

Span Arts case study for WAHWN website 25/02/19

Title	Remote Choir / Côr Pellenig
Subtitle	Singing, technology and connection in Pembrokeshire
Short description (200 words)	<p>Remote Choir was a participatory singing project, piloted by Span Arts, engaging isolated, housebound older-people in rural West Wales between December 2017-May 2018. Singing and digital technology were used to increase wellbeing and reduce loneliness and isolation.</p> <p>The project was developed in response to the increase in chronic and severe loneliness experienced by older people in the UK and a higher than average elderly population, rural isolation and poor connectivity in the County.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce loneliness and isolation - Improve mental/physical health and wellbeing - Improve confidence, skills, and memory - Increase participants' connection to wider community <p>The project worked with 130 individuals, 10 of whom struggled to leave their own homes. Health conditions included dementia, autism, COPD, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, ME and depression.</p> <p>Through a series of 40 one-to-one sessions and 2 community celebrations the project successfully met its aims. The project was described as <i>"life-changing"</i>, <i>"important"</i>, <i>"positive"</i>.</p> <p>People experienced measurable increases in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing - Quality of life - Awareness/capacity with digital technology - Community connections - Human contact and feelings of worth - Confidence in singing <p>The project delivered excellent value for money costing £7,000 equivalent to just over £50 per head.</p> <p>Link to film: https://vimeo.com/268548606 (password: Span2018)</p>
Link to external web page	http://www.span-arts.org.uk/remote-choir-report/
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<p>Extended description (1000 words)</p>	<p>Remote Choir / Côt Pellenig was a participatory art project, which set out to engage isolated older people who struggled to leave their own homes, in Pembrokeshire, West Wales. The project used singing, songwriting, digital technology and volunteer singing-buddies to increase wellbeing and reduce loneliness and isolation. Span Arts worked with two exceptional Welsh artists Molara, a singer-songwriter and singing-teacher http://www.molara.co.uk/ and Ruth Jones an artist filmmaker http://www.ruthjonesart.co.uk/ both based locally.</p> <p>Purpose Remote Choir / Côt Pellenig was developed in response to the documented increase in chronic and severe loneliness experienced by older people in the UK (<i>Victor C. 2011 'Loneliness in old age: the UK Perspective'</i>); Pembrokeshire's high and increasing population of people aged 65+ (24.5% compared to 20% in the rest of Wales); and recognition that isolation and poor connectivity within the County are major obstacles for older people. (<i>Well-being Assessment for Pembrokeshire 2017</i>)</p> <p>Aims The project aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce loneliness and isolation - Improve mental and physical health and wellbeing - Improve confidence, singing skills, and memory - Increase participants' social networks and connection to the wider community - Create a new song about the experiences of older and isolated people - Support older people to use technology <p>Participants Target participants included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frail and elderly people living at home, attending day care centres or residents in care homes - People suffering with Alzheimer's and dementia - House-bound individuals - People with mental health difficulties - People experiencing rural, social and cultural isolation and loneliness <p>In total 130 people benefitted from the project 10 of whom had chronic or long-term health conditions including dementia, autism, COPD, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, ME and depression.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People experienced an increase in their sense of wellbeing.
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Wellbeing was measured using:

- a) The **Canterbury Wellbeing Scale** which measures “in the moment” happiness showed that sessions boosted people’s wellbeing by an average of 11%
- b) The **Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale**, which measures wellbeing over a period of time, showed that 80% of participants experienced an increase in their wellbeing at the end of the project compared to how they felt at the beginning.

- **Improved quality of life**
- **Increased awareness and capacity using digital technology**
- **Increased community connections**
- **Increased human contact and feelings of worth.**
- **Increased confidence in singing**

Evaluation

- Pre and post-project interviews with participants
- Pre and post-project wellbeing surveys (Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale)
- Pre and post-session wellbeing surveys to measure “in the moment” happiness (Canterbury Wellbeing Scale)
- Post-session progress monitoring reports carried out by the artists and volunteers running each session
- Photographic, filmic and audio recordings of the sessions and community singing event

Cost

The project cost £7,000 to deliver that equates to a cost per head of just over £50.

Outputs


The project delivered a total of:

- 40 one-to-one singing sessions for housebound individuals, their family and friends
- 2 Community singing celebrations
- 1 new song created by participants in collaboration with the artist
- 1 high-quality art film: <https://vimeo.com/268548606> (password to access it: Span2018)

Quality Indicators

Delivering a high-quality project was extremely important to Span Arts and was ensured in the following ways:

- Rigorous and competitive recruitment process of experienced artists
- £175 daily rate for artists (as recommended by Artists Newsletter)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participant-centered approach; sessions were specially tailored for each participant. - Ongoing feedback; progress monitoring reports were submitted for each session and recommendations were made for future sessions which were responded to - Safeguarding of participants, staff and volunteers was paramount; pre-project training was provided and guidance was written with advice from Pembrokeshire Association of Volunteer Services' safeguarding officer. <p><i>"I felt shut away but the project has given me a whole new lease of life".</i></p>
Image	
Supporters /partners/funders	<p>The project took referrals and was supported by a number of organisations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Stroke Association https://www.stroke.org.uk/ - The Alzheimer's Society https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/lizstory - Solva Care https://solvacare.co.uk/ - Age Cymru https://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/, PAVS Community Connectors https://www.pavs.org.uk/ - Pembrokeshire People First http://www.pembrokeshirepeople1st.org.uk/ - Narberth Living Memories Group - Various care homes and day-care centres in the local area. <p>Funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caring Communities Innovation Grant administered by PAVS (Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services) and funded through the Welsh Government's Integrated Care Fund (ICF) - Big Lottery Fund.