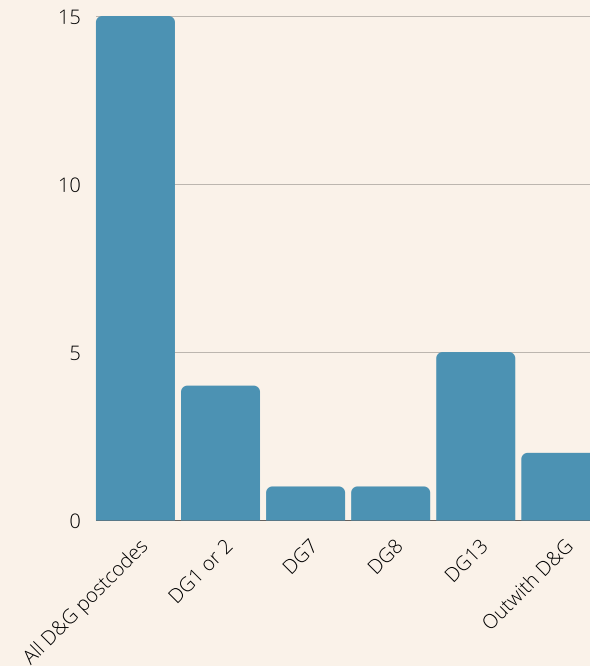
We wanted to understand who was engaging with this work, and asked respondents to provide information about their professional background and link to wellbeing.

62% of respondents were from the Art & Culture sector, which vastly outnumbered representation from other sectors combined. The second-best represented sector was the voluntary sector (although there is recognition that these sectors overlap). Most of the respondents work across D&G, which provides a good reach and level of understanding about regional need. (below).



Respondents primarily operate across all D&G postcodes (15), perhaps reflecting the working patterns of people employed/working in the dominating art & culture, health & care, education and voluntary/third sectors in a rural region (below).

A cluster of respondents working primarily in DG13 postcode is most likely caused by OutPost Art's base in Langholm & Eskdale area, and also the location of the pilot Art Journal Project.



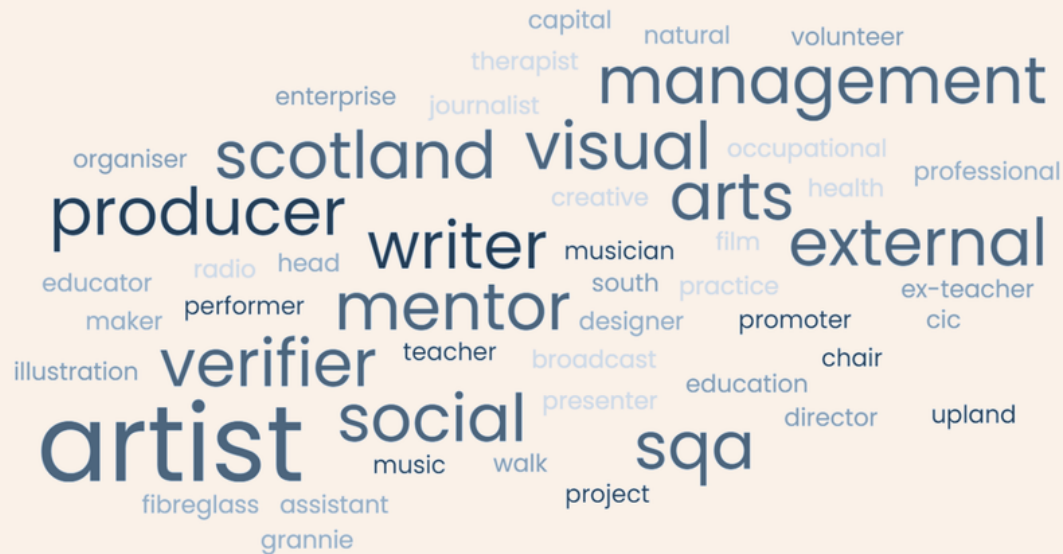
NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

Secondary Professions / Roles

Understanding that many people, particularly those working in the Arts & Culture sectors, often have secondary occupations or professional roles, we asked respondents to detail these positions (below).

Many people working in non-creative sectors also maintain part-time creative practices, or pursue a significant creative interest in their spare time. It is also worth considering that people working in our questionnaire's dominant sectors (see Q1) may be more likely to hold voluntary positions on boards and/or committees.



Connections to Wellbeing

We asked our cohort to describe how their role or organisation linked to wellbeing, and there was a broad mix in responses, including economic development, grant-making, regeneration and direct frontline delivery. Most of the responses reflected a focus on creative wellbeing or wellbeing through creative activity - which corresponds to the sectoral makeup of the sample.

However, only 52% of the group stated that they delivered wellbeing services. This would suggest that there is a flexible or misunderstood definition around 'wellbeing service' which may be need to more clearly defined. The respondents, for the most part, reflected that their roles had some kind of wellbeing link - but this didn't necessarily translate into the delivery of a wellbeing service.

Examples include:

- **Training opportunities for carers**
- **Opportunities for creatives to build confidence and connections**
- **Wellbeing events and discussion groups**
- **Theatre making**
- **Multi-sensory storytelling**

NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

Purpose of Network

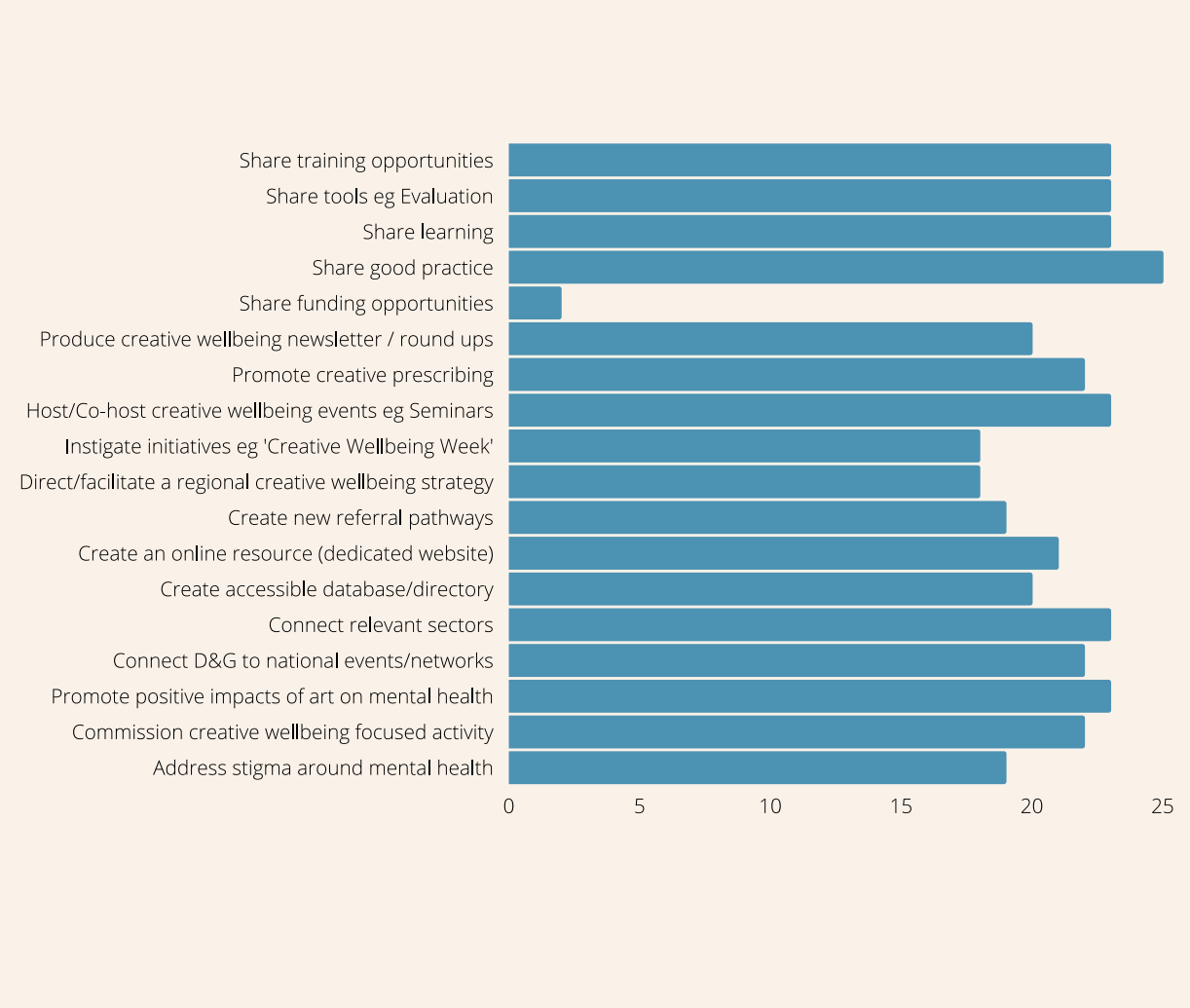
We wanted to understand what the purpose of a potential network would be, which we can break down into three rough objectives:

CREATING CONNECTIONS: To connect relevant sectors, create new referral pathways, curate networking events, deliver a directory of contacts and engage with wider, established wellbeing events.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES: To deliver training and learning opportunities, promote and deliver funding and commissions that support creative wellbeing, establish events e.g., annual 'Creative Wellbeing Week' and support the development of a regional creative wellbeing strategy.

SHARING INFORMATION: To establish an online resource for practitioners, address the stigma around mental health, create and promote effective communications around creative wellbeing (including a regular newsletter), and promote and share good practice.

When we asked the cohort to identify which purpose would be most important to them, a large portion of the group suggested that **CREATING CONNECTIONS** and specifically bringing sectors together was a priority. However, it is important to be mindful that these priorities may change with time - and once connections are made, the focus of the network might change.

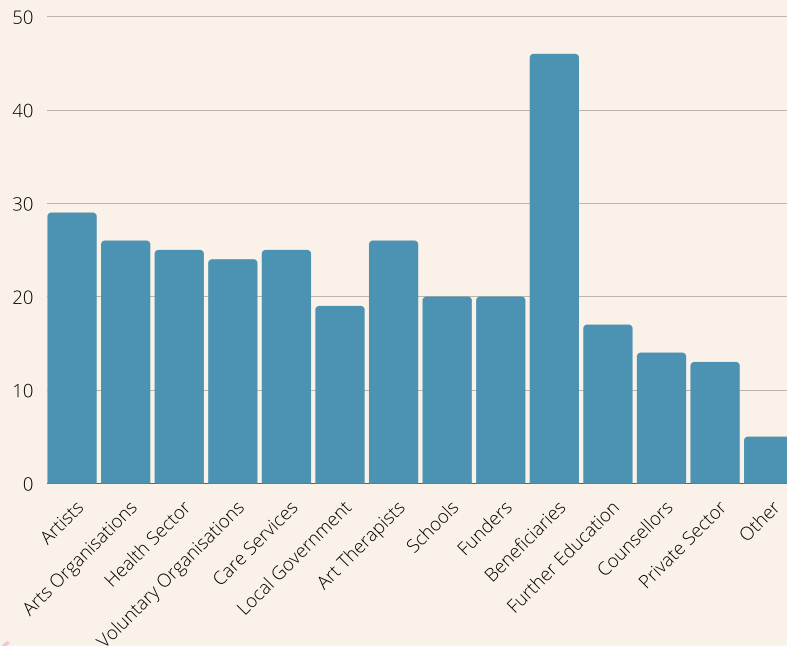


NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

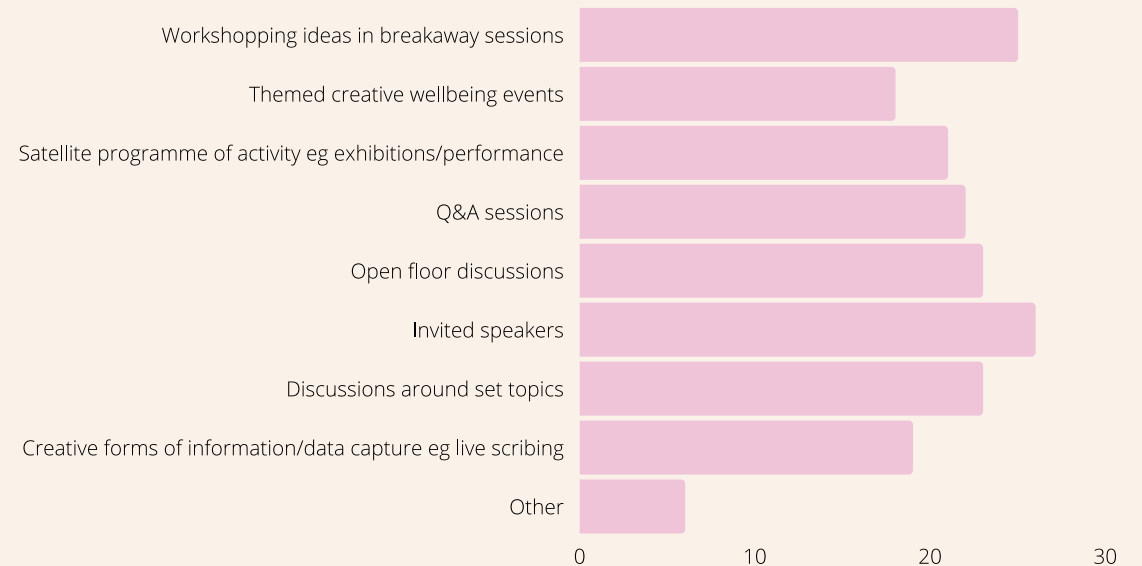
Who Should Join?

Understanding who the network should be composed of was a priority - we asked our group to recommend who should be involved. The results were interesting in that they suggested that a tiered model of representation may be a consideration. Most important to the group was representation from programme beneficiaries (people who either had been involved in creative wellbeing work or would benefit from it). Secondly, representation from front-line practitioners or services, including artists, organisations, art therapists and health services. Less important for representation were schools, higher education, local government and funders. Lastly, some representation was recommended for the private sector and counsellors (below).



Network Activities

We also wanted to understand what specific activities respondents would want at meetings. The results suggest that a curated or facilitated approach would be appreciated - with workshops, invited speakers and open/themed discussions being highlighted as priority activities (below).

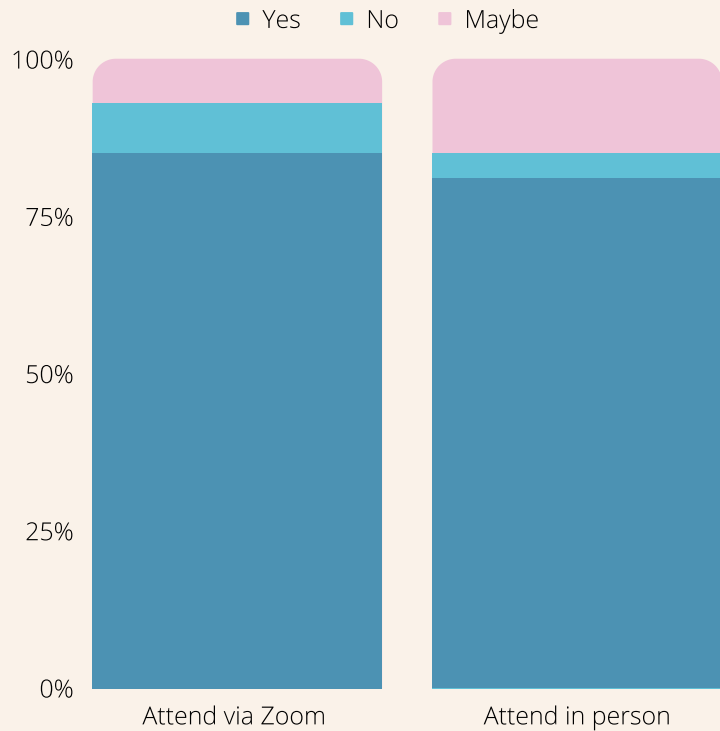


NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

Attendance

How the network is delivered needs to consider the changing attitudes towards remote working. While there was no considerable split between whether people would be happy to attend a physical event versus a remote event, there was more opposition to the individual proposal of remote (via video conferencing) meeting. This may be reflective of 'Zoom fatigue' or skills and competencies (below).

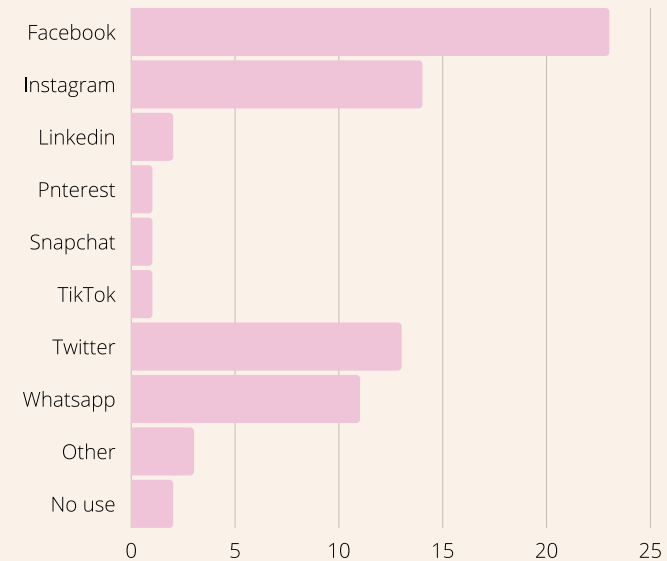


Network Schedule

A large majority of respondents would prefer the network met either **BI-MONTHLY** (9) or **QUARTERLY** (9), with the next most popular schedule being monthly (4).

Accessing Information

It's important to understand how potential stakeholders utilise the internet, and understand what social networking platforms they find most user friendly. Building a vibrant, lively and interactive presence online will be crucial moving forward - to achieve this, we must select the most appropriate formats (below).

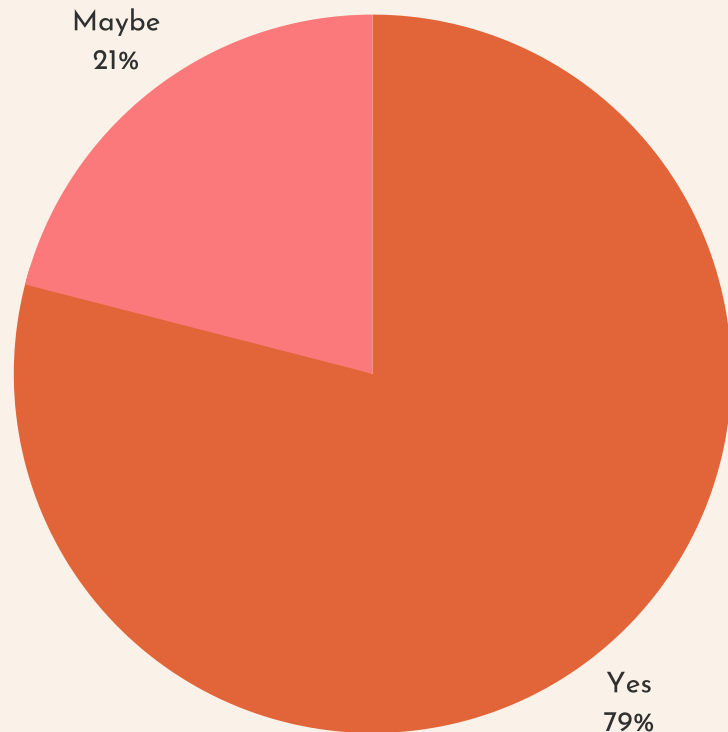


NETWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

Creative Wellbeing Network | D&G

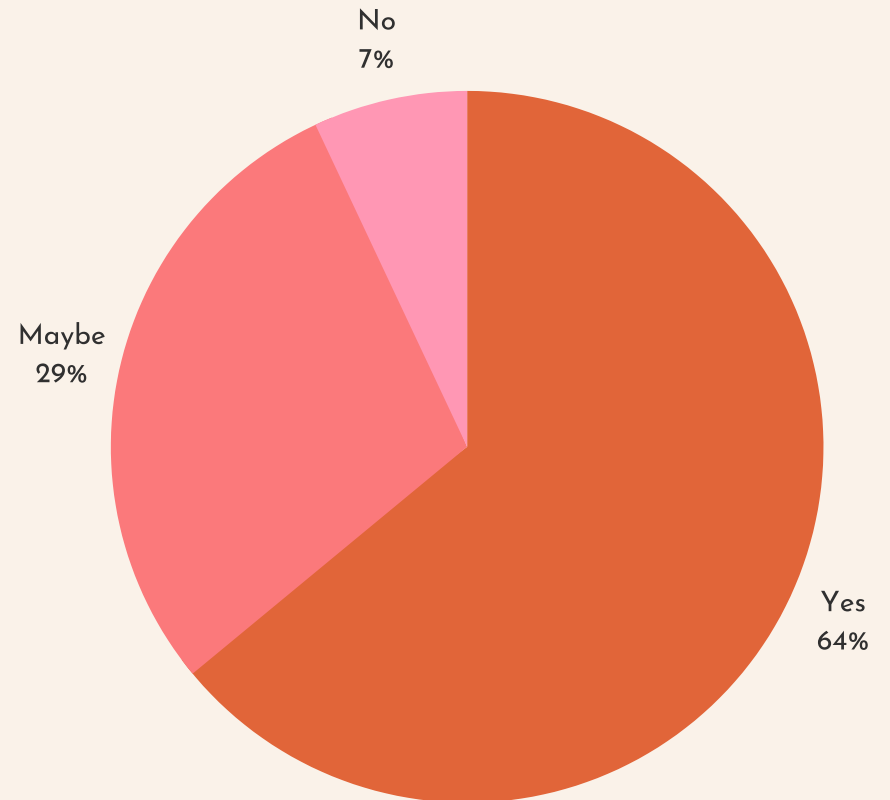
Dedicated Position

When asked if they thought a dedicated role was necessary to drive forward a Creative Wellbeing network, to maintain momentum and manage its programme, the respondents reacted positively (below).



Willingness to Join

64% of all respondents were favourable about joining a Creative Wellbeing Network with another 29% uncertain, and judging by previous responses, decisions may depend on schedules, programme content and mode of delivery/contact.



NEXT STEPS

Regional Creative Wellbeing Network

Creative Wellbeing Network - Phased Approach

In light of the network event feedback and the results of the subsequent questionnaire, we have formed a draft strategy to take concepts and ideas forward. Network building will be overseen by OPA's Creative Wellbeing Director, supported by the Communities Health & Wellbeing Fund:

- **PHASE ONE - STEERING GROUP**

A working group of people from relevant backgrounds/sectors with key skills and experience will focus efforts and allow us to tap into existing communication networks. OPA will seek funding for necessary administrative support.

- **PHASE TWO - ONLINE COMMUNITY-BUILDING**

Building up to a more permanent online presence, a network can come together, and share resources and ideas using existing social media platforms eg Facebook, and could also utilise communication/team working platforms such as Miro and Slack Channel to build up membership, share initial ideas, create a supportive, community spirit, and build momentum. Gatherings can be recorded and shared or live-streamed on Facebook, allowing people facing access barriers to join in.

- **PHASE THREE - CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE**

Given the general lack of understanding around the potential benefits of creativity and culture on the wellbeing of individuals and communities, in the short term, it will be necessary to work together to create a strong messaging campaign to raise awareness and draw attention to the strong evidence, including personal experiences.

- **PHASE FOUR - EXPLORE LONG TERM AIMS, PURPOSE & IDENTITY**

We have earmarked a dedicated website for a regional Creative Wellbeing Network (www.dgcreativewellbeing.co.uk), which during Phase 2, will be used as a platform to access resources, book into network events and share information/news. We will invite our members to contribute towards these resources with case studies and relevant learning - building strong evidence of need and benefit. An identity for this facility and the network itself will be co-designed by our membership and stakeholders.

A network model for the future will be designed with a manifesto that aligns with national and neighbouring region's strategies, linking D&G to wider initiatives, events and activities. Long term governance and a management structure will be put in place, and appropriate funding will be sought to support sustainability, leveraging our evidence base.

ART JOURNAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Next Steps | Project Management | Evaluation | Budget | Funding

NEXT STEPS

Art Journal Project | Phase 2

1. *Scale Up*

- Expand programme from x1 to x3 distinct AJPs
- Lengthen AJP programme from 12 to 16 weeks
- Addition of regular live Zoom sessions
- Addition of optional meet-up sessions and creative research trips
> scope art-in-nature opportunities (for Phase 3)
- Addition of a 3-tiered, 30 week Graduate Programme
- Addition of a concurrent 30 week Satellite CW Programme
- Build an alternative, flexible AJP model to allow alternative modes of delivery e.g. training others to deliver AJP with aid of recorded workshops paired with artist tutor feedback sessions
- Scope a Phase 3 'AJP-in-the-workplace' model to support staff wellbeing; addressing self-care and stress management
- Build in a formal training programme and evaluation process to safeguard and support the project management, artists and participants, and to measure the impacts of the project

2. *Form Partnerships*

- Strengthen relationships and form partnerships to create referral pathways (both in and out of AJP)
- Access existing networks, alliances and communication platforms to promote AJP and the CW Network (such as A&E SHAP, Health & Social Care Forum, and the NHS D&G blog)

3. *Expand AJP Creative Programme & Pathways*

- ADULTS - Introduction of 3D skill-building; using art journal for ideas development and research/planning
- YOUNG PEOPLE - Introduction of animation, photography and printmaking
- Refer young people into Arts Award programme (11-25yolds), which could be completed as part of the Graduate Programme
- Signpost & refer adults towards formal enterprise support

NEXT STEPS

Art Journal Project | Phase 2

Art Journal Project Content

ADULTS

Programme length: 16 weeks

Places: 20

Ages: 18yold +

8 guided recorded sessions:

Drawing, Painting, Printing, Photography, Abstraction, Thinking 3D, Mark-making & Mixed-Media

8 guided live zoom sessions:

Supporting recorded sessions

4 meet up sessions:

x2 trips - tbc

x2 in-person workshops - Printing, Clay

Joint exhibition - alongside youth & adult
AJP

Joint publication (see above)

ADULT CARERS

Programme length: 16 weeks

Places: 10

Ages: 18yold +

4 guided recorded sessions:

Drawing, Painting, Printing, & Photography

8 guided live zoom sessions:

Supporting recorded sessions

6 meet up sessions:

x2 trips - tbc

x4 in-person workshops - Printing, Mixed-Media, Clay & Textile Crafts

Joint exhibition - see ADULTS

Joint publication (see above)

YOUNG PEOPLE

Programme length: 16 weeks

Places: 15

Ages: 11-17yold

4 guided recorded sessions:

Drawing, Painting, Printing, Photography & Illustration (alternative themes from adult programme e.g. gaming or anime)

8 guided live zoom sessions:

Supporting recorded sessions

6 meet up sessions:

x2 trips - tbc

x4 in-person workshops - Printing, Mixed-Media, Clay, Letter-design/decorating

Joint exhibition - see ADULTS

Joint publication (see above)

NEXT STEPS

Art Journal Project | Phase 2

Art Journal Project Content:

GRADUATE PROGRAMME

PHASE 1: CONFIDENCE BUILDING (10 wks)

- Larger scale work > Exhibition & public art planning (10)
- Sml group from young ppl group to complete arts award via Graduate & Satellite Programmes

PHASE 2: RAISING AMBITIONS (10 wks)

- Exhibition & public art project (8)
- Mentoring > Researching & Identifying goals (2)

PHASE 3: NEW HORIZONS (10 wks)

- Mentoring > Individual skills development (4)
- Creative enterprise support (2)
- Digital support - sharing and presenting work (3)
- Connecting to wider opportunities incl Satellite Programme - signposting and referrals (via mentoring)
- Long term creative wellbeing planning (1)

SATELLITE CREATIVE WELLBEING PROGRAMME

Programme length: 30 wks (running alongside Graduate Prog)

Places: Dependant on activity

Ages: 11+ (>16 must be accompanied by adult)

Open to public & AJP graduates via self/3rd party referral

ACTIVITY 1: LETTING GO - LIFE DRAWING

x7 Monthly life drawing classes - across x2 venues (tbc)

x7 Monthly online drawing classes - open, themed sessions

ACTIVITY 2: CREATIVE WELLBEING SOCIALS

x3 Discussions & mindfulness activities - in-person or online

ACTIVITY 3: ART & WELLBEING IN NATURE

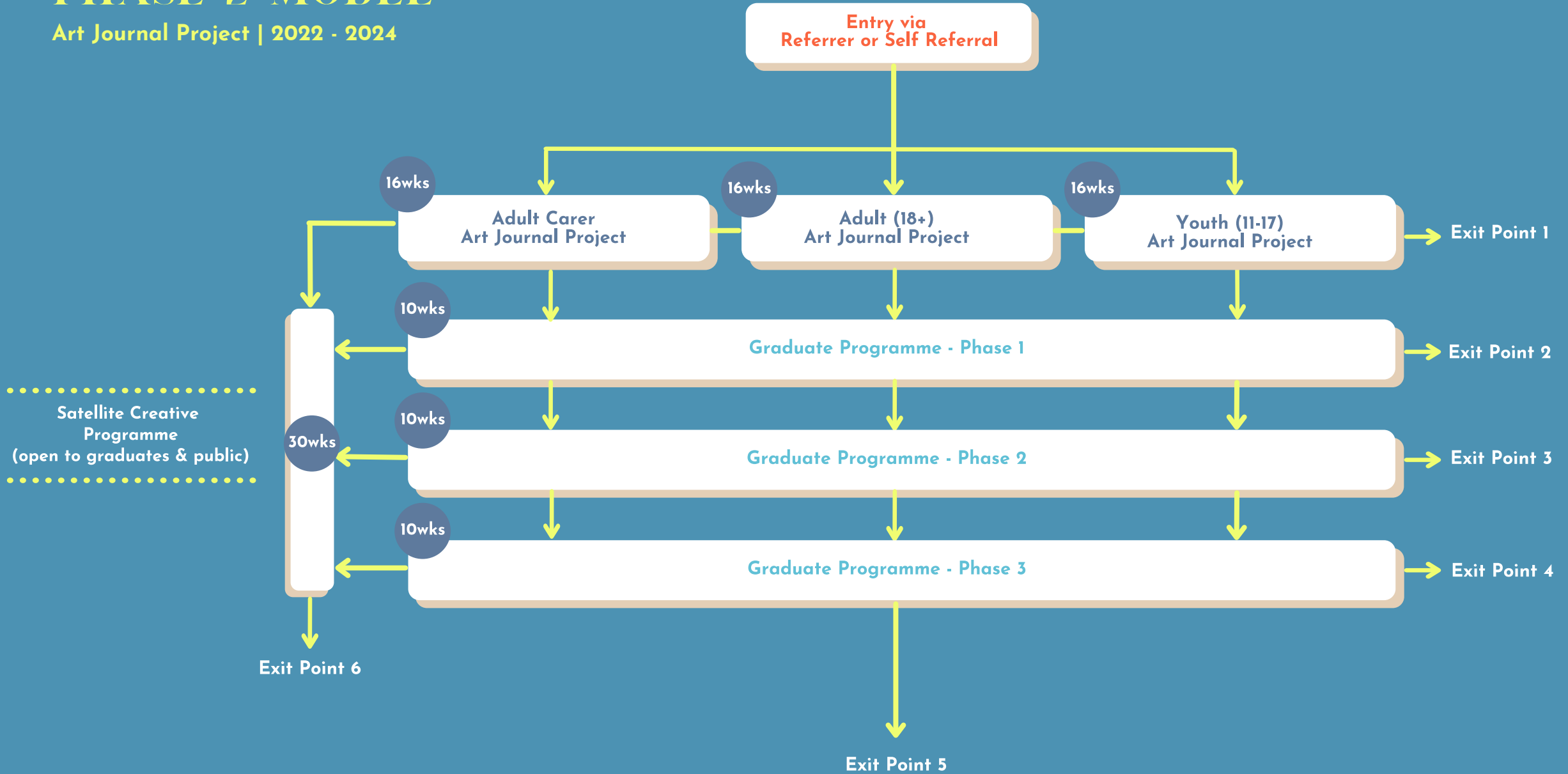
x3 Art in Nature journal trips + x6 linked creative sessions

ACTIVITY 4: SPECIALIST SKILL-SHARE

Bi-monthly skill-share sessions - accessed in-person or online

PHASE 2 MODEL

Art Journal Project | 2022 - 2024



EVALUATION INTRO

Art Journal Project | Phase 2

When delivering the pilot Art Journal Project (AJP), the OPA's team was experienced in evaluating community-based projects focused primarily on community engagement, creative placemaking and education-related outcomes - assessing numbers of people engaged, impacts on community cohesion and skill development. With a narrow gap between the Pilot AJP's funding application and the project's delivery, the collection and evaluation of data, focusing on wellbeing outcomes, was incredibly challenging and intimidating. We also found it difficult to source relevant points of reference or evaluation templates that were adaptable for a community-based creative project. It's our aim to share our evaluation experiences moving forward, including the Phase 2 AJP evaluation toolkit, in order to support other organisations planning similar wellbeing-focused initiatives.

During the pilot AJP, OPA utilised the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale* at the outset of the programme, and as participants self-referred into the project, any specific issues they might want to focus on were also informally raised via the recruitment and initial engagement process. Although following completion of the pilot project we managed to capture extremely meaningful and powerful accounts from graduates that indicated AJP had strongly affected confidence levels, mental health and both personal and professional development, in developing AJP into a more established programme that could be delivered by partner organisations, it has become necessary to develop a more robust plan that safeguards our participant's wellbeing, makes certain the needs of the artists are more closely monitored/supported, and ensures that the project's stakeholders are included in the evaluation planning process as much as possible.

To enable AJP's leads, partners and participants to work in concert at the earliest possible stage, we've developed bespoke [Intended Impact](#) and [Theory of Change](#) models that present a clear sense of what AJP intends to do, and importantly fills in the 'missing middle' - i.e. the intermediate steps between activities and impact. The intended impact model simply visualises WHO the project will benefit, WHERE it will take place & WHAT the outcomes are that we want to achieve. These models have helped us to identify gaps, priorities and potential improvements, resulting in clearer goals and pathways towards achieving objectives. We will revisit and potentially revise our Phase 2 evaluation plan in 2023, following completion of AJP2, but hope in the meantime that other organisations successfully utilise the toolkit and adapt it to their own needs.

*Please note that to use the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, you must register [HERE](#).

EVALUATION TOOLKIT

Art Journal Project | Phase 2

Part 1 - Intended Impact: WHO, WHERE, WHAT

Part 2 - Theory of change: IDENTIFYING AIMS & GOALS

Part 3 - 9 Point Safeguarding & Evaluation Plan

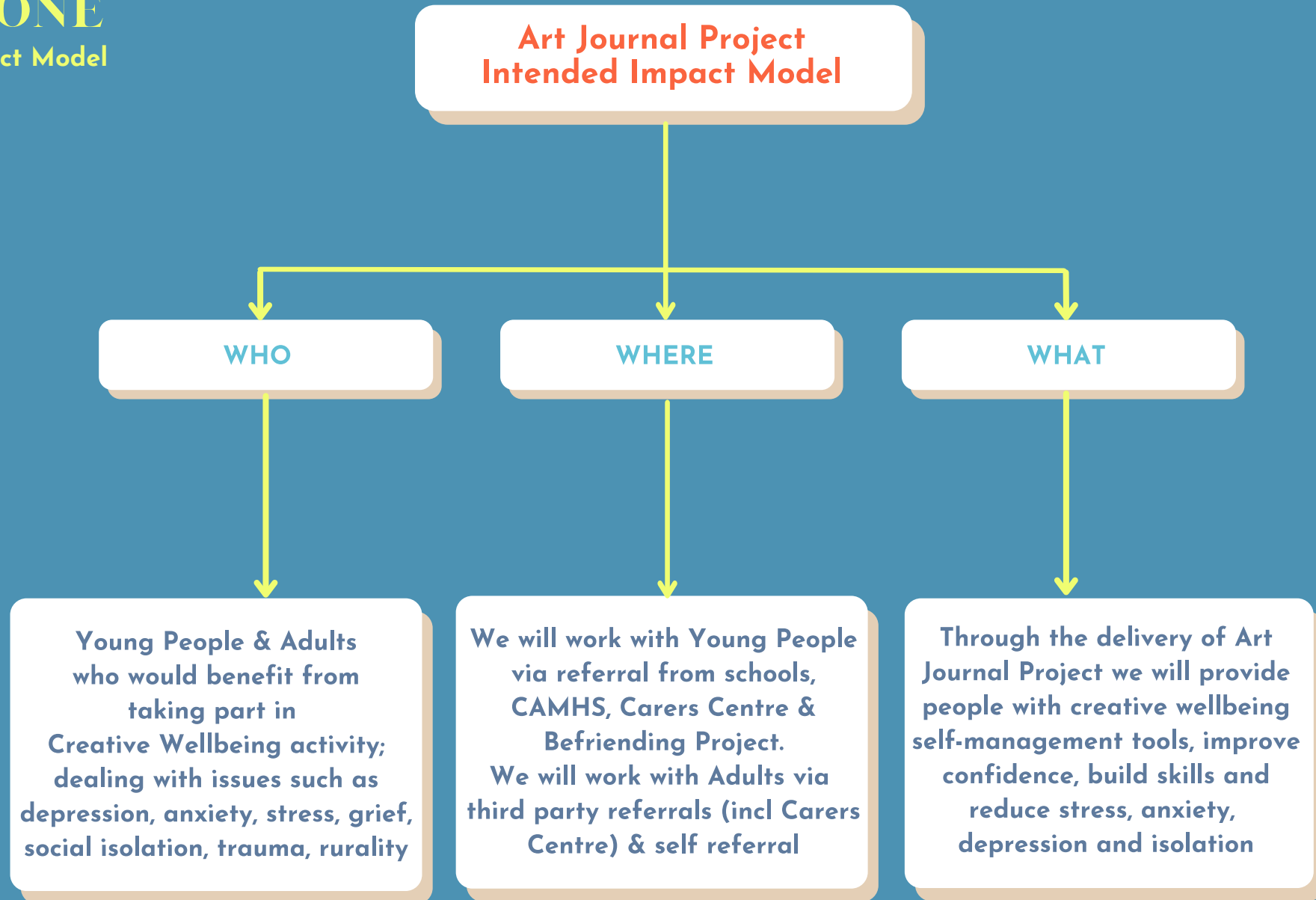
Part 4 - Safeguarding: TRAINING

Part 5 - Evaluation approach: DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Part 6 - Assessment & Reporting: MEASURING & SHARING OUTCOMES / WIDER IMPACT

PART ONE

Intended Impact Model



PART TWO

Theory of Change | Background

What IS a "Theory of Change"?

Theory of Change is a comprehensive visual description of HOW and WHY a desired change is expected to happen in a specific context, filling in what has been described as the "missing middle" between what a project/initiative does - ie it's activities - and how these lead to specific objectives being achieved. First, it identifies the desired long-term goals and then works backwards from these to identify the outcomes/conditions that need to be in place for the goals to occur. These are all mapped out in an Outcomes Framework.

The Outcomes Framework provides a foundation to specify what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes identified as preconditions for achieving the long-term goal. Through this approach, the precise link between activities and the achievement of the long-term goals are fully comprehended, leading more thorough planning, with activities connected to a detailed understanding of how change actually happens in the short, medium AND long term.

Importantly, it also leads to better evaluation, as it is possible to measure progress towards the achievement of longer-term goals that go beyond the identification of programme outputs.

When planning our project's Theory of Change, we made sure to include the views of stakeholders gathered via the pilot project's evaluation AND the subsequent development project's creative engagement process, and carefully considered the perspectives of the individuals and groups our organisation is accountable to.

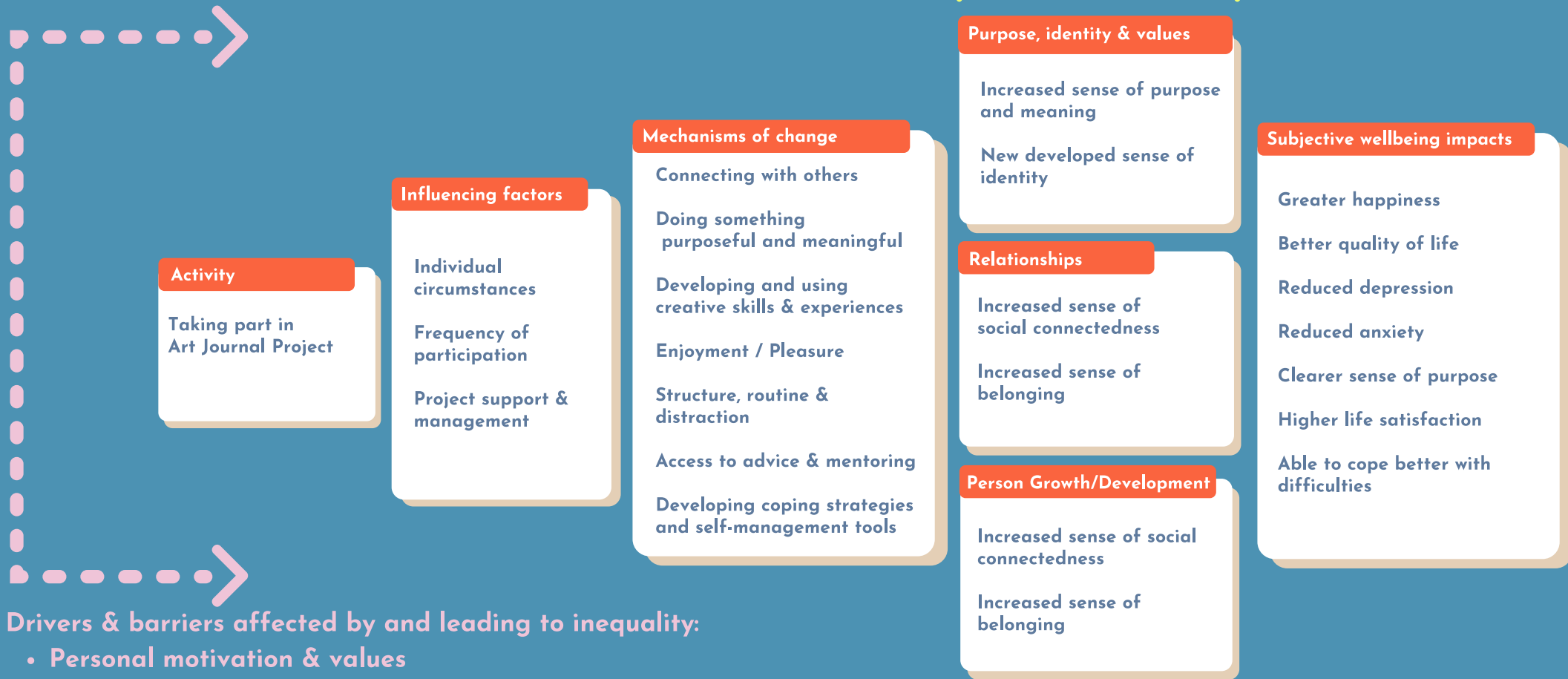
Knowhow, an advisory body for the charity/voluntary sector, suggest an effective Theory of Change should be:

- **Credible** - based on previous experience and insight from your different stakeholders or relevant research where appropriate
- **Achievable** - you have the necessary resources to carry out the intervention
- **Supported** - your stakeholders will be involved in defining and agreeing your theory of change, which builds support for it
- **Testable** - a complete but not over-complicated description of your work and its outcomes, with prioritised outcomes for measurement and indicators to collect data against them.

knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-build-a-theory-of-change#

PART TWO

Theory of Change Model

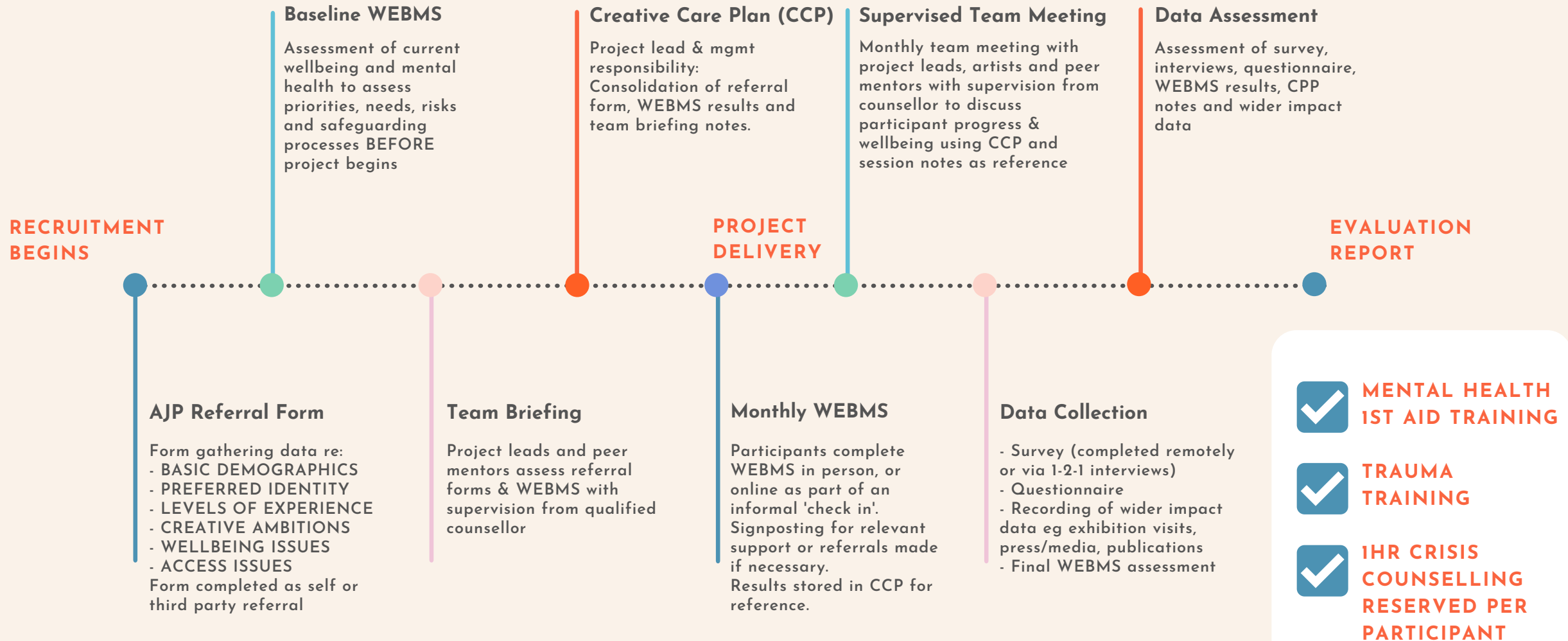


Drivers & barriers affected by and leading to inequality:

- Personal motivation & values
- Social relationships & networks (friends, family)
- Individual resources
- Wider community, societal & global factors

PART THREE

9 Point Safeguarding & Evaluation Plan



PART FOUR

Safeguarding Training Programme

Adult Art Journal Support - Tutors & Peer Mentors

- TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTISE MODULE via National Trauma Training Programme (free) *
- VULNERABLE ADULTS TRAINING MODULE (£40 in person - 3 hrs, Crichton or £19.95 online) *
- GDPR & DATA PROTECTION AWARENESS ***
- RISK ASSESSMENT TRAINING (£40 3hrs, Crichton or £19.95 online) *
- WORKING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR (£40 3 hrs, Crichton) *
- FIRST AID (£19.95 online) *
- CARER AWARENESS BRIEFING *
- MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID - SCQF LEVEL 5 (£75 per person - 1 day course at D&G College) *
- INTRO TO TRAINING - DG College 1 day course **

Training for
management
only



'Plan, measure & report social impact'
Online 2 day training course: June 2022
(£110 for SCVO member)

Youth Art Journal Support - Tutors

- TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTISE MODULE via National Trauma Training Programme (free) *
- CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING: Module (£40 3 hrs, Crichton or £19.95 online) *
- GDPR & DATA PROTECTION AWARENESS ***
- RISK ASSESSMENT TRAINING (£40 3hrs, Crichton or £19.95 online) *
- WORKING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR (£40 3 hrs, Crichton) *
- FIRST AID (£19.95 online) *
- YOUNG CARER AWARENESS BRIEFING *
- YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS BRIEFING *
- MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID for young ppl - The Spark £95 *

* Training for Tutors, Peer Mentors & Mgmt
** Peer Mentor training only
*** Admin / Mgmt only

PART FIVE

Evaluation Approach | Data Collection Plan

Qualitative: Impacts Survey

PARTICIPANTS:

1. Since you got involved with Art Journal Project, what, if anything, has changed about how you feel about yourself and your life?
2. Why have things changed? What is it about Art Journal Project that has helped this happen?
3. Have these changes impacted anyone else - e.g. family members? If so, who has it affected and how? (Wider impacts)
4. Since you got involved with Art Journal Project, have any other things in your life helped or got in the way of where you want to get to - e.g. children, supportive partner, poor health? Please give details
5. What would have happened if you hadn't been involved with Art Journal Project? - e.g. How would you feel about yourself? What would you be doing?

ARTIST TUTORS, PROJECT LEADS & PEER MENTORS:

1. How has being involved in Art Journal Project benefited your creative and professional development?
2. How has being involved in Art Journal Project benefited your own wellbeing - e.g. confidence, self-esteem, sense of purpose?
3. Have you felt supported & safeguarded? Give details.
4. How could Art Journal Project improve?



Graduate & satellite programme evaluation plan will be formed during delivery of AJP Phase 2

Questionnaire re: content/structure

1. Rating system for themes (from 'most enjoyed' to 'least enjoyed' - comments requested for top scoring and lowest scoring)
2. Rating system for recorded workshops (see above)
3. Rating system for live Zoom workshops (see above)
4. Rating system for in-person sessions (see above)
5. How supported did you feel (1-5) by the: a. Artist Tutors b. Peer Mentors c. Counsellor (if applicable)
6. Were you happy with the pace and length of the programme? If no, what change would you like to make?
7. Were you happy with the accessibility of sessions, support & feedback? If no, what changes would you like to make?
8. What skills/interests have you developed as a result of participation?
9. Did you achieve any personal ambitions as a result of participation?

Quantitative - Recording Interactions & Wider Impact

- Number of participants taking part in each session
- Number of participants taking part in exhibition
- Number of visitors to exhibition
- Number of online engagements
- Number of graduates & people taking part in satellite programme

PART SIX

Assessment & Reporting

Assessment & analysis 5 point plan

Having collected our project reflections and collated all data, we will:

- Compare WEMBS results before and after AJP
- Analyse and test findings against Theory of Change
- Assess initial ambitions and wellbeing issues as outlined in referral form, comparing against results of survey and questionnaire
- Analyse the Creative Care Plan notes to assess what they can tell us about the personal journey of the participant
- Analyse information from the survey/interview/questionnaire

When analysing the data, we will answer five questions:

1. What sorts of findings did we expect to get?
2. How can we best organise these expected findings?
3. What sorts of findings did we get that we didn't expect?
4. How can we best organise these unexpected findings?
5. Which three findings do we feel are the most important?

We will look for and highlight emerging patterns and themes, and will also consider external influences, such as Covid-19, which may have negatively impacted people's experiences of the project.

Sharing our findings

Alongside project engagement statistics, we will include the following information in an end of project report:

- Reason for the project
- Why people were referred
- Who we collected data from > numbers of beneficiaries + relevant demographics
- Data collection context - face-to-face, telephone, zoom, online survey
- List of main questions asked
- Summary of main findings
- Direct quotes to illustrate key points
- Strengths & limitations
- Personal statements + testimonials
- Recommendations for future research and implications for organisations considering delivering similar projects in the future

Guidance via: <https://measure.whatworkswellbeing.org/gathering-qualitative-data/>

APPENDIX

Regional Stakeholders | National Stakeholders | Funders | References & Reading

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Regional Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Arts Focused Organisations:

OutPost Arts

www.outpostarts.co.uk

Contemporary rural arts organisation based in Langholm promoting creative wellbeing, education and placemaking opportunities.

For Enjoyment CIC

www.instagram.com/forenjoymentcic

Providing inclusive accessible workshops classes and events and encouraging creativity through a supportive nurturing and welcoming environment.

The Stove Network

www.thestove.org

The Stove Network is an award-winning arts and community project based in the heart of Dumfries High Street, using creativity to bring together people and ideas, inspire and support new community-led projects, grow opportunities and celebrate local places and people. TSN is establishing a placemaking network.

Catstrand

www.gcat.scot

Catstrand is an Arts & Community Centre in New Galloway that presents a high quality programme of arts events, concerts, workshops & activities.

A' the Airts

www.atheairts.org.uk

A' the Airts (based in Sanquhar) contributes to the social, economic and cultural well-being of the communities of Upper Nithsdale by actively encouraging participation in a range of arts, crafts and related activities.

Upland CIC

www.weareupland.com

Upland is a bold, ambitious, rurally-based visual art, design and craft development organisation that evolved from Spring Fling CIC.

DGUNlimited

www.dgunlimited.com

DGU is the day-to-day operating name of the D&G Chamber of the Arts - a membership organisation that works with, and provides a voice for D&G's creative sector.

pARTners Group

pARTners Group (otherwise known as the Regional Arts Hub Working Group) acts as DGU's critical friend, a platform for information sharing, and a greenhouse for exploring emerging ideas, debating critical issues and nurturing collaborative working.

Cample Line

www.campleline.org.uk

Independent arts organisation based in Cample Mill, Thornhill with a public programme that includes exhibitions, screenings, readings, workshops, events and outreach projects.

Performance Collective Stranraer

www.performancecollectivestranraer.com

Development organisation created to nurture, promote and sustain rural theatre artists from D&G and South Ayrshire.

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Regional Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Community Focused Organisations:

Castle Douglas Community Development Forum

www.castledouglas.info/castle-douglas-development-forum

CDDF runs/delivers the Heart of Galloway Visitor Centre, the Town Shop, the Stepping Stones Foodbank, Castle Douglas Journal, and are involved in running the local Men's Shed and EcoCD. CDDF provides opportunities to build confidence and skills so the town can thrive, grow, and innovate.

Upper Eskdalemuir Community Trust

www.eskdalemuir.com/

Main framework of volunteer support for a project to develop Eskdalemuir Community Hub on the site of the old school which runs courses, provide arts facilities and exhibitions, rental space for therapies, businesses, and meetings alongside a shop and a café/bar. The hub is a focal point for community development across a wide range of themes for all sections of the community.

Sleeping Giants

www.sleeping-giants.org.uk

A community-focused, capacity building social enterprise that provides a range of services and support that strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities.

LIFT D&G

www.liftdumfries.com

Lift's mission is to strengthen Lochside's community and enhance the lives of the families who reside in it. Lift is a group of caring people helping people, with a shared passion of making a difference and giving back to the community.

Creative Places:

Kircudbright Galleries (Dumfries & Galloway Council)

www.kirkcudbrightgalleries.org.uk

Kirkcudbright Galleries is a regional gallery of national significance, celebrating and promoting the unique art heritage of Kirkcudbright; Artists' Town.

Moat Brae

www.moatbrae.org

Moat Brae House and Garden is the 'enchanted land' where Peter Pan began - restored and opened as an International Visitor Attraction and National Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling

Shambellie House

www.shambelliehouse.org

Once a private home and later a National Museum of Costume, the building has been restored and has become a centre for arts, culture and the environment, with a programme of events and educational workshops.

Dumfries Museum & Camera Obscura (Dumfries & Galloway Council)

www.dgculture.co.uk/venue/dumfries-museum

Dumfries Museum is a treasure house of history in D&G, telling the story of the land and people of the region and hosting a lively programme of activity/events.

Gracefield Art Centre (Dumfries & Galloway Council)

www.dgculture.co.uk/venue/gracefield-arts-centre

Gracefield Arts Centre rotates a dynamic programme of art and craft exhibitions throughout the year with regional, national and international artists represented.

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Regional Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Creative Places:

Theatre Royal Dumfries

www.theatreroyaldumfries.co.uk

The oldest theatre in Scotland, Theatre Royal Dumfries is in the heart of the town, first opening its doors in 1792. It has strong associations with the renowned Scottish poet Robert Burns, who wrote several pieces specifically for its stage.

Creative Events:

Big Burns Supper

www.bigburnssupper.com

Scotland's biggest Burns Night celebration and Winter Fringe Festival which takes place in venues across Dumfries every January, with 300 shows across the festival programmes, weekly community arts sessions to over 100 participants, creative industry training for emerging artists and the sector, and traineeships.

D&G Arts Festival

www.dgartsfestival.org.uk

D&G Arts Festival allows the region's most rural areas to experience world class performing art, bringing local and national artists to communities, investing in performing artists; introduce young people to live performance and engaging people of all ages.

Kircudbright Festival of Light

www.kirkcudbrightlight.com

Three days and nights of illuminated experiences, art installations and world class performances around Kircudbright that celebrates the quality of light experienced in the South of Scotland.

Wigtown Book Festival

www.wigtownbookfestival.com

A ten day literary celebration in Scotland's National Book Town, Wigtown. It is also Scotland's National Book Town, a designation that reflects its dozen or so secondhand bookshops and annual literary festival. Wigtown also programme for Moat Brae - National Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling.

Spring Fling

www.spring-fling.co.uk

Spring Fling is a vibrant visual art and craft open studios event covering the length and breadth of Dumfries and Galloway in South West Scotland; it is highly regarded as one of the UK's most successful contemporary visual art and craft events.

Kirkcudbright Art & Crafts Trail

www.artandcraftstrail.com

Annual event now in its 20th year with open studios, houses, sheds, gardens, galleries and open spaces, and anyone is welcome to apply to take part. The trail encourages people to visit and explore Kirkcudbright.

Creative Education:

Dumfries & Galloway College

www.dumgal.ac.uk

Dumfries and Galloway College is a further education institution in Dumfries and Stranraer offering a wide range of full time and short creative courses and qualifications, plus online creative learning opportunities.

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Regional Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Notable Creative Developments:

Old School Thornhill

www.oldschoolthornhill.com

Artist led project transforming the old school into an innovative, entrepreneurial space supporting community groups, charities, small businesses and creatives in and around Thornhill. Currently fundraising for capital works.

Lockerbie Old School

www.lockerbieoldschool.org

Working towards creating a community facility for Lockerbie through the process of Asset Transfer, aims to create a not for profit but financially viable venue where the people of Lockerbie can gather, learn and grow as a community.

Midsteeple Quarter

www.midsteeplequarter.org

A Community Benefit Society set up and run by the people of Dumfries, shaping a new future for the town centre that responds to the needs of the community, bringing 8 underused properties under community control and refurbishing these as a contemporary living, working, socialising, learning and enterprising quarter.

The Guild - Flourish | Market

www.theguiddumfries.org/pages/flourish-dumfries

A shop, workshop and community space in the heart of Dumfries supporting a collective of over 40 makers & producer, 'Flourish' is led by social enterprise The Guild Dumfries in partnership with Midsteeple Quarter. The Guild are a not-for-profit social enterprise, who provide a platform, opportunities and support for makers, creatives and producers to help their businesses grow, including a monthly curated 'micro festival' market in Dumfries town centre.

Third Sector Youth:

Better Lives Partnership

www.betterlivespartnership.org.uk

Giving young autistic people a structured programme of person-centered accredited training in their area of interest and expertise, work-related skills and to prepare them for the next step towards employment, education, training or volunteering. Based in Dumfries, Stranraer and Castle Douglas.

LGBT Youth Scotland

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

Scotland's national charity for LGBTI young people, working with 13-25 year olds and delivering the LGBT Charter programme to schools, organisations and businesses. In D&G there are 3 support groups, based in Dumfries.

Befriending Project

www.befriending.org

Supports and enriches the lives of vulnerable young people, aged 8 to 18, across Dumfries & Galloway through Befriending.

Youth Carers Project - D&G Carers Centre

www.dgalcarers.co.uk/young-carers-project.php

The Project aims to provide Young Carers with a break from their caring role through activities and groups held on a regular basis throughout the region.

Third Sector Adults:

D&G ME & Fibromyalgia Network

www.dgmefm.org.uk

Providing a local forum where ME, CFS and Fibromyalgia sufferers can socialize, swap information, support each other and learn about events and meetings.

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SPRING Social Prescribing Project

www.thehubdg.org.uk/spring-social-prescribing

Assisting adults to improve their health and wellbeing by supporting greater independence, reducing reliance on healthcare and motivating positive change.

D&G Carers Centre

www.dgalcarers.co.uk

Provides information, advice and support to anyone who cares for a relative or friend. We also aim to raise awareness of the needs of Carers and the contribution they make to care in the community.

LGBT Plus

www.lgbtplus.org.uk

Empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexuals and others questioning or expressing their gender identity and sexuality, their families, friends, supporters and allies across D&G.

Third Sector Support:

Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway

www.tsdg.org.uk

Charitable organisation that promotes, supports and develops a strong third sector, social enterprise, volunteering, and connects into community planning.

NHS:

D&G Royal Infirmary

www.nhsdg.co.uk

D&G Royal Infirmary is the main hospital in Dumfries. It serves the whole of South West Scotland. The hospital has 392 staffed beds and has a full range of healthcare specialties.

D&G Arts Committee / Arts Strategy Delivery Group

www.artuk.org/visit/collection/nhs-dumfries-and-galloway-2625#

Strategic committee focused on linking healthcare & clinical environments with creativity via commissions and NHS D&G's impressive art collection.

Adult Health Improvement Team

www.dghscp.co.uk/health-wellbeing-teams

Partners with Health, Social Care, Independent & Third Sector and local communities, working to maintain and improve people's health and wellbeing.

Adult Mental Health Team

www.dghscp.co.uk/adult-mental-health/

The Adult Mental Health team comprises Clinical and Counselling Psychologists, Psychological Therapists, Psychology Assistants, Trainee Clinical Psychologists and Trainee Clinical Associates in Psychological Therapy. The team is based at Mountainhall Treatment Centre in Dumfries, but clinicians in the specialty are divided into smaller teams covering five geographical areas in the region.

CAMHS - D&G

linktr.ee/DGCAMHS

Multi-disciplinary team, offering a community based service in D&G for children and young people up to the age of 18, who are struggling with their mental wellbeing, which is significantly impacting on their day-to-day life.

D&G Health & Social Care Partnership

www.dghscp.co.uk/

Union of the NHS, Council and Third and Independent Sector, helping people achieve and maintain their wellbeing, working in partnership to deliver new models of health & social care; taking forward the work of Integration Joint Board.

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National Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Arts Focused Organisations - Scotland:

Health in Mind

www.health-in-mind.org.uk

promoting positive mental health and wellbeing by providing a wide range of services / courses to support people to make a positive difference in their lives.

Media Education

www.mediaeducation.co.uk

Media Education use participatory video and podcast as a means for people to create meaningful change in their lives and communities.

Prescribe Culture - Edinburgh University

www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/cultural-heritage-collections/museums-and-galleries/prescribe-culture

Prescribe Culture is the University of Edinburgh Museums award-winning, heritage-based, non-clinical health, social care and wellbeing support initiative.

Moray Wellbeing Hub

www.moraywellbeinghub.org.uk

Takes personal experiences and combining them with research and local resources to create sustainable change. Improving wellbeing in Moray by challenging stigma whilst supporting recovery and self-management.

See Me

www.seemescotland.org

See Me is Scotland's Programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. We are funded by Scottish Government and managed by SAMH and The Mental Health Foundation.

Luminate - Creative Ageing

www.luminatescotland.org

Works to ensure all older people can enjoy high quality arts and creative activities, whatever their background / circumstances and wherever they live.

Whale Arts

www.whalearts.co.uk

Cultural anchor organisation for Wester Hailes - a community-led arts charity and social enterprise, set up by local people in 1992 with a mission to be the creative heart of a vibrant, thriving community.

Reachout with Arts in Mind

www.reachoutwithartsinmind.org.uk

Reachout studio is a place to learn, experiment and develop creative skills as well as improve confidence, resilience and social interaction.

Arts Focused Activity - Outside Scotland:

Art Doctors

www.hatchprojects.org.uk/project/art-doctors

The Art Doctors playfully break down barriers to participation in art and culture, and explore the positive role of creativity in all our lives. Based in Leeds.

A Space Between

www.aspacebetween.co.uk

A Space Between create spaces that inspire moments of creative calm in hospitals and the community including Creative Care Boxes and Open Art Table.

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National Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Arts & Health Hub

www.artsandhealthhub.org

London based not-for-profit organisation that supports artists and cultural producers exploring arts & health in their practice.

Radiate Arts

www.radiatearts.co.uk

Workshops designed to offer space to relax, unwind and be inspired, to support those who can benefit from the outdoors and mindfulness process of creativity.

Arts Well

www.arts-well.com

Arts Well champions the role of the arts and creativity in promoting health and wellbeing. It works with organisations, large and small, to develop projects and programmes that respond to identified needs.

Performing Medicine

www.performingmedicine.com

Supports health professionals to provide high-quality, compassionate care through arts based training and courses, research, advocacy and public events; nurturing the flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness required to thrive within demanding healthcare environments.

London Arts & Health

www.londonartsandhealth.org.uk

Promoting, developing and supporting the understanding of what the arts can do to contribute to a healthy society, in London and nationally.

Strategic Partners - Scotland:

Scottish Community Development Centre

www.scdc.org.uk

SCDC is the lead body for community development in Scotland. We work to our vision of an active, inclusive and just Scotland where our communities are strong, equitable and sustainable.

Skills Development Scotland

www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

Scotland's national skills body, contributing to Scotland's sustainable economic growth by supporting people and businesses to develop and apply their skills.

Creative Entrepreneurs Club

creativeentrepreneursclub.co.uk

The Creative Entrepreneurs' Club is a member-driven community designed to help creative people grow sustainable businesses in an authentic and empathic way, sharing resources, events and masterclasses.

Support in Mind Scotland

www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

Action for people affected by mental illness through political engagement, awareness-raising consultations, policy and public affairs activity and partnerships and media and communications involvement.

SCVO

www.scvo.scot

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations is the national membership organisation for the voluntary sector. Our mission is to support, promote and develop a confident, sustainable voluntary sector in Scotland.

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National Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Strategic Alliances/Orgs - Outside Scotland:

National Centre for Creative Health

www.ncch.org.uk

London based not-for-profit organisation that supports artists and cultural producers exploring arts & health in their practice.

What Works Wellbeing

www.whatworkswellbeing.org

An independent collaborating centre that develops and shares robust and accessible wellbeing evidence to improve decision-making.

National Academy for Social Prescribing

www.socialprescribingacademy.org.uk

Dedicated to the advancement of social prescribing through promotion, collaboration and innovation; creating partnerships, across the arts, health, sports, leisure, and the natural environment to promote health and wellbeing.

Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance

www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk

a national, free-to-join membership organisation supporting everyone who believes that culture and creativity can transform our health and wellbeing; building national, regional and local collaboration to strengthen the collective power of members.

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Working to prevent mental health problems and helping people understand, protect and sustain their mental health. Supporting communities, families and individuals to live mentally healthier - home of Mental Health Awareness Week.

Repository for Art & Health Resources

www.artshealthresources.org.uk

Resource for those interested in the field of arts, health and wellbeing - particularly academics, researchers; policy-makers, health and social care managers, and creative arts professionals.

Social Prescribing Network

www.socialprescribingnetwork.com

Key organisation in leading the social movement around the use of non-medical activities to support health and wellness working alongside stakeholders to have social prescribing adopted by NHS England and internationally.

Creative Lives

www.creative-lives.org

Championing community and volunteer-led creative activity and working to improve opportunities to be creative via advocacy, development and sharing.

Art in Healthcare - Scotland:

Art in Hospital - Glasgow

www.artinhospital.com

Delivers a visual arts programme for patients in healthcare across NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, bringing visual arts into the context of health and medicine.

Art in Healthcare - Central Belt

www.artinhealthcare.org.uk

Works with healthcare providers to connect people personally to art via artwork rental, creative workshops, site-specific commissions. in turn havng a direct, positive impact on health and wellbeing.

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National Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Artlink Central - Central Belt / Forth Valley

www.artlinkcentral.org

Inspiring social change through extraordinary participatory arts experiences that: challenge, empower and include people, value the creative voice and enhance wellbeing.

Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust

www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk/OurServicesA-Z/TaysideHealthcareArtsTrust

Develops the role of the arts in healthcare across the area of NHS Tayside, and delivers creative engagement projects that promote health & wellbeing.

Tonic Arts - Lothians

www.elhf-tonicarts.co.uk

Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's award-winning Arts in Health and Wellbeing programme - Tonic Arts helps to improve and support the health and wellbeing of NHS Lothian staff, patients and visitors via arts & creativity.

Government:

National Partnership for Culture - Scotland

www.gov.scot/groups/national-partnership-for-culture

Formed to a cross-sector, interdisciplinary voice which can both advise and influence Scottish Ministers on the delivery of the Culture Strategy for Scotland.

All Parliamentary Group on Health & Wellbeing - UK

www.londonartsandhealth.org.uk

Formed in 2014 with aims to raise awareness of the benefits that the arts can bring to health and wellbeing and improve policy and practice.

Networks - Scotland:

RISE Scottish Borders Arts and Wellbeing Network

www.facebook.com/RiseBorders

RISE is an informal network of artists, creatives, arts organisations, health professionals and policy makers from across the Scottish Borders.

Scottish Social Prescribing Network

www.scottishspn.org.uk

Overall aim is to develop the strategic direction of social prescribing - sharing learning, information, good practice and lessons across different initiatives.

Scottish Mental Health Creative Network

Newly formed - designed to bring together people working in the arts and mental health across the UK for mutual learning and support.

National Rural Mental Health Forum

www.ruralwellbeing.org

network of rural people and stakeholders driving change to enable open conversation around mental health and form evidence to improve people's lives.

Arts Culture Health & Wellbeing Scotland

www.achws.org

an active network providing information and support for anyone working across arts and culture, health and wellbeing in Scotland, open for anyone to join.

Culture Wellbeing Community Network Scotland

www.facebook.com/groups/culturewellbeingscotland

This peer & community network brings creative, library and grassroots groups and individuals together in Scotland and is open to all.

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National Creative Wellbeing Stakeholders

Creative Wellbeing Events - Scotland

Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival

www.mhfestival.com

Now in its 15th year, the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (SMHAF) is one of Scotland's most diverse cultural events, covering everything from music, film and visual art to theatre, dance, and literature.

Creative Wellbeing Events - UK

Creativity & Wellbeing Festival

www.creativityandwellbeing.org.uk

Partnership project between Culture Health & Wellbeing Alliance and the London Arts Health Forum, delivering a nation-wide programme of creative wellbeing activity during 'Creativity & Wellbeing Week' in May each year.

Funders:

The Baring Foundation

www.baringfoundation.org.uk

Independent foundation which protects and advances human rights and promotes inclusion, working with people experiencing discrimination and disadvantage, acting strategically to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality, and building positive, purposeful partnerships with grant recipients, grantmakers and others in order to work together for socially just change.



Top: Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival, 2017

Above: Creativity & Wellbeing Week, 2021

APPENDIX

Creative Wellbeing Network | Menti Responses

What problems exist, in relation to Creative Wellbeing?

- Working in silos - not sharing or understanding enough of how what we do individually could benefit and bring additional understanding to what others do. This relates particularly to Creative & Culture work
- Lack of funding & resources
- Health: I guess it's we've been somewhat stretched doing the 'day job' - arts is considered a luxury rather than an essential IMHO
- Lack of joined up working - Health & Arts/Culture sector
- Arts: Projects often sporadic and limited in scope, so building relationships with participants is not given enough time
- Arts: I'm in the arts but also worked for D&G council in the past on integration of art & social care
- Arts: Lack of sustainable paid opportunities for freelancers in the arts to work in healthcare
- Examples of good practice in other places would really help in my own context
- Local Gov: Don't think people understand the potential
- Not enough people in the right positions/places understand the benefits of art in wellbeing
- Lack of safe, inclusive places to meet
- Further Ed: The need to make money while also providing training & support that is needed for the community
- Still too much is top down, not bottom up
- We grow socially - with interaction from the other. This past 2 years we have not had to opportunity to grow and develop as a community
- And what has happened to our libraries as places to access arts and culture??
- Lack of joined up strategic thinking across sectors
- 3rd Sector: Limited capacity/funding to link in with wider/multi-agency projects at times with running core services
- Young people often don't like to put themselves forward for projects relating to mental health and wellbeing due to perceived stigma attached. Peer pressure is huge now, with social media taking over and young people feeling so much pressure.
- Private therapist: Working as one person profession, not recognised in region as valuable to wellbeing
- Arts: Lack of infrastructure to support freelancers to work in 'applied' arts settings
- Arts Practitioner: Working in isolation in remote area
- Local govt: There doesn't seem to be much resource to help make connections that are needed
- Public: Funding for projects, resources, mental health stigma
- Everything is too short term - need more multi-year programmes and projects
- Short term project funding - not time to embed. Means things are here today, gone tomorrow, often as they become established
- The NHS is quite fixed and often slow/cumbersome at innovation. It's also driven by political necessities/performance and there's not much room or space to think outside the box and consider the massive evidence base for the arts in a health context
- Teenagers 14+ harder to engage at the moment (covid?)
- 3rd Sector: Hard to support and stay positive when services are so thin on the ground for Carers. This project would be a positive opportunity to help Carers moving fwd.
- Art - WWDN project: we need long term planning/funding in order to fulfill the potential of bringing creative wellbeing to local people
- There are a lot of people and groups doing great things that benefit mental health in D&G so skills and experience sharing would be hugely beneficial to the organisations and the people delivering
- Public Sector: There can be lack of understanding of how creativity can have positive impacts on health & wellbeing. Not about job creation so it can be hard to argue the case for major funding.
- I run a Social Enterprise as well as working for CABN in the Scottish Borders. We need to help build connections between artists and organisations, charities, NHS etc.
- Arts: Desire at national level to create one-size fits all solutions - we need to support locally specific work
- We're a creative org - we have the creative expertise / good links to artists and makers but do not always have the links to the health sector, or right orgs to partner up with. Help to find participants / ensure the right support is in place.
- Need to raise the profile of best practice and what's possible
- Agree should be long term action, not just projects
- Lack of investment in projects that have wider social impact over longer periods of time
- Too often it is arts with a wellbeing add on, or wellbeing with an arts spin, and not a genuinely holistic approach
- Public Sector - there's a complete lack of understanding as to the value and power of the arts and culture in terms of wellbeing and prevention. I guess it reflects the focus on a treatment/medical model the NHS is good at, but getting engagement is difficult!
- Lack of high quality training in the region for people who engage their active older communities in creative wellbeing activities

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Creative Wellbeing Network | Menti Responses

- Health: A lot of pressure to 'save money' focuses on short term and not the long term gains of developing different ways of working
- Arts: Art/Culture still considered an add-on, not a fundamental in improving overall community health & wellbeing. Limited accessibility to support networks, creative opps. Solutions need to acknowledge specific needs of rural region.
- Art - WWDN project: we need long term planning/funding in order to fulfill the potential of bringing creative wellbeing to local people
- Arts: Lack of long term funding to allow orgs to plan strategically - they are forced to chase project funding with priorities decided at national level.
- Being set up in a way to apply for funding and the knowledge in putting together for successful grants.
- Art not being accessible for young people who may not feel confident enough because of their mental health to participate in art/performance projects.
- Offers of creative engagement for older people often like occupational therapy and lack creative thinking
- We have a wonderful network of community centres and village halls which are underused for creative activities.
- So much energy has to be spent every year finding funding and the emphasis on novelty rather than sustainability from funders

What can we do to address these problems?

- Work together to push for the 'participation' support and way of working that Matt spoke about
- We could bring people together to share best practice and make connections - invite the top movers and shakers to hear what's possible
- Link workers - created vision, working smart
- Key connections between art & healthcare would be important, developed relationships rather than repetition for each project needing to build connections/trust
- Make a strategy - invest in it long term
- Forward planning for multiagency/joined up projects
- Change perception of art & culture as 'not for me'
- Set up resources banks or sharing networks eg theatre lights, artist easels, kilns etc
- Culture wellbeing ambassadors of all ages
- Make booking exhibition spaces and council spaces like town halls - easy and cheap to book for art activities
- Share our ideas regularly and be supported to develop them
- Convene an annual conference for culture & health in South Scotland?
- There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in As the Arch put it.
- And...we need more continuity of projects and arts-based services, not just one-off events. As illustrated in the writing project I showed you (with older people) the arts can literally be a life-saver when it comes to mental health
- Agree some key indicators of success and create a benchmark across the region
- More artists in residence
- Identify one or two key voices to make the case for culture within emerging approaches to healthcare delivery or have a regional champion for Culture & Health
- Art: We need long term funding for arts projects like WWDN to enable long term planning for building genuine wellbeing
- A public database of village halls and centres to book
- Invest in cultural buddies or tap into the ones that exist already
- One area in charge of updating what is available in each town village and an online resource for this making it available
- Invest in training and skills for practitioners in arts/health
- Shared channels of communication between sectors
- One day a week is a creative day with no pressure, no expectation- as Frank would say 'for enjoyment'
- Develop a national network for community link workers in primary care
- I like the culture buddy thing - lots of people come back with the 'I can't draw a straight line' and are intimidated by the idea of getting it wrong. SO a buddy might help them feel less intimidated in trying new things
- Multiagency working, investing in participation. Young health & arts champions. 'Who knows best but the ppl themselves' - Pauli Freire
- Skills development - mental health first aid
- Training in Understanding & stimulating group creative processes
- In Eire they recognise the importance of arts and culture to the overall wellbeing of everyone in their society, its encouraged and they fund it appropriately. Are there things we can learn from how they do things?
- Long termism
- Supported access - materials transport

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Creative Wellbeing Network | Menti Responses

- Not rely on artists pulling 'new ideas' out of the sky - it takes time and experience to understand what works. We need to build up this knowledge, invest in developing what works and the people who are making in work
- Ensure we create the spaces for as many voices as possible to contribute to long-term strategies and test, trial ideas before being asked to 'vote' on them (less traditional consultation, less forms, more active project work instead)
- Funding to support more culture and arts opportunities is the first hurdle to overcome. My schools have a multitude of sports clubs - more arts would be welcomed
- Joined up policy thinking between placemaking (eg 20 minute neighbourhoods) and art in healthcare
- Art: Art, drama and music having a bigger importance in schools - it's always pushed aside for more 'academic' subjects
- Value and train volunteers to assist or who are artists themselves
- Not telling someone they're too old to volunteer
- I'd like to see a more collaborative approach to these projects - stronger opportunities for participants to be able to work with both arts and healthcare connections, rather than relying on upskilling of one or other parties
- Agree trusted 'connectors' are important for social/creative prescribing, also continuity - needs investment of resource
- Definitely involve artists from the outset - allow them to set agendas for social engagement from an art context. Be surprising in the outcomes
- Longer projects can lead to participants being more confident and developing new skills to go on and potentially be art buddies themselves
- Artists with more experience in a variety of contexts could mentor or collaborate with artists new to working in emerged practice
- Enable teachers to educate students in creative and cultural ways to develop and maintain ongoing mental health resilience
- Develop a regional strategic framework looking at Culture and Children and Young People's Mental Health
- Consider the role of youth groups and informal educational settings in promoting wellbeing and other benefits for young people through culture
- Develop a dedicated funding stream for artists and other practitioners who specialise in creating and delivering cultural experiences working in the health field
- School pupils should have basic entitlement - like music at present eg to go to an art gallery at least once in primary, once in S1 or S3, go to see live performance for fun
- A well-connected map of localised projects that utilise local intel and really meet the needs of individuals within a community but provide and encourage linked opportunities with neighbours
- Somehow we have to tackle the unconscious biases of those in decision making positions. While the comfortable educated networked middle classes still make all the decisions there will always be a struggle to overcome the real barriers faced
- I think art journaling should be done in schools. Early. Linking it to MH well-being aspects. Encouraging young ppl not to let go of benefits of play - we don't do enough as adults because we're taught to let go of it and 'grow up'
- Not sure about embedding H&W training in arts education only - don't we need it in sciences etc? Danger of losing arts for arts sake as a creative educator
- Lower barriers to entry by understanding how potential participants will realistically engage with the arts for wellbeing eg timing, open Vs personal invitations, physical access, buddies, 'champions'
- Look at exchange groups - where the rural and the more urban people can 'walk in each others shoes'
- Empower people with new art skills to engender self confidence and self-belief
- Embed health and wellbeing into arts education
- Develop a Public Health action plan for South of Scotland

APPENDIX

Creative Wellbeing Network | Menti Responses

A Network for Creative Wellbeing?

- Great to have support of others by knowing what others are doing - could have smaller groups within the network
- Previously have hosted a one off event as a space for exchange, learning and presentation for both artists and those involved in healthcare. Focused energy for sharing can be really useful for learning and support 'you're not alone'
- A network needs genuine buy in from big agencies, which means that we need to be a campaign group first in order to lever this support
- Yes, agree with the campaign group/awareness raising idea
- When we have limited capacity as one org it allows us more opprtunities to link our young people into and utilise skills of others that our org may not have
- Would like to see an organisation driving a long term strategy/delivering outcomes, not necessarily a network. But perhaps with a representative membership
- Have people a community org can turn to for advice and ideas pre-funding application stage
- Share research and data bite sizes about successful projects so we can educate each other
- A group of counsellors are looking into a discord group. No meetings but the ability to connect with us all in one message?
- A network of partners being honest about what they can offer, so for example in all or some projects or even in capacity limited members can be even linked in with info and updates to be able to be sign posting agency into projects
- We all bring different skills and knowledge to the table - We need to make the most of this, hence a need to share and signpost and see where any gaps might be
- Yes please - to connect the creative/cultural and health practitioners
- Treating network building as a creative project itself - creative approaches
- Allows for more partnership working and building members trust in other orgs - eg if we work with other orgs in partnership it allows our young ppl to feel more confident in engaging with them in the future unsupported
- So that we can work towards a similar goal, I think we could all be supported to do this - particularly freelancers
- We all bring different skills and knowledge to the table. We need to make the most of this, hence a need to share and signpost and then see where any gaps might be
- I'd like to see long term multi level projects that allow for participants to then become facilitators/mentors themselves - embed it in the community through participation and empowerment
- To identify shared challenges and thinking creatively together on solutions
- Yes - definitely good to create connections between sectors, share learning, strength in pulling together
- Signposting to people, places, ways to access art events or to resources and materials. We have food banks can we have art banks?
- Wary of creating a large talking shop
- Best not to just be art people taking to ourselves
- Q: how does creative wellbeing relate to therapy?
- Danger if arts activity as a panacea for professional health organisations
- In terms of working smartly, there is solid emerging work and creativity and place in the region, should the arts and healthcare agenda team up with this (and art in education?) as a 'social art' movement in SOS?
- Get smart about how we gather evidence of success. Be creative about that
- Can we also consider our rurality a strength - the relationships (and understanding we have within communities, and ensure that we are advocating for understanding and working practices that are relevant to rural places and communities
- Yes to working smart comment and 'movement' for SOS for something to really have impact I think there needs to be a bold strategy
- Networks provide a sense of belonging but how do you make it accessible to everyone at a point in time of need. Networks often need nurturing to keep alive
- Only if there is a serious investment that could be directed through the network. There is a risk that public agencies use a network like this as a fig leaf to disguise their own lack of activity

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Lucy orchestrated of the pilot Art Journal Project in 2020 and was also one of the project's tutors.

She has worked in the creative sector for over 20 years on a wide range of commercial, third sector and private client commissions and projects.

An experienced arts educator, Lucy has also contributed to several degree courses across the UK.

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WWW.DGCREATIVEWELLBEING.CO.UK

www.outpostarts.co.uk
hello@outpostarts.co.uk