

## The Context for a Creative Words for Wellbeing network (Phase 2) Summary for November 2019 Reference Group meeting

### Provider survey

#### Methods

An online survey was open during September and October 2019 to those who answered “yes” to the question: *Do you provide Creative Words for Wellbeing services in Scotland?* The survey was distributed via the full spectrum of project contacts, who were asked to cascade the survey more widely.

In total, 80 Creative Words for Wellbeing Practitioners completed the survey:

- Around half (49%) were Facilitators, with 13% being Directors and 24% being Project Managers. Almost one in five (18%) were Facilitators AND had a project role.
- The Practitioners came from a wide range of sectors, most often the arts (36%) or health (35%) sectors. Many Practitioners worked across multiple sectors.
- The Practitioners most often worked in the Central Belt area (48%), with 8% being based North of this area and 11% South of this area. One in five (20%) told us that they worked across Scotland, and 6% (sometimes) work outwith Scotland.

#### Summary

##### ***The Practitioner experience***

The majority of Practitioners found it easy to persuade beneficiaries (82%) and people in the arts sector (81%) about the value of Creative Words for Wellbeing. Proportionally fewer (64%) found people in the health sector easy to persuade. However, decision-makers were typically the least receptive, as only 30% of Practitioners found Funders easy to persuade (with 49% finding them actively difficult to persuade) and 29% found policy-makers easy to persuade (with 51% finding them actively difficult to persuade).

The challenges most often faced by the Practitioners were:

- Difficulty sustaining funding (61%)
- Finding sources of funding (56%)
- Access to persuasive evidence of the value of such activities (41%)

The Practitioners least often had sufficient access to the following forms of support:

- Help with fundraising for activities (10% had sufficient access)
- Access to an up-to-date evidence base (20% had sufficient access)
- Support to campaign or advocate for this work (21% had sufficient access)

##### ***The Facilitator experience***

Seven in ten (70%) of the Practitioners currently facilitate Creative Words for Wellbeing activities in Scotland. Of these:

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- 70% said that they felt adequately trained to facilitate Creative Words for Wellbeing activities.
- 71% felt that their own wellbeing is adequately protected when facilitating Creative Words for Wellbeing activities.

### ***Considering a future Creative Words for Wellbeing network in Scotland***

The Practitioners were very enthusiastic about the idea of a Scottish network focusing on Creative Words for Wellbeing, with 89% saying that they would find such a network valuable and only 1% saying that they would not.

There was some demand for a Scottish network to provide each of the forms of support that were listed in the survey, with at least four in ten Practitioners saying that they would use each if it was available. However, the Practitioners most often said that they would use:

- Opportunities to share experience and best practice (66% would use)
- Opportunities for collaborative or partnership working (60% would use)
- Access to an up-to-date evidence base (59% would use)

Support options with relatively higher demand and relatively lower current provision could be prioritised and these are as follows:

High priority: Currently lower access but more likely to use

- Access to an up-to-date evidence base
- Opportunities to network with others from different sectors

Medium priority: Currently higher access but more likely to use

- Opportunities to share experience and best practice
- Opportunities for collaborative or partnership working
- Opportunities to discuss your ideas

Phase one of this project highlighted several issues and activities as being of potential relevance to Creative Words for Wellbeing, and the Practitioners were asked the extent to which they felt that a future network should work on them.

- The Practitioners most often felt that a future network should work on ethical guidelines for Creative Words for Wellbeing (88%), followed by being a collective voice for Creative Words for Wellbeing (77%) and considering a shared approach to evaluation (71%).
- Practitioners also agreed that a network should advocate for training accredited by a professional body (64%), deliver a collective action plan (63%) and advocate for practitioner accreditation by a professional body (59%).

The Practitioners felt that barriers to setting up a network in Scotland might include: a lack of resources (including time and money) and conflict due to different opinions or professional approaches. Linked to these, it was felt that someone would need to take the lead in delivering this work.

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### Mapping exercise

#### Methods

As part of the survey, Practitioners were asked to tell us about Creative Words for Wellbeing activities currently taking place in Scotland. Responses were cleaned and de-duped, and any missing information and activities were sourced via email and the web. The data was then transferred into an Access database, ensuring that one entry was made for each geographic location where an activity was taking place.

#### Summary

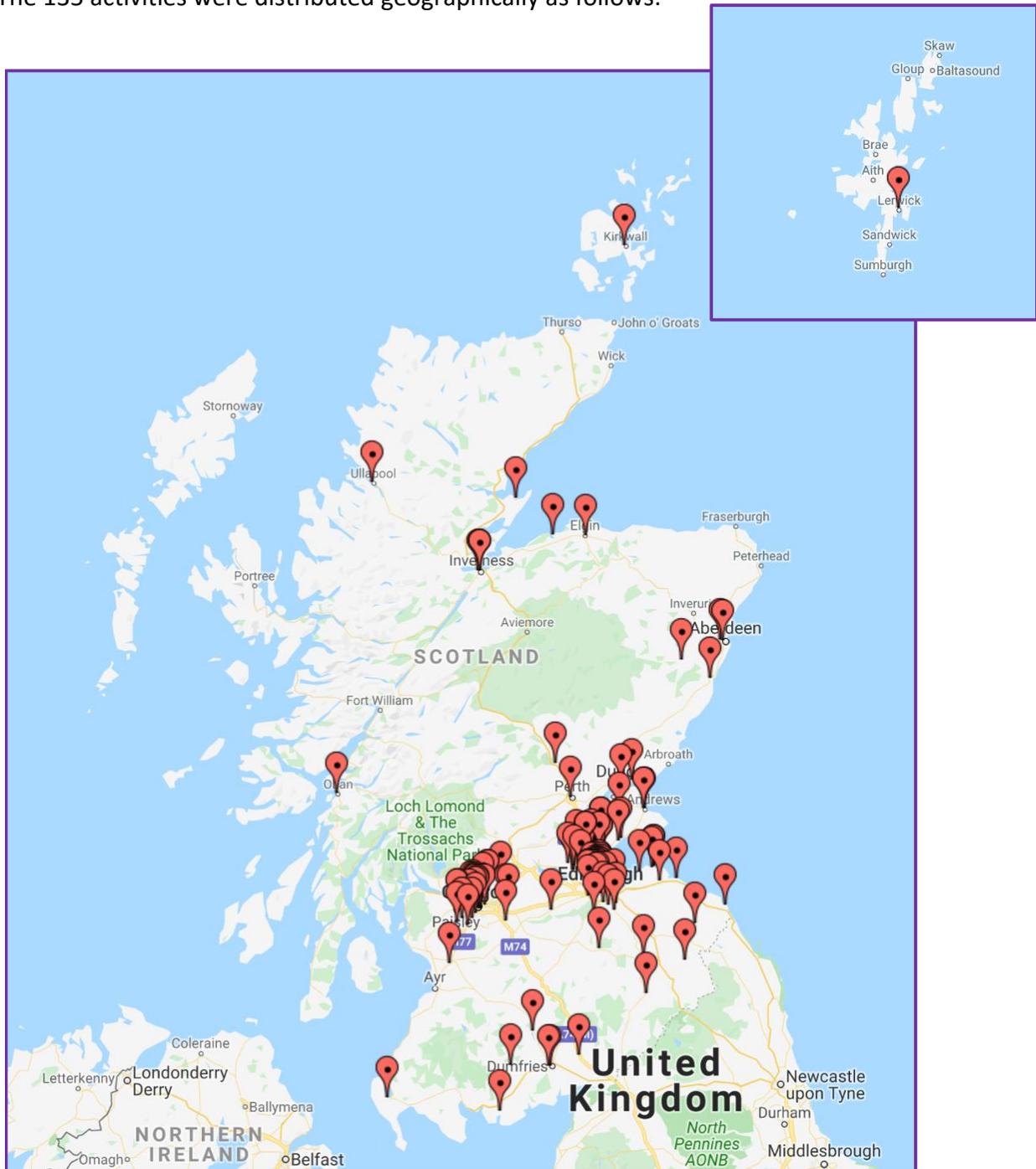
In total 135 entries were made into the database, representing 135 separate opportunities for people to join Creative Words for Wellbeing activities in Scotland at the end of 2019.

Patterns in provision were as follows:

- The 135 activities were led by 47 separate Providers.
- The activities most often involved poetry (85%), reading (82%), writing (72%) and short stories (71%).
- Activities that had specific intended beneficiaries were most often aimed at people with mental health problems (11%), people with chronic health conditions (8%), people at risk of social isolation (7%) and women (7%). However, more than half of the activities (53%) were simply aimed at the general public.
- Around two thirds (66%) of the activities were set up with the intention to achieve health or wellbeing outcomes, and this was an incidental outcome for around a third (34%) of the activities.
- All but one of the activities had a facilitator. The facilitators were most often paid freelancers (48%), library staff (27%) and/or professional writers / artists (15%).
- All of the activities were conducted in English. In addition, 5% were also conducted in Gaelic / Scots, 1% were conducted in BSL, and 4% were conducted in other languages.
- The activities were most often offered weekly (53%) or fortnightly (21%), although in practice some of these were offered on an ongoing basis and some were offered in blocks of sessions.
- The activities were most often Council funded (37%), funded by other grant funding (36%) or unfunded (26%).
- The majority of the activities were located around Scotland's Central Belt.
  - Salaried members of staff were all situated around the Central Belt.
  - Activities funded by charities or other grants tended to be situated around the Central Belt.
  - Otherwise, no strong geographic patterns in provision were observed.

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The 135 activities were distributed geographically as follows:



Links to interactive maps:

[all activities](#), [beneficiaries](#), [artforms](#), [facilitators](#), [funding](#), [language](#), [intentionality](#)