



Creative Home Delivery Service



Project Evaluation
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Section 1: Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report seeks to capture the key learning in relation to the Creative Home Delivery Service (CHDS), gained from the various methods of data collection including:

- Participant check-ins.
- Participant and carer wellbeing scores.
- Artist and facilitator reflective diaries.
- MSC Panel stories and discussions.
- Causal mapping of MSC story transcripts.

It also includes:

- A summary of the project, including the aims.
- A summary of the most significant themes and key learning that has emerged across the project.
- A brief overview of the evaluation tools used.

1.2 Project description

CHDS is an arts and health home delivery service for older people living in Carmarthenshire who are feeling lonely and isolated during the autumn and winter months. The project aims to improve mental health and wellbeing and to reduce loneliness and isolation by providing creative activities in the home and with groups in care home settings across Carmarthenshire.

1.3 Evaluation approaches

CHDS used three main evaluation methods aimed at maximizing learning, improving practice and outcomes, and providing evidence for funders and other stakeholders. These were:

- Participant check-ins from a member of staff at various points in the project.
- Participants and carer wellbeing scores taken using the 'Well-being Numerical Rating Scale (WB-NRSs)' at the beginning and end of the project (aimed at measuring progress against key outcome indicators).
- Artist and facilitator reflective diaries.
- Most Significant Change (MSC) – a qualitative approach that collects and uses participant stories of change for group reflection and learning.
- Causal mapping – an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated map of causal links between project activities and outcomes using MSC story transcripts.

1.4 Key findings from the evaluation

The following is a summary of key findings from across the evaluation methodologies.

Mental health and wellbeing

Project participants reported significantly improved mental and physical health and wellbeing as a result of the connections and relationships made, and the therapeutic arts practices learned, through the project. Some reported feeling less lonely and isolated. In particular, unpaid carers emphasised the positive impact the project has had on their lives, in a context where other support is minimal or non-existent.

Personal growth

The project has provided opportunities for participants to be challenged and stretched within a safe and nurturing environment, leading many to report stories of personal growth and increased self-worth, confidence and meaning. The artists and facilitators' roles in facilitating these journeys through encouragement and gentle challenge has been central.

Community dynamics (engagement, involvement and social connection)

Relationships between participant, artist and facilitator have been foundational to the project, but these have also provided a basis for improved relationships with close family, friends, neighbours and the wider community, with many participants increasing their social networks and activities beyond the bounds of the project and PSU. Significantly, the project has helped participants and artists build relationships across group and identify boundaries.

The role of creative endeavors

Participants have learned creative skills that they have been able to use to support their wellbeing outside of sessions themselves. The experience of creating and exhibiting unique and expressive artistic work, along with the encouragement of the artists and the celebration and commendation of peers, has transformed participants' confidence and sense of self-worth and meaning. Artists have gained confidence in supporting these journeys through gentle challenge 'outside of comfort zones'.

The professional development of artists

Opportunities for new experiences, reflection and learning has supported the project artists in their own personal and professional development. This has stimulated a strong desire for further collaboration amongst this group. There is an interest in exploring further the effective use of wellbeing coaching.

People Speak Up's wider engagement

PSU provides a strong relational culture and sustains relationships of trust that provide a context for the successful delivery of projects. The Ffrwnes Fach centre acts as a 'home' for these relationships and a place where creative work can be exhibited and celebrated. The organisation provides a clear vision and a stable long term presence where projects can come and go and individuals learn and grow.

Section 2: Project description and aims

2.1 An introduction to People Speak Up

People Speak Up (PSU) is an arts and health charity based in Llanelli, established in 2017 and delivering work across the Hywel Dda and Swansea region. PSU creates time and space for individuals and communities to find their voice, especially those who are marginalised, live in poverty and who have protected characteristics.

PSU connects communities through storytelling, spoken word, creative writing, and participatory arts. They offer workshops, training, events, volunteering and conversations.

Their aim is to connect people and to create healthier, cohesive, resilient communities through artistic exploration by:

- Stimulating, engaging, and creating cohesive communities
- Building confidence
- Cultivating intergenerational understanding
- Promoting health and wellbeing through creative practice
- Generating workshops, performances and opportunities for individuals and communities
- Tackling loneliness and isolation
- Measuring social impact in the local and wider community
- Investigating the gaps in provision within current arts and wellbeing practices in the UK and nationally
- Providing volunteering opportunities for future employment

Connecting people, making healthier, cohesive, resilient communities.



PSU Theory of Change

2.2 The Creative Home Delivery Service (CHDS)

CHDS is an arts and health home delivery service for older people living in Carmarthenshire who are feeling lonely and isolated during the autumn and winter months. The project seeks to build on the success and experiences of PSU's Stories on Prescription, Creative Friendships on Prescription and Virtual Day Centre projects.

The project aims to improve mental health and wellbeing and to reduce loneliness and isolation by providing creative activities in the home and with groups in care home settings across Carmarthenshire. Participants receive weekly home visits over a 20 week period from a creative facilitator. They are joined fortnightly by a guest artist. A range of art forms are available, with participants free to explore their own interests and creative aspirations. Guest artists and creative facilitators receive necessary training and complete all essential safeguarding checks.

As the project progresses participants are supported to attend creative wellbeing sessions at Ffwrnes Fach Arts, Health and Wellbeing Hub, Llanelli's Arts and Health Hub and The Nurture Centre in Carmarthen. An exhibition is held at the end of the project to bring all artists, creative facilitators, participants and families together to share and celebrate creations and to connect with each other.

A video about the project can be accessed here:
https://youtu.be/y2nrVbshyh8?si=TyUthoFC_v27JrsB

2.3 Project partners

CHDS is delivered in partnership with the following organisations and individuals:

- Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) have 'micro-commissioned' PSU as a referral service for the Connecting Carmarthenshire project, providing £15,000 of match funding. CCC recognises PSU as a strategic service provider for older people in the county.
- Hywel Dda University Health Board are enabling GP clusters to refer into the service through their social prescribing scheme.
- The following freelance artists are facilitating creative activities alongside project facilitators: Bill Taylor Beales, Sam Hood, Duke Al, Tia Zakura Camilleri, Karen Fitzpatrick, Valeria Ayres, Lisa Evans, Ceri Phillips, Kate Woodley, Stirling Steward, Nerissa Joan Faulkner and Mared Davies
- Ali Franks ('Reconnecting Coach') is offering fortnightly well-being sessions for staff.

Project beneficiaries include the following:

- Project participants, their unpaid carers and or families.
- Carmarthenshire County Council (the new team delivering the Connecting Carmarthenshire project)
- Project artists
- The wider community

2.4 Project Impact, Outputs, Outcomes and Questions

The Creative Home Delivery Service has sought the following impact and outcomes:

Beneficiary group	Profile	Outcomes	Outputs (numbers)
Older people at home	Older people referred to the project experiencing loneliness and isolation	Improved well-being and mental health, reduction in feelings of loneliness and isolation	24
Unpaid carers	Unpaid carers to the older people	Improved well-being and mental health, resilience and empowerment through developing deeper connections	5
Artists and creative facilitators	Artists and creative facilitators working with older people	Supporting practitioners delivering the service with their well-being, ensuring their mental health is well so they are able to support the participants. Sessions for them to check in and receive one-to-one coaching.	15

In addition, the following key questions were identified at the start of the project:

- 1) What impact does partnership work have on supporting older people in the community.
- 2) In what ways does receiving ongoing wellbeing coaching support Artists and PSU Team?
- 3) In what ways does an ongoing arts and health home service impact participants' mental health and wellbeing.



Section 3: Evaluation methodology

3.1 Purpose of evaluation

The Creative Home Delivery Service used five key methods to evaluate success against the outcomes identified at the beginning of the project. The purpose of the project evaluation was:

- To create opportunities for reflective learning based on practice and experience, enabling lessons to be learnt and improvements to be made 'on the ground' during the delivery phase.
- To provide evidence of impact against the project outcomes to funders and other stakeholders.
- To identify key themes and learning to enable the effective planning and design of future projects.

3.2 Evaluation methods

The following evaluation approaches were used:

Participant 'check-ins'

Project Co-ordinator Carys Phillips contacted each participant for a check in and conversation three times throughout the project: at the beginning, the middle and the end (following the celebration and exhibition). The following themes were used as a guide during these conversations:

Start	A sense of their wellbeing / any questions or concerns for the project
Middle	How the project has been / any highlights / lowlights / general sense of wellbeing
End	How has the project been / reflecting on highlights / lowlights / general sense of wellbeing / any other comments on if anything needs to be changed / improved / works well / if it was to happen again, is it something you would be interested in?

Notes were taken recording the key insights shared during these check-ins

Participant and carer wellbeing scores

Information from the participant check-ins was supplemented by collecting wellbeing scores from participants and their carers using the 'Well-being Numerical Rating Scale (WB-NRSs)' at the beginning and end of the project using the following questions and scoring system.

- 1) How would you rate your overall mental health and wellbeing right now?
(1 = Low, 5 = Average, 10 = Excellent)
- 2) How would you rate your physical health right now?
(1 = Poor, 5 = OK, 10 = Excellent)
- 3) To what extent do you feel lonely or isolated regularly in your day-to-day life?
(1 = Not at all, 5 = A bit, 10 = A lot)

This approach enabled an assessment of the progress participants and their carers made in relation to key outcomes of the project as a result of their engagement in the Creative Home Delivery Service.

Artist and facilitator reflective diaries

Project artists and facilitators were required to complete a reflective diary pro-forma after each session with a participant. In doing so they provided a response to the following questions:

- What did you observe? (incl. body language, engagement levels, changes in mood).
- Any comments from the participant?
- What, if any, relationships were formed?
- Any other comments.

At the end of the project artists and facilitators also attended a facilitated evaluation session in which they explored key learning from the project and responded to the questions 'What would you do differently?' and 'What worked well?'

Most Significant Change (MSC)

MSC is a qualitative, story based method of evaluation that seeks to understand the impact made by the project from the perspective of participants and staff. It provides opportunities for the project team to reflect on these 'stories of change' in order to gain as much learning as possible from experiences of the project. The process included the following stages:

- PSU staff were introduced to MSC and briefed in the process of story collection.
- Staff arranged meetings with, and collected stories from, 8 project participants. These included: 5 participants, 2 artists and one facilitator. Prompt questions were used including the following:
 - Could you tell us a little bit about yourself and what life was like before you got involved in the project?
 - How did you get involved in the project? What did you hope might happen as a result of getting involved?
 - As a result of participating in the project what do you think has been the most significant change for you personally?
 - What caused this change?
 - If you were to tell other people about People Speak Up, what would you say?
 - What title would you give your story?
- As far as possible, story-tellers were encouraged to speak freely, with story-collectors using prompts when necessary. Consent to use the story was discussed and obtained. One participant story-teller asked for their story to be anonymised.
- Stories were transcribed and edited by the team and the evaluation consultant.
- A panel of 8 people (consisting of project participants, staff, artists and partners) was convened to read and reflect on the stories of change. The group met for three hours on 18th March. Each story was read in turn, with 15 minutes after each reading for two groups of four panel members to reflect on, and discuss, the story using the following prompt questions:
 - What have you learnt? – What insights has the story given you into how the project has impacted on the storyteller and / or on their community?

- What did you feel? – What were your emotions during and after reading the story?
- What, if any, insights has this person's story provided in order to help inform current or future project activities?
- The two groups of panel members were asked to select one story each which was considered to be the 'most significant' in terms of impact and learning for the organisation. These were presented to the wider group. In the end, three stories were selected and agreed as the most significant.
- The panel discussions were recorded and transcribed by a PSU member of staff.

Causal mapping using MSC story transcripts

The project team engaged the services of Causal Map, an organisation that uses Artificial Intelligence to identify causal links between project actions and outcomes. Transcripts of the 8 MSC stories were uploaded to the Causal Map application with unique IDs applied to each MSC interview prompt question (allowing the app to identify each separate question). AI (GPT 4 turbo) was then used to identify each and every causal link and for each link label the cause and effect. A "radical zero-shot" approach was used in which the AI is given no codebook and is simply told to invent its own codes. Context about the project and instructions about acronyms were inputted as follows:

"Later I will give you a text that contains interviews about the Creative Home Delivery Service, an arts and health project to alleviate loneliness and isolation and improve wellbeing through creative arts. Designed and facilitated by People Speak Up, in partnership with the Connecting Carmarthenshire, Carmarthenshire County Council and Hywel Dda Health Board. A PSU facilitator makes weekly visits to the homes of people who are older, lonely and isolated as well as group sessions in two care homes. A creative artist joins the PSU facilitator fortnightly. We are interested in examples where the interviewees shared narratives changes that happen in the respondents' lives due to the participation in the project. Bear in mind that:

- PSU means People Speak Up and you can refer to it as PSU

- CHDS means Creative Home Delivery Service and you can refer to it as CHDS

- PSU project and CHDS project are the same thing"

254 causal links made by the respondents were found. The sentiment of each link was autocoded in order to show which contributions were "positive" (blue lines) and which were "negative" (red lines).

3.3 Data analysis

The causal analysis process identified a useful set of key causal factors that were emphasised within the stories. These were used as headings and themes and provided a structure from which to analyse the other data from the participant check-ins, wellbeing scores, artist/facilitator diaries and MSC panel conversations. These other sources were analysed using these themes, allowing each to be explored in further detail and providing additional evidence, narrative examples and learning. Additional themes were also identified from these evidence sources and, together with the causal mapping themes, these provide the headings under which the key findings are laid out (section 6).

Section 4: Participant and session numbers

The project delivered the following outputs across the duration of the project:

Home visits

- **475** Home visits were carried out throughout the project
- A total of **28** individual participants benefitted from home visits
- Total attendance numbers **475**

Care Home activities

- **27** sessions were carried out at care homes
- A total of **20** individual participants benefitted from care home activities
- Total attendance numbers **272**

Total project figures

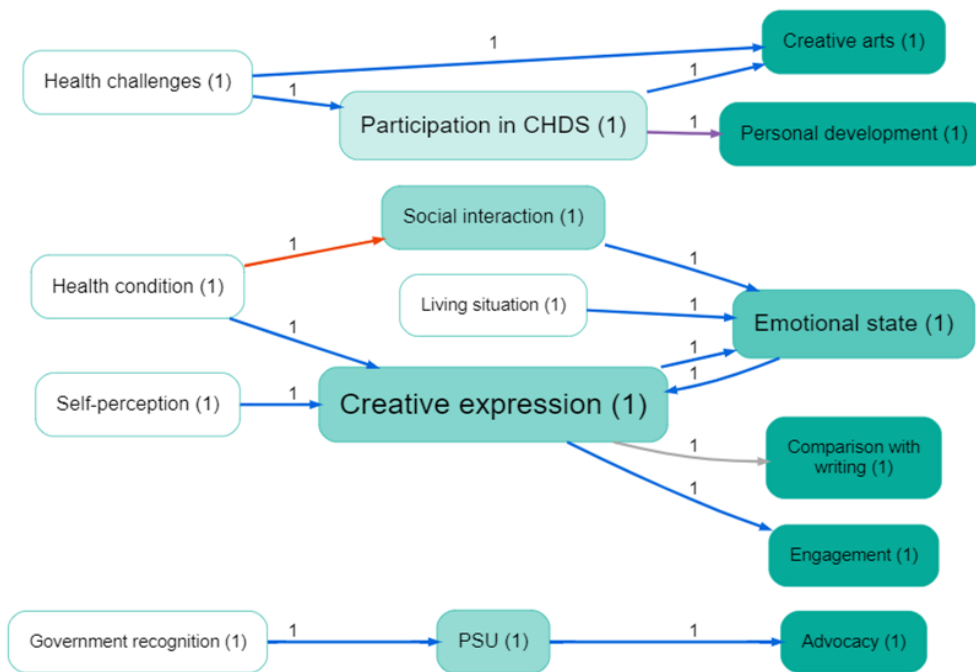
- A total of **502** sessions were carried out across the project
- A total of **48** individual participants benefitted from the CHDS project
- Total attendance numbers across all project activities **747**
- **15** sessions at Ffwrnes Fach were attended by CHDS participants



Section 5: Key findings from the causal mapping exercise

Overall 254 causal links were found to have been made by the respondents. The sentiment of each link was autocoded in order to show which contributions were "positive" (blue lines) and which were "negative" (red lines).

5.1 Typical response from one respondent

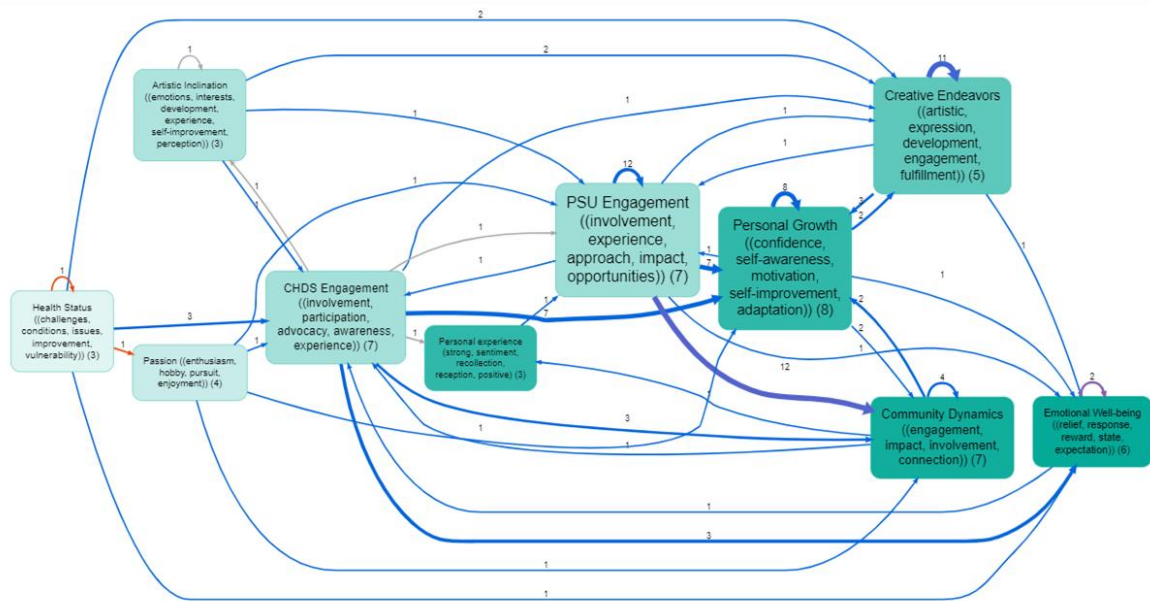


Filename: psu-chd. Citation coverage 6.7%: 17 of 253 total citations and 1 of 8 total coded sources are shown here. Numbers on factors show source count.. Factor sizes show citation count. Darker factor colours show greater outcomeness. Numbers on links show source count. Zooming in to level 1 of the hierarchy. Auto clustering factors using label set new. Top 15 factors by citation count.

For this respondent, participation in the Creative Home Delivery Service was very important because it influenced their creative arts and personal development. Creative expression is another central factor in this map. This factor is associated with the arts activities of the project. It was mentioned 5 times by this source and it leads to positive factors, such as Emotional state (increased confidence) and Engagement (being absorbed in art for hours).

5.2 Top level overview

The AI produced a variety of labels with overlapping meanings and was asked to automatically construct a label for each cluster from all of the respondents, with a title and 5 additional typical words, using a granularity of 56%. Factors with lighter coloured backgrounds are drivers, factors with darker backgrounds are consequences



Filename: psu-chd. Citation coverage 43%: 110 of 253 total citations and 8 of 8 total coded sources are shown here. Numbers on factors show source count. Factor sizes show citation count. Darker factor colours show greater outcome. Numbers on links show citation count. Zooming in to level 1 of the hierarchy. Auto clustering factors using label set 3. Top 10 factors by source count.

The most frequently mentioned factor by the sources was *Personal Growth*, which all of the 8 sources mentioned. Coming in second, with 7 mentions by the sources are *Community Dynamics*, *PSU Engagement* and *CHDS Engagement*. They have been kept separate as that is how people referred to them.

Participants feel welcomed, valued, and cared for when they are part of the project, which combats feelings of loneliness and worthlessness. The friendly atmosphere and the caring approach of the facilitators and other members are highlighted as key factors that contribute to this positive change.

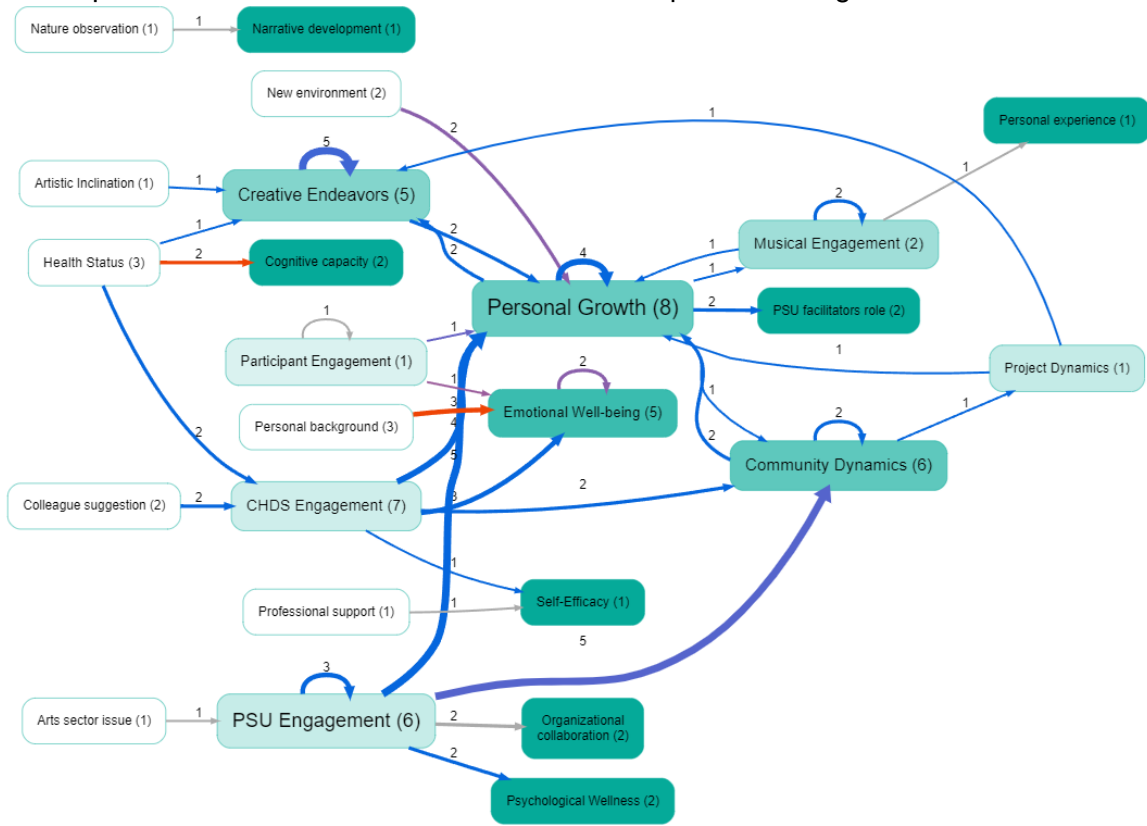
The strongest link in this map is the link going from *PSU Engagement* to *Community Dynamics* and the *PSU Engagement* self-loop, both with 12 mentions. *PSU Engagement* is heavily influenced by many factors and it has a strong influence, alongside *CHDS Engagement*, on *Personal Growth*, both links with 7 mentions.

Most of the links in this map have a positive sentiment, with just links related to *Health Status* having negative aspects. An example is that issues around one participant’s speech has negatively impacted their love for literature and conversation.

CHDS Engagement is a major driver of outcomes, influencing many of the factors in this map, such as *Creative Endeavours*, *Community Dynamics* and *Personal Growth*.

5.3 More detail

In this map the brackets are removed for a cleaner map but showing more factors.



Filename: psu-chd. Citation coverage 57%: 145 of 253 total citations and 8 of 8 total coded sources are shown here. Numbers on factors show source count.. Factor sizes show citation count. Darker factor colours show greater outcomeness. Numbers on links show source count. Zooming in to level 1 of the hierarchy. Auto clustering factors using label set 3. Showing only links with at least 2 citations.

One of the most frequently mentioned causes of change is the act of engaging in creative activities, such as art and poetry, which has led to personal growth, increased confidence, and a sense of accomplishment. For instance, one participant discovered an ability to draw and create art, which they had never been able to do before, leading to a significant boost in self-esteem and the prospect of an exhibition for their work.

The one-to-one nature of the project allows for deep, meaningful connections and tailored sessions, which are seen as more impactful. This personalized approach has enabled participants to relate to others despite differences in background, age, or experience, leading to mutual learning and inspiration.

5.4 Ask the AI – Reasons to participate in the project and unexpected outcomes

After analysing the maps, the AI was asked to help understand more about the interviews. This functionality allows the asking of questions about all the text in the file and is completely independent of causal coding (and will work just as well without causal coding). The questions asked were:

- What are the main reasons to participate in the CHDS project?
- What are the unexpected outcomes mentioned by the respondents in relation to participating in the project?

Based on the text provided, the main reasons why people get involved with People Speak Up and the Creative Home Delivery Service are:

- **Seeking Personal Growth and Healing:** Individuals are looking for ways to overcome personal challenges, such as dealing with the loss of family members, health issues, or feelings of loneliness and depression. One participant expressed that they were "very down" and hoped the project would help them return to the person they used to be, someone who is "very bubbly" and likes to help people.
- **Creative Exploration:** Participants are interested in exploring their creative side, whether it's through art, writing, singing, or other forms of expression. For example, one participant discovered a newfound ability to draw and paint, stating that "what I do is, get a picture and then I sketch it out, and then colour it all in".
- **Social Connection:** The project provides an opportunity for social interaction and community engagement. Participants value the chance to meet new people, share experiences, and feel a sense of belonging. One participant mentioned the friendliness and caring atmosphere of the group, saying, "I feel wanted here".
- **Professional Development:** For some, the project is a platform for professional development and expanding their practice. One young artist involved in the project hoped to "expand my people skills" and "learn about myself" by working with a demographic different from what they were used to.

The following unexpected outcomes were identified:

- One participant, who had never been able to draw before, discovered through the project that they could indeed draw, stating, "I've never been able to draw in my life, but now I can". This newfound ability to express themselves through art was a significant and unexpected change for them.
- Another participant, who initially joined the project to engage in one-to-one sessions, found that these sessions were more impactful than anticipated, leading to a deeper understanding and connection with the people they worked with.
- A third participant, who was involved in facilitating the project, observed significant changes in the participants they worked with. They noted that the participants seemed "more bold" and "brighter" in their body language and in what they thought was possible, suggesting that the project had a positive and perhaps unexpected impact on the participants' confidence and willingness to try new things.
- These outcomes highlight the transformative power of creative engagement and suggest that the project had a meaningful impact on the lives of those involved, beyond what they initially expected.

5.5 Most mentioned factors

The following table summarises the causal factors most mentioned in the stories.

label	source_count	link_count	in_degree	out_degree
All	All	All	All	All
PSU Engagement ((involvement, experience, approach, impact, opportunities))	7	52	34	18
Personal Growth ((confidence, self-awareness, motivation, self-improvement, adaptation))	8	42	14	28
Creative Endeavors ((artistic, expression, development, engagement, fulfillment))	5	35	16	19
Community Dynamics ((engagement, impact, involvement, connection))	7	30	8	22
CHDS Engagement ((involvement, participation, advocacy, awareness, experience))	7	26	18	8
Emotional Well-being ((relief, response, reward, state, expectation))	6	12	3	9
Health Status ((challenges, conditions, issues, improvement, vulnerability))	3	10	8	2
Artistic Inclination ((emotions, interests, development, experience, self-improvement, perception))	3	7	5	2
Passion ((enthusiasm, hobby, pursuit, enjoyment))	4	5	4	1
Personal experience (strong, sentiment, recollection, reception, positive)	3	3	1	2

PSU Engagement was the most mentioned factor in the map, with 52 mentions. It is reported 34 times as an influence factor and 18 times as an outcome factor. It includes: Creative involvement, PSU approach, Project environment, Participation in PSU, feeling thankful for PSU, PSU opportunities, etc.

Personal Growth comes in second, with 42 mentions. More than 50% of the mentions report this factor as being an outcome. It includes: Personal development, Self-improvement, Self-perception, Professional development, ability to create and express, etc.

Section 6: Key findings from the artist and facilitator reflections, participant check-ins, participant and carer wellbeing scores, and MSC panel discussion

The following overview of outcomes and learning from the project uses the key headings that emerged through the causal mapping activity along with additional themes that have emerged through the other evaluation methods. It uses the MSC panel discussion, participant check-ins, artist and facilitator diaries, and wellbeing scores to dig deeper, evidence outcomes and explore significant learning in relation to these headings and themes.

6.1 Mental health and wellbeing

“It is just a lovely time and a very strong vibe of wellbeing all around...” – Artist

The positive impact of the project on the mental health and wellbeing of participants is strongly evidenced throughout the evaluation material. As will be seen, a significant contributor to improved wellbeing is the social contact between artist, facilitator and participant and the relationships that form between them over time as a result. For a person who is socially isolated within the home and whose opportunities for social interaction are limited, regular contact and conversation is a lifeline.

“(Participant) commented on how much she needed this today, as it had been a tough holiday period for her.” – Artist

“When we were chatting with her, she appeared visibly uplifted, lots of smiles.” – Artist

In addition, the creative activities themselves are often therapeutic and ‘mindful’ in nature and promote wellbeing. Project artists described the opportunities these activities provide for ‘looking at the difficult stuff without it being overwhelming’, thus allowing participants to confront and process challenging experiences and aspects of their lives in a safe and calm context.

“She got really stuck in and seemed to actually get lost in the activity at times (there were periods where she didn’t talk because she was so in the zone!)” – Facilitator

Some activities incorporate physical exercises, movements, practices and experiences (e.g. dancing, using paint brushes and pens, breathing exercises etc). This can provide opportunities for relaxation, improved co-ordination and movement, and increased physical fitness and wellbeing.

“(Participant) responded particularly well to breathing with arm movements, I could almost see the stress easing and her calming. We talked about how it might be possible for her to find moments in her day regularly to do some short stretches or breathing with movements.” – Artist

“She expressed that she’d like to feel fitter and get prepared for being more physically active once she’s had her knee operations. We talked about taking it steady and maybe just doing a few exercises each day. I noted the movements she

had enjoyed/felt some benefit from in previous visits - we talked about doing these with some music so it's fun!" – Artist

It is clear that participants are often learning a range of techniques and practices that support mental and physical wellbeing that they are continuing to use between sessions. In this sense, the project is empowering people to take control of their lives and to build the skills and knowledge to live a more fulfilling and happy life.

Participant wellbeing scores

- Percentage of participants who reported improved mental health and wellbeing at the end of the project: **71%**
- Percentage of participants who reported improved physical health at the end of the project: **50%**
- Percentage of participants who reported feeling less lonely or isolated regularly in their day-to-day lives at the end of the project: **25%**

The MSC panel discussed the experience of carers in relation to the project, noting that the focus is usually on the person being cared for and their needs despite the very real emotional and other needs of carers themselves. The project creates a space for both the participant and carer to participate as equals. As a result, there is plenty of evidence that carers have experienced improved wellbeing as a result of engaging in the project. In fact, a significantly higher percentage of carers than participants reported improved wellbeing and reduced feelings of isolation through the wellbeing scoring.

"I was feeling really low and felt on my own. Your staff have made me feel much happier and has had a very positive reaction from my mother. She really looks forward to your visits." – Carer

"Seeing mum excited and happy about a creative endeavour has been wonderful. It is a positive thing that we can talk about when she has lost so much to her illness. Witnessing the positive effects on her makes me feel happier and less stressed." – Carer

Carer wellbeing scores

- Percentage of carers who report the support received as good or excellent: **100%**
- Percentage of carers who report that accessing the support has increased their wellbeing alongside the caring role: **93%**
- Percentage of carers who report that accessing the support has increased their skills knowledge and confidence to independently manage their wellbeing alongside the caring role: **93%**
- Percentage of carers who report that accessing the service has reduced their feeling of isolation: **87%**
- Of those carers who accessed the service alongside the person they care for, percentage of carers who reported that accessing the service enhanced the caring relationship: **87%**

The MSC panel discussed how both participants and unpaid carers express relief at the opportunities provided by PSU in an environment where little, if any, other support is available for people who are socially isolated in their homes.

Finally, staff on the project reported positive impact on their own mental health and wellbeing

"Visiting isolated people in their homes and seeing their perspective on life has completely changed my view on life and made me feel so much more grateful and positive. I really feel that these home visits have changed me as a person." – Facilitator



6.2 Personal growth

Personal growth was the second 'most mentioned factor' in the causal mapping. People Speak Up engagement and Creative Home Delivery Service engagement were demonstrated to have strong causal links to outcomes in this area. How do these changes take place?

"It has unlocked something within me." – Participant

"I absolutely Love doing it, brings something out in me that I didn't know was there." – Participant

Personal growth can appear minor 'on paper' but can be extremely significant to the person experiencing it.

"We had a special moment today. (Participant) is unable to hold a pencil or paintbrush unaided. She requires help to grasp anything and when participating in an activity either myself or (participant's) carer need to guide her hand. Today, whilst I was chatting to her, she tried to pick up a felt pen. I helped place it in her hand and then for the first time since I've met her, she made marks on a colouring page by herself, unaided and without any prompting from us. It was wonderful to see." – Artist

These 'small changes' accumulate in ways that create inspiring stories of transformational change for individuals. The MSC panel were particularly moved by the story of one participant who was initially 'reluctant to participate in a creative activity' at all. In time she began recollecting her experiences in dance halls as a young person before listening to some waltz music with her artist and facilitator. Eventually she was able to practice and enjoy some dance moves herself.

"We now have dances that are familiar and that develop each time we see each other... I use lots of props with (the participant) as she responds well to dancing with something in her hands, it seems to help her extend her range of movement more as she is focused on the object she is interacting with." – Artist

The artists' sensitivity to the participant's needs and abilities facilitated a flowering of confidence. Later on in the project, with encouragement, this participant decided she would like to visit the Ffwrnes Fach Arts, Health and Wellbeing Hub. Arrangements were made that satisfied her, and her family's, concerns about safety, and she attended the centre and participated in a group activity. The impact for someone who has been socially isolated at home should not be underestimated. The impact on her family, other participants, staff and artists of seeing this participant's personal growth was also huge, challenging not only their notions of what is possible for her, but for themselves and others. Her daughter who accompanied her was gradually drawn into the activity herself and has begun her own creative journey with the support of the artist.

This story was used by the MSC panel to explore the role of risk within the organisation and project, with the point made that this kind of outcome requires carefully negotiated risk on the part of managers and staff. It is possible to approach this issue of risk appropriately and carefully only in the context of the kind of caring and attentive relationships that develop between artists, staff, participants and their families.

6.3 Community dynamics (engagement, involvement and social connection)

The causal mapping activity identified a strong causal link between engagement in People Speak Up and the Creative Home Delivery Service and experiences and outcomes related to community dynamics (including engagement, involvement and connection). How does this work in practice?

The role of relationships is absolutely central to the project and includes the connections between the participant and artist, carer, family members, neighbours and wider community. Relationships both provide the context in which the project and its activities can thrive and achieve outcomes, but they are also a crucial outcome from the project itself.

“Moments of human connection with participants have been life changing” - Artist

The MSC panel described the bond that develops between the artist, facilitator and participant as unique and contrasted it with the more impersonal relationship that can exist between a paid carer and their ‘client’. The relationship between artist and participant is focused on ‘meaningful and intelligent activity’ and is thus able to focus on the participant’s strengths and abilities rather than just their needs. This ‘meaning’ and sense of personal strength and agency can be as important to a person’s wellbeing as basic needs such as nutrition.

“The main developments were that she and I were able to connect on a more emotional level through shared experiences of a few life circumstances.” – Artist

The MSC panel felt that a key aspect in this relationship was the space, time and ability to see past the person for their needs or weaknesses and to engage ‘the whole person’ with their strength, creativity and resilience. It is in this sense that the project is truly ‘strength based’.

“It’s so important I think to care about the whole person and not just to do art with them. It is as important, if not more so, than the art itself. I got the sense he really enjoyed our company. He liked the attention of us being there.” – Artist

Providing consistency in artist and facilitator support is crucial in allowing these relationships and dynamics to grow and thrive. There is evidence that if these relationships are disrupted or inconsistent it can have a negative effect on the participant’s experience of the project.

“(Participant) said that she did feel comfortable now but doesn’t like it when people change and different people stop by every week (I think she likes more consistency).” – Facilitator

These relationships provide the context for effective engagement and creative activity, as well as supporting wellbeing.

“(It) seemed to me that the familiarity with (the facilitator) for (the participant) set her at ease and enabled us to make the most of the visit.” – Artist

Interestingly, the centrality of relationships within the project extends well beyond the participant, facilitator and artist to impact on the family, friend and neighbourhood networks within which participants are embedded. The ‘safe structure’ of relationships of support that the project provides enables participants’ wider relationships to recover and flourish. This was seen particularly for couples in long term relationship, often in which one partner has

caring responsibilities for the other. Creative activities that couples can enjoy together provide new opportunities for emotional connection and also create a sense of 'life still worth living' by replacing significant activities that were an important feature in relationships but have become impossible due to ill health or age. However, activities can also provide 'a break' from each other and an opportunity for personal recovery and rest that helps sustain people's relationships and lives together.

"There's a clear sense that our visits are a highlight in their week and give opportunity for wider interaction and a chance for their usual day to day dynamics as a couple to shift a little in company." – Artist

"It has enhanced my relationship with my wife because it gives us a break from each other, and we both know that we are being supported by a fantastic team at People Speak Up." – Participant

This dynamic can extend to other significant participant relationships. For example, participants reported that pre-established friendships benefitted from mutual engagement in project activities.

"She said that through these workshops topics are brought up that her and (her friend) might not otherwise ever broach and that through experiencing workshops together that are new to the both of them, and she has gotten to know her friend better thanks to the CHDS project." - Facilitator

Beyond these close and immediate partner and friendship relationships, the project is also able to work flexibly in the context of the participants' neighbourhood and community relationships. Participants often end up involving people around them in activities in ways that increase the support available to them but also extend support to new community members.

"Her neighbour was there the whole time and really enjoyed observing and commented how well she did. It was a lovely that (her neighbour) was able to be there with her so that she felt safe... It would be an idea to create more of a relationship with (the neighbor) to see how we can all support (participant) to engage." – Artist

In addition to supporting established relationships, the project helps participants build their local social networks by meeting new people in the home and at group sessions and by building the confidence and health to 'go out' and engage with new people, local groups and opportunities.

"I am wanting to just note that I found working with this group of men really quite moving. The way they talked about and reflected on their lives, shared stories with us and each other." – Artist

"I think she was inspired as she left, and was contemplating going to the poems & pints poetry event at CWRW, Carmarthen in order to scope out a new venue to perform at and a place to gather inspiration from." – Facilitator

"I was in a lot and now I'm out every day...learning how to socialize because I didn't do that much." – Participant during MSC panel

Finally, the MSC panel identified the role the project has played in breaking down barriers and building relationships and understanding between groups of people who may not often mix in wider society (including intergenerationally). A key example is a young black artist who was paired with an older, white participant. The pair shared a love of poetry over which they connected and bonded. Having previously seen her poetry as primarily relevant to other young people of colour, the artist was encouraged to discover that the participant connected with her work on a profound level. This enabled the participant to create her own work and the pair began writing poems together, completing alternate lines with and for each other. Participation in the project has brought this artist to a new audience and it is hoped by the organisation's managers that her presence may encourage other people of color to feel able to participate in the organisation's work.



6.4 The role of creative endeavors

The causal mapping activity identified that one of the most frequently mentioned causes of change is the act of engaging in creative activities, leading to personal growth, increased confidence, and a sense of accomplishment. So how does this happen in practice?

“Creativity helps me.” – Participant

As previously identified, the creative process and activities themselves are key contributors to wellbeing by providing therapeutic activities that enable self-expression and the processing of difficult feelings and thoughts. The final creation of something physical and unique, and the feedback this enables from other participants, artists and others, promotes additional feelings of confidence and self-esteem.

“At the end of the session (the participant) was content and quite happy with his work. I was beyond impressed and fetched some of my colleagues from the office to see it. They all remarked how good it was and how far (the participant) has already come in terms of drawing and confidence in what he tries to achieve in his art now. I

think the praise from everyone really got through to (the participant) and it was a lovely moment to sit in.” – Facilitator

Often participants are revisiting and picking up skills and interests from their past which have lapsed due to other commitments or barriers created by health or accessibility challenges.

“Both (participants) were appreciative and said many times that they were happy to be included in the project and were looking forward to spending time getting back into visual art, something they hadn’t properly given time to for a good few years.” – Facilitator

The MSC panel identified a key outcome as being the development of creative skills, activities and confidence that can be continued beyond the duration of the project. A number of participants described watching less television because they were absorbed in creative activity in the home. It was felt that this kind of activity was better for mental health and wellbeing than the more passive ‘activity’ of watching television.

“When I arrived both (participants) had been working independently with acrylic paint, painting landscapes from images sourced and taken by them... They seemed happy to continue working when I was leaving so I’m looking forward to seeing the work in two weeks.” – Artist

This can include the development of broader ‘life skills’ that support general mental health and wellbeing outside of participation in project meetings.

“(Participant) had some questions and observations about mindfulness, which he shared with us, and said he would like to explore the idea of meditating specifically on a certain object/item. He said that he sometimes feels like simply taking a walk or being in nature is meditative, and we had a discussion about what mindfulness/meditation can look like.” – Facilitator

Participants’ sense of pride in their work, and of their work being viewed and celebrated is an important factor in improved wellbeing, self-worth and confidence. In this respect the sharing exhibition at the end of the project in which participants’ work is displayed and enjoyed by project participants and visitors is a central part of participants’ experience, allowing them to receive praise and encouragement for their work and to see others enjoy and value their creative output.

“(The participant) loved her Pavarotti collage and said she was going to ask (staff member) to frame it to put on her lounge wall.” – Artist

“(The participant) definitely feels better when she produces something she is proud of, a finished product.” – Artist

Staff and artists emphasised their role in stretching participants and in gently encouraging them ‘out of their comfort zones’. This was seen as a new area of learning in this project that has come with the increased experience and confidence of the artists. It leads to further opportunities for improved participant confidence and self-esteem but also to an increased quality in artistic output. As a result, a number of participants are continuing to explore their own creative practice outside of the project, to view and present themselves as artists and to seek other avenues for artistic expression and to present their work.

“I think having worked on the creative one to one project and now having the opportunity to work on CHDS, I can see the benefit that having a structured workshop that asks something of the participant benefits that person.” – Facilitator

“I was particularly impressed by (the participant) who seemed quite daunted by the task initially and would make jokes about how she had no art skill. By the middle of the session, she was totally engrossed and asked me to fetch other media to help her finish her drawing.” – Facilitator

“The sharing day was a remarkable artistic experience, the work itself that was being shown. The quality of the work was really high. Showcased and celebrated!” - Artist

The role of the artist and facilitator here is to design activity that takes account of the participant’s ability and skill level whilst enabling them to stretch themselves by trying something new and challenging, whilst providing effective feedback and encouragement. Indeed, words of encouragement and praise were regularly cited as important by participants in building their self-confidence.

“I think (the participant) possibly doesn’t have many people pushing him in his day-to-day life, and in these sessions (the artist) does a great job of gently pushing him and broadening in him, what he thinks he is capable of.” – Facilitator

“I think it is really important to be sensitive to what they can and can’t do and gently take them out of a comfort zone.” – Artist

“(The participant) was very open again about how he is aware of his hands shaking and how this is impacting on his painting. We talked about how this shouldn’t hinder him from pursuing his love and passion.” – Artist

“I could tell she respected and valued (the artist’s) opinion and as he explained potential steps she could take to move forward with her work, she was relaxed and happy during the session...Her body language was confident and you could tell she was proud of the work she had done.” – Facilitator

“After the session had ended I re-iterated to (the participant), that it would help his art practice a lot to invest in a small sketchbook that would fit in his coat pocket. He seemed very happy at the end of the session.” – Facilitator

Finally, the MSC panel identified the importance of child-likeness and play within and through the creative activities. It was felt that the promotion and use of play provides a number of benefits including access to memories, physical activity, and wellbeing outcomes through enjoyment and relaxation.

6.5 The professional development of artists

The MSC panel noted the positive impact and rewarding nature of the project for the artists, with plenty of opportunities to observe the personal growth of participants and the positive impact on their wellbeing, with these experiences inspiring the artists to sustain their involvement. The plentiful opportunities for new experiences were also deemed important for the artists’ professional development.

This provides an excellent environment for the personal and professional growth of the artists themselves. The panel were particularly inspired by one facilitator’s story as someone who began his time with People Speak Up as a tentative participant but is now highly skilled and deeply embedded in, and central to, the project and organisation. In this sense the culture and approaches developed by People Speak Up are highly effective at

nurturing the skills, commitment and attitudes necessary for the work to flourish and be sustained.

“I will now go and research art and how it can help people who have had a stroke, and in what way it can support.” – Artist

“I do think that sometimes I overburden the session with concepts in regards to the art, and will try and run some simpler workshops moving forward to gauge if that works better or worse, or just as well.” – Facilitator

The space provided for artists to reflect on their practice together and individually was deemed crucial here by both management staff and the artists themselves. Individual reflection was encouraged through the completion of the artist diaries following each session. Group reflection took place through a planning session at the beginning of the project, a reflective session halfway through the project, and an evaluation meeting at the end of the project. These regular opportunities for project artists to gather and reflect were new in this iteration of the project. They enabled a sense of team and of mutual support and they contributed positively to the artists’ personal and professional development and to the effectiveness of the project interventions.

The project artists reported that they would like to build on the new team reflection sessions by developing increased collaboration, working closely with each other to bring different art forms together. The possibility of this leading to one ‘central’ collaborative piece of art was discussed in the final artists’ evaluation. They also stated that they would value mental health training and described the need for clearer boundaries and a greater sense of what they can expect from project facilitators. Finally, they would like more information about what wellbeing coaching sessions could be used for.

6.6 People Speak Up’s wider engagement work

“Without PSU where would I be?” – Participant

“I love that place!” - Facilitator

The Creative Home Delivery Service does not operate in a vacuum. It is one project of many set within the context of People Speak Up (PSU), an organisation with a specific set of values, commitments and approaches that are aimed at creating a particular relational culture. Project participants identified closely with People Speak Up and identified their wider experiences with and through the organisation as key factors in their positive experiences of the project. In fact, the organisation itself was the ‘most mentioned factor’ in the causal mapping.

The MSC panel identified and emphasised the importance of PSU’s nurturing and welcoming environment in which people can open up and progress naturally at a speed that is comfortable for them. The hope is that ‘as you learn to trust this environment, then you learn to trust again as a human being when life’s been difficult’ and that this ultimately has a positive ripple effect on the wider community. The context of a single project, which acts as an initial ‘route in’ to the wider organisation, allows for people to make a journey to and through a variety of projects that provide different levels of challenge and development.

People Speak Up’s wider culture of established long term relationships and community, and the organisation’s communication structures and processes, were identified by the MSC

panel as crucial to the project's success. Multiple opportunities for long term engagement, including face-to-face contact, online engagement and digital communication (including Whatsapp groups) enables staff to maintain relationships of trust and friendship that 'smooth the way' for artist engagement in the home. This enabled artists to quickly establish their own relationships and to focus on contributing their own creative and artistic skills. It also establishes the context in which long term transformation and development can happen for participants.

"(The participant) and I are already established friends within PSU. We have spent lots of time together in group settings though this might be the first time we have spent time together one on one." – Facilitator

"(staff member) and I have known (the participant) for many years through People Speak Up and always have a wonderful time visiting (her)." – Facilitator

In addition to providing a stable long term 'infrastructure' and culture of relationships, PSU also of course provide physical space (the Ffwrnes Fach Arts, Health and Wellbeing Hub) in which this can thrive. This space also operates as a key place where participants can share and celebrate work, the impacts of which are made clear above.

"He's not sure how he fits in at PSU yet he also expressed he feels welcome and has found a place to share & develop his creative work." – Artist

"He talked about how he takes photos for his own enjoyment, wellbeing and to connect with the beauty and detail of the world around him - but he hasn't yet found an outlet for them, a place he feels they can be shared in the way he imagines (except for at PSU)." – Artist

The MSC panel discussed the importance of inspiring people with 'the vision' behind their work. This permeates all aspects of the work insofar as vision is communicated through factors including the relationships, the building etc. This vision is both created and sustained by the passion of each individual stakeholder who 'goes above and beyond' in their commitment to the project and organisation, but is also the culture that inspires this passion and commitment in others, creating a 'virtuous cycle'.

"Many organisations don't let you be truly artistic, but PSU allows you to be an artist while using it as a tool for wellbeing with participants" – Artist

The long term vision and presence of the organisation allows for multiple iterations of projects to develop over time, incorporating the learning from previous efforts and providing new opportunities to experiment with different approaches. Along with the previously mentioned opportunities for staff and artists' reflection, this creates an environment rich with learning and one that underpins constant project improvements and increasingly meaningful and impactful outcomes.

*'I came alive today
Imagining with Lee
Skipping from thought to thought
Fragments and whole stories
Bounced between us
Reading into the future
Elevator pitches
Brought to fruition.'*

Participant

Section 7: The ‘most significant stories’

The panel chose three stories they felt were most significant in relation to the impact of the project and the learning for the organisation. These were as follows, with the reasoning summarized for each. *Edited versions of all three stories are included in the appendix.*

7.1 Story 1 – Tia (Artist)

The panel described this story as ‘a complete package of that journey of what the project’s designed to do’. As an artist, Tia experienced a journey of significant personal and professional development and has become an integral part of the PSU team. In bringing her own skills, passion and vision to the sessions she was able to encourage good things from the participant(s). Tia’s story is honest about the challenges of racism and discrimination and the panel felt that her experience of finding things in common and of developing a connection between herself as a young, black woman and the participant as an older white woman, provides a hopeful model for creating better understanding between sometimes disparate groups in wider society. Her own artistic practice and skills were fundamental in discovering shared humanity and human experience that goes beyond these boundaries. As a result of all this, the work Tia and the participant created together is moving and profound. The panel noted the significance of creating space where these kinds of relationships can thrive but acknowledged that this is often not as easy as people imagine, with many significant elements to ‘get right’ in order for this to happen. In this context, this story is particularly relevant and powerful.



7.2 Story 2 – Joan (Participant)

The MSC panel participants liked the metaphor Joan uses of 'being on a boat' and reaching a harbor for safety, particularly as Joan and her partner used to go boating themselves. The story communicates the ups and downs of life and the profound effect that creative activity can have in coping and flourishing.

The panel noted that Joan herself has gone on a journey but that, in fact, the project has been significant for both her and Colin, providing special time for them to spend as a married couple. Life has changed due to Colin's dementia but the project has helped them embrace that change. 'They're changing with it'.

The panel identified the significance of the 'different ways of keeping each other company'. There are habitual ways of doing this, in a couple particularly. But the project also provides ways of disrupting this gently with another kind of company and a different kind of activity by 'coming together with intention'.

7.3 Story 3 – Anonymous (participant)

This story was deemed to be significant due to the profound change experienced by the story-teller as a result of engaging with the project. Starting in a place of loneliness, grief, a lack of confidence and real sadness, the connections made with people and the development of artistic skills and practices have reduced the impact of these and increased wellbeing significantly.

The 'distance travelled' artistically was noted, with the participant travelling from a basis of little artistic experience to seeing his work exhibited on the wall at Fwrnes Fach. The consequent impact on his confidence and self-esteem was huge. The participant has learned to see himself as an artist and his perception of how other people perceive him has changed too.

"People must like me then!" - anonymous participant

The role of creative activity in helping cope with grief and other trauma through therapeutic and 'mindful' activity was emphasised. These practices 'spilled' beyond the activity sessions, with the participant practising his newfound artistic skills instead of watching TV.

Members of the panel felt that it's the combination of factors within the activity that 'works' – "You've got social interaction, you've got communication, the listening, and you're doing something that's got a bit of flow or has an object involved." This combination is believed to be unique to the project and different from other professional caring relationships.

Important questions were raised by the panel about how we might measure this kind of profound change effectively.

7.4 Key themes from all the stories

The following are general themes that the MSC panel identified within the stories.

- The ripple effect of the stories is important. The wider impact, not just on the participant but also the artists, family members, partners etc.

- It's important to tailor the project around unique individuals.
- For this to happen requires effective listening, relationship development and skills in co-design and co-production.
- It's important to create a safe space but also possible to be courageous within it. Be open to surprises and take thoughtful risks to open up space for transformation.
- Ongoing reflection and learning is crucial, and this can happen most effectively by bringing artist, facilitator, participant and other stakeholders together on a shared journey.
- The willingness of participants, even older ones, to develop a new skill is inspiring. A new thing to get excited about that brings joy.
- The project helps people take control in at least one area of life, providing agency.
- The work involves 'meeting people where they are'.



Section 8: Summary of findings and recommendations

The following is a summary of the key findings and recommendations from across the Creative Home Delivery Service project evaluation.

8.1 Mental health and wellbeing

A significant percentage of project participants reported improved mental and physical health at the end of the project. Key contributors to improved mental health include the connections and relationships developed between participant, facilitator and artist, and the therapeutic nature of the creative activities themselves. There is evidence that participants are using these activities to develop life skills that promote wellbeing and that bring benefits well beyond the sessions themselves. 25% of participants reported feeling 'less lonely or isolated regularly in their day-to-day lives at the end of the project'. This may be lower than expected and more work is needed to identify the reasons for this. It may be that participants are fearing a return to previous experiences of loneliness once the project (and potentially their relationships with facilitators and artists) finishes. Unpaid carers of participants reported high levels of increased mental health and wellbeing. Support for this group is limited and the significance of the project in providing them with very positive outcomes should not be ignored. Future projects could seek to build on this support.

Recommendations:

- PSU should seek to identify the reasons for continued loneliness and isolation amongst some participants at the end of the project. It may be necessary to develop new approaches to the provision of follow up activities and continuation of key relationships.
- Look to build on the impact made with unpaid carers, further exploring their needs and aspirations and seeking to continue responding to their needs in future project plans.

8.2 Personal growth

Personal growth is a key outcome from the project which is unique to each participant and is often caused by an accumulation of relatively small changes and achievements. The role of the artist and facilitator in nurturing these 'journeys' through listening, noticing, encouraging, and gently challenging, is crucial. A key aspect here is the appropriate and sensitive management of risk in ways that enable participants to be stretched and challenged in a safe and supportive context of family, friends and professionals.

Recommendation:

- These findings have implications for the management of risk in the organisation. New creative approaches to risk assessment and management could be co-produced with artists, facilitators, participants and their families, allowing the need for challenge and new experiences to be balanced with a shared responsibility for managing risk.

8.3 Community dynamics (engagement, involvement and social connection)

Relationships are crucial to the project, providing the context in which the project thrives. Improved relationships are also a key outcome in their own right. The relationship between participant, artist and facilitator supports wellbeing by focusing on participant strengths and by building meaning through creative activity. These core relationships exist within, and nurture and support, wider relationships with family and neighbourhood. This extension of relationships into the wider community is one key way in which new participants get involved in the work of PSU. The project builds confidence in participants to embrace and engage in new opportunities in their wider community. Finally, the project provides opportunities to build relationships and understanding across traditional divides (for example, see story 1 in the appendix).

Recommendation:

- The role the project plays in bridging divides could be explored further, for example by consciously looking to engage more people from minority groups and by actively facilitating connections between people from different groups using creative activities.

8.4 The role of creative endeavors

Creative activities themselves lead to personal growth and increased confidence. The satisfaction of creating something physical and unique, positive feedback from respected artists, and the displaying and viewing of work at the final exhibition are all key here. Participants develop activities and skills that they practice outside of sessions, extending wellbeing outcomes further and longer. Artists are increasing their confidence in challenging and stretching participants to 'go further', sometimes outside of their comfort zones. This approach creates increased opportunities for personal growth and development and is a significant development in this iteration of the project.

Recommendation:

- The role of the artist in 'inviting' the participation to act outside of their comfort zone should be explored further. What are the skills used here? How can they be developed further? How can they be shared with others?

8.5 The professional development of artists

The project achieved important outcomes for artists as well as participants. They described opportunities for new experiences and challenges and a number told stories of their own personal and professional development as a result. This culture of, and focus on, artist development helps sustain the organisation by creating committed, creative and talented associate artists and staff. Opportunities for personal and group reflection underpin this success. Artists would like to build on this by working even closer together, possibly by co-creating a collaborative piece of art alongside participants. They would also like to understand better how to make use of the wellbeing coaching sessions.

Recommendations:

- Further opportunities for artist collaboration should be explored through the next project, building on the group planning and reflection sessions developed during this project.

- Artists should be engaged in conversations about how they make use of the wellbeing coaching opportunities, and how this area of support is developed and offered.

8.6 People Speak Up's wider engagement

Participants and artists identify strongly with PSU and it is the relational culture in the organisation that creates the context in which CHDS and other projects thrive. This network of projects provides multiple 'access points' for local people into the organisation but also constant opportunities for new experiences and challenges. Relationships are at the heart of the organisation and are created and sustained using multiple approaches to communication including one-to-one contact, group based work, digital communication and social media. The Ffwrnes Fach Arts, Health and Wellbeing Hub is a crucial resource that provides space to gather but also to exhibit and celebrate creative work. The organisation provides both a clear vision and a consistent and stable presence within which projects can come and go and individuals can learn and grow.

Recommendation:

- Given the importance of the organisation's culture to the success of projects and the delivery of outcomes, it might be worth exploring opportunities for research and evaluation that is not project specific but focused on these wider issues (and aimed at making a case for PSUs core values and approaches).



Section 9: Appendix – The three most significant stories

The following three stories were picked as the ‘most significant’ by the MSC panel. They have been edited but are told in the story-tellers’ own words. Permission has been granted by all story-tellers to share their stories (except where introduced as ‘anonymous’).

9.1 Story 1

Story-teller: Tia-Zakura Camilleri

Role: Participant: Artist

Story collector: Eleanor Shaw

Could you tell us a little bit about yourself, and what life was like before you got involved in the Creative Home Delivery Service Project?

I’m a freelance creative from Cardiff. I am 19 years old and I describe myself as a spoken word poet. A lot of my work is focused on young people, working with around 11 – 18-year-olds, delivering some workshops, and just kind of introducing my theme.

How did you get involved in the project, and what did you hope might happen as a result of getting involved with the project?

I guess I had never worked with anyone who was older than me, so I was quite nervous but I was also hoping to be able to expand my practice and expand my people skills. I was also hoping to learn about myself. It kind of forced me to start from scratch. I think I had quite a standardised workshop that I delivered a lot and I was like ‘okay I need to completely remain authentic to what it is that I do, but change and completely revamp how I deliver workshops’. This was more about being really participant led and I was really interested in that, and I wanted to be able to create new ways of delivering and expand my skills.

I know it’s not a question on here, and we don’t have to talk about this, but I know before the project we had a bit of a chat didn’t we, and there was a conversation about worries regarding the project?

Yes, I am actually really happy to talk about this because it was something that I was definitely anticipating. Even though we would always be accompanied by a People Speak Up Facilitator, going somewhere like that, on your own can be intimidating. I am 19 years old and as a black woman in an area that is not super-diverse, I remember sitting there and being like ‘I am actually quite nervous about this’, and my question was ‘are they going to know that I am a black woman?’ I reached the end of the session and felt comfortable enough to come to you (Eleanor) and speak about it, and just be like, this would put me at so much ease if I just knew that they (participant) knew who I was, and you explained that it would be something that is already told to the participant, that they would know what it is I do, and my age and that Hillary and Lynne were happy with that and were very keen to meet new people as well.

So I think it actually tested my own ignorance in a way because, although it came from lived experiences, I had to really question myself for thinking that ‘oh because they are older, they are not going to be accepting’. It’s turned out that actually that topic of racial differences has

been fruitful in the sessions. Especially with Lynne, we have spoken about our age difference, our racial difference, our upbringing and now we are actually writing a piece that is about that difference but there is also a lot we relate on.

As a result of participating in the project, what do you think has been the most significant change for you personally?

I think I have definitely realised how much I see value in one-to-one sessions because I feel like I have really been able to get to know the people that I am working with, and tailor all of the sessions to that.

And by having that one-to-one contact, how has that changed you personally?

Every session I come out of it inspired. I think what is significant for me is being able to relate to people that are so vastly different from my background. In every session, there are things that we just click on and also for me significantly it has instilled a bit of confidence in what I do, in that it resonates with people that I think it wouldn't resonate with. I sometimes think my poetry will land with a younger audience, or with a black audience, but actually when I read my poems to Lynne and Hillary they are feeling it in a different way but it's just as impactful, and I'm like 'whoa, it speaks to people of all demographics and we are able to learn', and actually, especially in Lynne's sessions, I have started to open up how I write as well, because I think that I write quite rhythmically and rhyme is a key-focus of my writing whereas the storytelling of Lynne's writing is so powerful that I have taken on that as well, and we are doing this thing where I write one line, she writes the next one, and seeing how our styles have slowly merged together. Yeah I would say the fact that I have been able to relate with these people on a deeper level than what I thought, that I would say has been really significant.

What caused this change?

I think that just getting to know them on a deep level because of that one-to-one nature.

If you were to tell other people about People Speak Up what would you say?

What I really value with People Speak Up is the integrity in everything that People Speak Up do.

So what title would you give your story?

I'm trying to think of something really clever, I'm a poet so it has to be good haha, umm. I feel like I would call it 'Safe Landing' because in one sense you have jumped out of a helicopter, not knowing where you are going to land. I feel safe and like I have landed on my feet.

9.2 Story 2

Story-teller: Joan Lewis

Role: Participant

Could you tell us a little bit about yourself, and what life was like before you got involved in the Creative Home Delivery Service Project?

Well, we became involved when it was confirmed that Colin had dementia and we heard about the Eleveses group which meets every Friday morning. Then they introduced us to this idea of someone coming into your home and creating art of whatever type you wanted to be involved in, and we thought 'hmm this sounds interesting' and so, that's how it started with us.

Before getting involved with Eleveses and People Speak Up, what did your life look like?

Pre-dementia (our lives) I suppose were pretty active really. It (art) was only one of the activities that we've always enjoyed, we've otherwise always been boating, whether it's been sailing or the motorboat in later years, then Colin got a little bit unsteady on his feet and we were a bit concerned about him on the boat when the boat is moving.

Colin also started... It was more than just an aging thing, with losing memory (and later) he was diagnosed with Louis Type dementia, which includes Parkinson's disease. So that did sort of change things slightly, we gave up the boat but we were determined that we wouldn't let the word dementia rule our lives.

How did you get involved in the project? And what did you hope might happen as a result of getting involved?

Well, we thought it would be good, since there is such a thing about dementia...it can be quite a difficult subject to talk about. And yet you don't want to brush it under the carpet. It is as it is. It's an illness. You talk about cancer and so why should this be any different?

How did you get involved with the project and what did you think might happen as a result of being involved with the project?

We were very curious about the project and happy to be involved, we felt quite privileged that somebody would actually come into our home and that we didn't have to go out to do it. We initially felt quite guilty that we, as a couple, were taking up your (PSU's) time specifically for us rather than doing something in a group setting. We have definitely benefitted from the more intimate nature of the visits though.

As a result of participating in the project, what do you think has been the most significant change for you personally?

Well, I find art.. being absorbed in it, well it is something that is totally absorbing and therefore you relax, you concentrate just on what it is that you're producing, and the time goes by so quickly and you're not thinking 'oh I should be doing this' or 'I've got this to do' or anything else. And it's time that we've been able to share together which is absolutely brilliant. The fact that we both enjoy doing it, is a bonus. You know, if it was just me, I'd feel guilty, but the fact that, you know, both of us enjoy and spend it together is lovely. The hour

seems to go by very, very quickly.

What caused this change?

I suppose we enjoy life and laugh a lot but there is a serious side to us, we're not totally flippant really, and so things that we do in small groups, I enjoy far more than being in a big crowd.

Colin: As far as groups are concerned, I think 10 people is the maximum for a good group because otherwise you will always get one who will lead the conversation and overpower the group so that it's difficult for anybody else to get a word in.

If you were to tell other people about People Speak Up what would you say?

It's a lovely friendly group, the helpers are absolutely wonderful and they are all very empathetic. You can go along, and it's got a sort of lovely, casual feel to it. I do things that I wouldn't normally do, I wouldn't get up and dance, but I do occasionally at Elevenses. We also joined the choir as a result of People Speak Up and neither of us are good at singing! It's (PSU) something that's been very therapeutic.

What title would you give to your story?

Well life always has ups and downs, doesn't it? You're tossed around. It's like being in a sailing boat on the sea. Some of it can be traumatic, some of it can be absolutely amazing and that's what life is all about and you can't say 'oh woe is me, why did Colin get dementia?' He did, and you can't choose, can you? Life is not that, so to be downhearted about it is silly because you've still got a life to lead. If you're in a rough sea, and you are suffering and feeling sea sick, and you think 'I wish I wasn't here' and then you make it into a harbour and the harbour is the 'ah waw, what was it that I was worried about?'

Colin; We have done things that I could never have dreamt of doing. Which have been exciting and sometimes frightening.

9.3 Story 3

Story-teller: Anonymous

Role: Participant

Story collector: Dave Horton

Could you tell us a little bit about yourself and what life was like before you got involved in the project?

How far would you like me to go back? School obviously, I done a lot of running in school, football, I ran for Wales when I was 17. Done my knees in so I had to pack up playing football quit early. I worked at Asda, the hospital (Prince Phillip). I quit my last job, Prince Phillip, they finished me because of my back. Fast forward. I'm 65 years of age. I lost my mother a year and a half ago, I lost my sister two and a half years ago. I lost my father nine and a half years ago. And I'm very down. I get good days. I get very bad days. I think about my family all the time. I just can't get it out of my head. When I'm talking to yourself and other people I'm good. But once I get back in my flat I'm on my own. It all comes back then. I never thought I'd say this, I'm fed up watching TV! I'm thinking thoughts that I shouldn't be thinking. Not like, suicide or nothing like that, but you know, will I get up in the morning, or shall I stay in bed all day? That's not me. I like getting out, I like going out early, having a walk and whatever.

How did you get involved in the project, and what did you hope might happen as a result of getting involved with the project?

One of my mates, he was the minister, in a local chapel, he mentioned something. Because I was, I was living with my mother. She had a fall two and a half years ago and broke her hip. I blame myself for what happened.

I was hoping it would bring me back to something like I was. The person I used to be. Which is not this. No, I'm very. Like I say, I'm very bubbly. I like to be around people. And I like to help people. As much as I can. I'd be a better person in myself if I could get back to something like I was when I was younger.

So, what has changed as a result of getting involved in the project?

I've learned so many things. The drawings and the painting. Art. I've never been able to draw in my life, but now I can. What I do is, get a picture and then I sketch it out, and then colour it all in. And whatever comes in here (points at head), goes on the paper. And Val told me 'that's good' she said. 'That's creative thinking' she said. So, I was happy with that. I said 'I'm weird!' Maybe so, but 'it's good' she said.

When I'm in the flat I can put a piece of paper down like that. Don't feel like watching the TV. Bigger the TV. I just look, I grab something. Like a silhouette or a church scene or whatever, and I'll just sketch it. When I start to do something, I won't stop until I finished it. Instead of watching TV for like three hours, I'd rather do something like that for three hours.

Well, they want to do an exhibition of my work. What's the name of the boss? Eleanor! Her, and Carys and Ffion. They want to do an exhibition of my, what I do...

And how does that make you feel?

Brilliant! Brilliant! Bringing people in to have a look! So it makes me feel like I got a sense. Like people like me. I get days I feel useless, I'm no good to anybody. Nobody wants to know me anymore. Which isn't the case, but that's how I feel some days. And that's happening a lot that is. When I come here, I'm great! Yeah, it gives me, it makes me feel better in myself, that people like me.

What caused this change?

The friendliness. The atmosphere. As soon as you walk in Carys comes up to you - 'Hello, how are you?' Or one of the girls, or Steffan or anybody. Come up to you...'how are you?' like, isn't it? Yeah, people care and, yeah, to that respect. One of the thoughts I'm having is that I'm useless to everybody. Nobody wants to know me anymore. I am a waste of space, and I want to get out of that. You know, don't get me wrong, I haven't got mental health problems or anything like that. But it's just, you know, I shouldn't be thinking things like that. I feel wanted here...and people are saying about my work. It's brilliant.

If you were to tell other people about People Speak Up, what would you say?

It seems to be tight knit, a tight knit group. Yeah. Yeah. This is my favourite place to go.

What title would you give your story?

This has been my life... basically. I'm quite proud of what I've done in my life as far as sport and helping people along. What else can I say? Yeah, I think I've done... for my age I think I've done quite well in my life. Most of my life.