

Evaluation of the Momentum Programme – Phase 2

Final report presented to **Arts Council of Wales** by **Arad Research**

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Executive summary

The Momentum programme aims to engage marginalised young people in inspiring and creative activity, aiming to provide the young people with hard outcomes, increase their skills and confidence, improve their emotional wellbeing and develop their employability. The first phase of the programme in 2014 was a pilot phase to allow the Arts Council to test the effectiveness of its approach to identification, tracking, progression and outcomes for the young people involved. Phase 2 (January-September 2015) funded 11 projects to deliver arts interventions to around 314 young people, extending the age range to include those in the 19-24 age group.

Arad Research was commissioned by Arts Council of Wales to undertake an evaluation of Phase 2 of the Momentum Programme. The aims of the evaluation were to collate evidence of hard and soft outcomes, assess the effectiveness of the partnerships involved and make recommendations for changes to the programme where it might lead to more successful outcomes.

Key findings

- The 11 Momentum projects have successfully delivered a range of hard and soft outcomes, and illustrated the role the arts can play in providing effective engagement and progression opportunities for vulnerable young people.
- The Momentum projects have exceeded their overall target for the number of young people to be engaged. A total of 314 participants were engaged compared to a target of 234.¹
- All Momentum projects have delivered at least two hard outcomes (and usually more) for participants. A total of 57 per cent of all participants (aged 11-24) gained a qualification, while 60 per cent of participants aged 11-16 improved their school attendance levels. A total of 36 per cent of participants aged 16-24 moved from being NEET (not in employment, education or training) to being in employment or education and 34 per cent are engaged in volunteering.
- Soft outcomes have been delivered in every Momentum project including a range of personal outcomes as well as project-specific and employability skills. Personal outcomes have included confidence and self-esteem, improved physical and mental health, and improved literacy skills. Project-specific and employability skills have provided some participants with a foundation for employment, self-employment and volunteering as well as offering opportunities to work in professional environments.
- Recruitment of participants has worked particularly well where committed partnerships between a range of organisations are in place. Successful recruitment is often attributed to the flexible approach of partners and the attractiveness of the arts as an engagement tool. Most projects matched the art form to the participants' interests and abilities which had a further positive impact on recruitment and retention.

¹ It is worth noting that initial targets were formulated by projects at a very early stage and do not necessarily reflect later project delivery e.g. projects may have decided it was more effective to work with a different age group.

- Difficulties with recruitment have been attributed to issues such as a lack of initial, active engagement from partners; communication and behaviour issues; and the transient nature of the target groups.
- Projects used a range of approaches to assessing their own impact and effectiveness in order to reflect the diversity of soft and hard outcomes they were delivering. Many projects undertook both a baseline and final assessment, to best illustrate the progress of participants.
- Momentum projects have developed a wide range of effective partnerships. Through developing a common understanding of participant needs and aspirations project partners were able to develop tailor-made activities and ensure appropriate support for participants.
- Partnership challenges included difficulties in initiating partnerships, communication issues and a lack of buy-in from some partners during the project's duration, and timing issues when working with schools.
- Most of the projects funded through the second phase of Momentum participated in the pilot phase. This continuity has enabled projects to develop trust and build on previous good practice and lessons in recruitment, management and delivery while developing more sustained outcomes for some participants.
- Ensuring an effective exit strategy and suitable progression routes for participants has been key for sustaining impact. Participants have progressed into a wide range of opportunities in employment, education and volunteering. A particularly effective element of some projects has been to integrate participants into the project partners' wider work and links with local communities.
- Some projects have continued partnerships in order to respond to other opportunities. This contributes to the sustainability of outcomes and opportunities to further develop arts engagement activities. These activities can link to action plans such as Creative Learning Through the Arts and wider Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government engagement strategies.

Recommendations

1. Projects should continue to work on developing the employability and entrepreneurship of participants, including through the development of business and self-employment skills.
2. All projects should give particular consideration to developing exit strategies for participants, to ensure any positive impact is maintained and a suitable progression route is available.
3. Projects should be flexible in considering which qualifications are most suitable for each project element and aim to match them with individual participants' needs and aspirations.
4. Roles and responsibilities should be formalised for wholly new partnerships before the start of project delivery. This will help to ensure commitment from partners unfamiliar with the requirements of Momentum projects.

5. Projects should consider how partnerships developed during project delivery can be maintained and can best support the delivery organisations' wider work with young people NEET and in the community.
6. The Momentum programme should continue to support participants aged 18-24, having demonstrated successful outcomes for this age group during this second phase.
7. Future iterations of Momentum should link closely to the wider goals of Arts Council of Wales relating to engagement with the arts and creative learning.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Momentum Programme

Momentum is the successor programme to the Arts Council of Wales's successful Reach the Heights programme. The first phase was a pilot phase, which started in February 2014 and finished in August 2014. 14 projects were funded to deliver arts interventions to around 325 young people aged 11-18, working in close partnership with Communities First. The purpose of this phase was to allow the Arts Council to test the effectiveness of its approach to identification, tracking, progression and outcomes for the young people involved. This pilot phase was evaluated by Arad Research in November 2014².

Phase 2 of the Momentum Programme started in January 2015 and finished in September 2015. This phase funded 11 projects to deliver arts interventions to around 314 young people, but extended the age range to include those in the 19-24 age group. This phase was supported through Arts Council of Wales Lottery Funding. A total of £381,580 was allocated to the 11 projects, with individual project funding ranging from £26,720 to £36,000.

The aim of Phase 2 was to engage marginalised young people in inspiring and creative activity, aiming to increase their skills and confidence, improve their emotional wellbeing and develop their employability. This phase has also focused on achieving 'harder outcomes' for the young people – outcomes that demonstrate clear, identifiable steps towards employability.

1.2 The evaluation

Arad Research was commissioned by Arts Council of Wales to undertake an evaluation of Phase 2 of the Momentum Programme, with the aim of supporting the Arts Council to consider a potential successor programme through the Youth and Youth Employment strand of the new ESF Operational Programme.

The aims of the evaluation were as follows:

- Collating the evidence of the hard outcomes delivered by the 11 individual Momentum projects (such as qualifications and progress into education, employment or training);
- Collating the evidence of the soft outcomes delivered by the 11 individual Momentum projects (such as increased confidence, motivation and self-esteem);
- Assessing the effectiveness of the partnerships involved;
- Making recommendations for changes to the programme where it might lead to more successful outcomes.

² http://www.artscouncilofwales.org.uk/c_engagement-and-participation/evaluation-of-the-momentum-pilot

1.3 Methodology

Arad undertook a detailed analysis of the impact of the 11 individual Momentum projects based on their final evaluation reports for Arts Council of Wales. To assist with this exercise Arad developed an evaluation framework to ensure that data was:

- collected systematically – helping to inform the design of data collection tools and identifying where qualitative and quantitative methods are required;
- organised according to agreed evaluation themes or subjects; and
- analysed in such a way as to ensure that the objectives of the evaluation have been delivered.

The framework was designed to link to the key objectives of the Momentum programme and cover the main objectives of the evaluation, namely assessing hard and soft outcomes for participants e.g. qualifications gained, progression opportunities taken up such as further education or volunteering, increased aspirations and levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.

In addition, the framework also covered the effectiveness of project delivery (including recruiting and retaining participants) and the effectiveness and sustainability of partnerships developed during phase 2 of the Momentum project. The framework also, where relevant, covered elements of continuity from the pilot Momentum phase, particularly how individual projects had learnt from and built upon their pilot Momentum projects to design and deliver this second project phase. Finally, the framework also considered sustainability and future development of the Momentum projects.

Arad undertook interviews with six project leaders in order to gain further understanding of the key impacts, successes and challenges of their projects. Arad developed a semi-structured interview pro-forma to guide these interviews which included identifying success factors and challenges; effectiveness and relevance of arts-based engagement; building trust with participants and meeting their specific needs, both in terms of skills development and also their aspirations; management; partnerships; and sustainability.

Arad identified a range of short case studies from the eleven projects' evaluation reports. These case studies aim to illustrate the wide range of individuals who have participated in Momentum projects and the hard and soft outcomes delivered as a result of their participation. These include impact on participants' skills, confidence, aspirations and their progression routes to further training, education or employment.

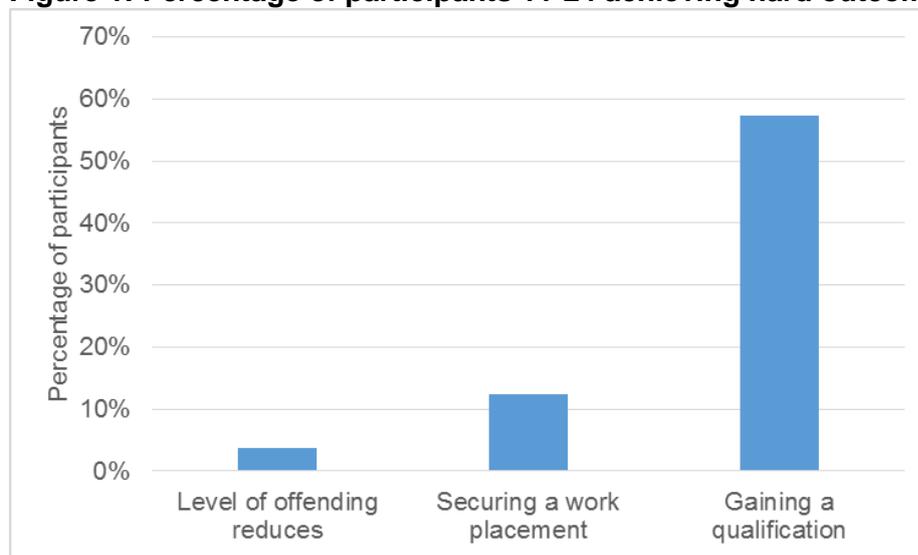
The final reporting stage synthesised the qualitative and quantitative data collected through each of the stages of the methodology, and provided recommendations for the development of similar initiatives in future.

2. Hard outcomes

Each of the 11 Momentum projects was able to demonstrate at least two hard outcomes (and usually more) for their participants. The figures below provide an overview of the hard outcomes for which aggregate data was available. The rest of this section provides a more detailed analysis of these hard outcomes as well as two outcomes specific to certain age groups; increased school attendance for 11-16 year olds and progression along the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) for 16-18 year olds.

Overall, 57 per cent of all participants (ages 11-24) gained a qualification, 12 per cent secured a work placement and 4 per cent reduced their level of offending (12 participants). Certain outcomes are only relevant to participants aged above 16. Therefore, 36 per cent of participants 16-24 moved into education, employment or training and 34 per cent are engaged in volunteering.

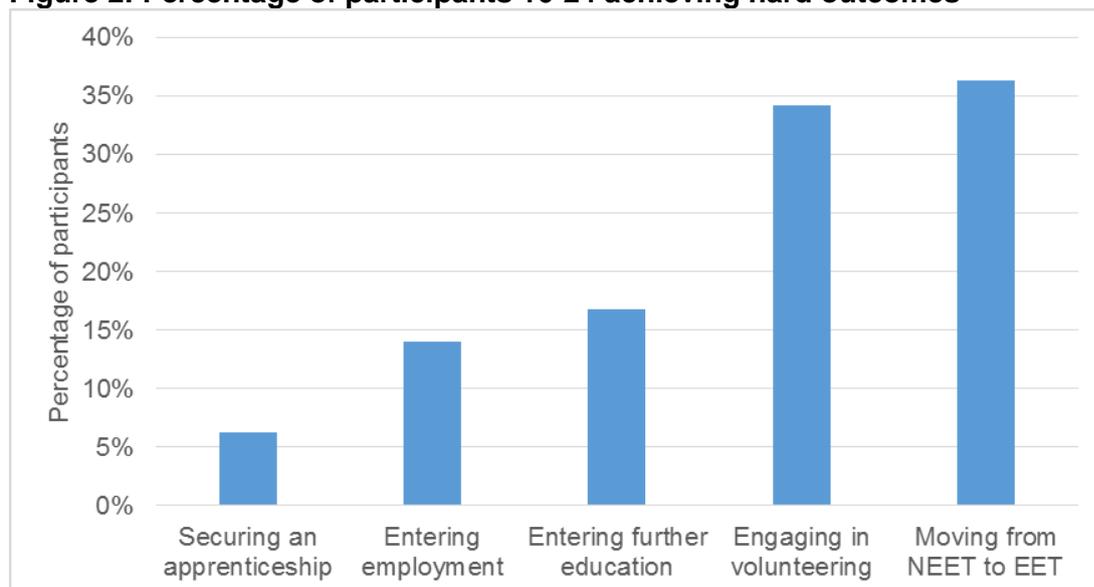
Figure 1: Percentage of participants 11-24 achieving hard outcomes



N=314

Source: Momentum projects' monitoring data

Figure 2: Percentage of participants 16-24 achieving hard outcomes



N=143

Source: Momentum projects' monitoring data

2.1 Qualifications

The most common hard outcome for young people in all projects was achieving a qualification, with 57 per cent of all participants (aged 11-24) achieving a qualification. Each of the 11 projects offered participants the opportunity to gain a qualification and the percentage of young people who actually achieved a qualification ranged from 39 per cent to 100 per cent between projects. Overall, 60 per cent of 11-16 year olds received accreditation, 54 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 53 per cent of 18-24 year olds.

Examples of accreditation include Arts Award at Bronze level, a range of Agored Cymru accreditations, ASDAN accreditations, Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards and GCSEs. Qualifications can cover both creative/technical skills and personal skills (for example units on communication or decision making).

Project evaluations and interviewees note that qualifications provide new opportunities for participants to progress in their education and/or careers. Some participants have very few existing qualifications. Cwmni'r Fran Wen noted that achieving Agored accreditation is particularly beneficial for such young people and Valleys Kids also reported that accreditation was *"a huge achievement for the group, particularly as some of the learners have a very low literacy level and struggle in everyday classroom situations"*.

Qualifications are also deemed to provide a route for young people to reengage with education, including given them confidence to do so; *"gaining such a qualification will not only build confidence in their ability and talent in art related activity, it will also enable them to progress into further education and employment. Pupils can further develop their interest and gain more credits by accessing Silver and Gold Arts Awards at a later date"* (North Torfaen Communities First).

Some projects provided specific examples of the types of qualifications their participants received. Action in Caerau and Ely supported participants to gain their CSCS cards, as well as OCN accreditations in Health and Safety, Sculpture and Improving Own Learning and Performance. Cwmbran Centre for Young People supported participants to achieve essential skills, Level 1 Youth Work and Level 2 Safeguarding qualifications. Cwmni'r Fran Wen offered a range of Agored units, both creative/technical and personal, for instance Assertiveness and Decision Making; Participating in an Enterprising Activity; Multimedia Software and Digital Film making; editing and production.

Project evaluations and interviewees emphasised that consideration must be given to matching the qualification offer with the project activities. Some projects found the qualifications offered to participants were well-aligned with the nature of the project. Head4Arts felt that Arts Award is *"a neat and discreet way of offering a hard outcome without changing the nature of the artist's work."* Similarly, Cwmni'r Fran Wen emphasised that they had worked closely with TEC Wales to offer appropriate Agored qualifications. They reported that this process worked well because they made it clear to participants that the qualifications did not involve additional work, only the project activities.

On the other hand, some projects felt that the qualifications used did not quite align with the project activities. Engage Cymru noted that they would prefer in future to carefully consider which qualifications are suited to each individual participant, rather than simply offering Agored qualifications because it was encouraged by the local youth service. North Torfaen Communities First also felt that the qualification did not suit their target group; *"whilst the Bronze Arts Awards formed the basis for the learning/teaching model and resulting sessions, it may have been too high an academic process for the groups the project was engaging with, within the project's timeframe."*

Case study: Qualification progression

engage Cymru

The participant's journey is viewed as "*a powerful testimony of the value of extended arts-based engagement with hard to reach young people*". He participated in the first Momentum project in 2014, when he was in year 12 at a residential school for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. He started the new Momentum project spending a week on work experience at Oriel Myrddin and mentored the two new younger learners. This represented a significant step forward and built on his previous success in Momentum. At the end of the project he achieved an A in GCSE Art, "*inconceivable*" before participating in Momentum. The external moderator commented on the high standard of his portfolio and in particular made reference to his work with local artists. The participant has now been accepted at the local further education college where he will continue post-16 studies in Art and Design. He also visited the sculpture department at the Carmarthen Art College which has given him a clear direction in his learning pathway, namely to complete a foundation course at the local college and continue his studies in sculpture at degree level.

2.2 Attendance

For those participants aged 11-16 participating in Momentum, a key hard outcome is increased attendance in school. A small amount of participants from this age group did progress into further education after their sixteenth birthday (9 per cent) and/or secured a work placement (8 per cent) but these two hard outcomes are not relevant to many participants, as they are still in the statutory education phase. Increased school attendance is therefore a measurable hard outcome for the 11-16 age group.

A total of 60 per cent of participants aged 11-16 improved their school attendance levels during or following the Momentum projects. Seven projects worked with this age group and they all identified increased attendance amongst their participants. In addition, a small number of participants (4 pupils) returned to mainstream education from a Pupil Referral Unit. It is also significant that many of those participants who improved their attendance levels were reported to have engaged positively when at school.

For example, engage Cymru reported that a notable outcome for them is "*teachers' feedback on how these arts interventions have engaged their most disengaged...and that they'd seen improved attendance.*" Clwyd Theatre found that for participants who responded positively to the project and engaged with the creative work, the project helped to increase their attendance at The Learning Centre. Valleys Kids found that their participants "*have demonstrated a significant improvement in attendance, throughout the duration of the project. The attentiveness and focus within the room, has been improved and this has been recognised by the teaching and support staff that work with the students in school. Punctuality was (also) improved.*"

Head4Arts also reported that the attendance levels of their participants were good to start with, since some felt more comfortable at school than at home. North Torfaen Communities First nevertheless raised some potential issues when trying to improve attendance amongst the Momentum target groups. They explained that such small projects sometimes have limited power to improve attendance when participants face problems at home. In addition, they found that it was "*expected that in particular, pupils from the Gypsy Traveller Community would leave their formal education before the end of the school term, due to family/travelling commitments.*"

Case study: Improved attendance

Clwyd Theatre Cymru

The participant first attended the Learning Centre in January 2014 and was 14 years old. She struggled with attendance and was only expected to attend morning sessions, yet even with this amended timetable she only attended approximately 40% of the time. Staff at the Learning Centre described her as an intelligent pupil with a lack of confidence and high levels of anxiety relating to social interactions with others, both peers and adults. During the project, she became passionate about the range of art forms and was motivated to engage proactively. She demonstrated significant improvements in her attendance at the Learning Centre during the period, which staff attribute to the project. Her attendance rose from her usual 40% to 100% during the project period. *“For the participant to access the centre 100% is amazing! Normally she comes for maybe three half day sessions. A maximum of one to two and a half hour sessions is the most she normally does. It’s like she’s a different person”* (Learning Centre member of staff).

2.3 Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

A key hard outcome for participants aged 16-18 is progression along the categories of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) from Red to Amber to Green, or from Tier 1 to Tier 5.³ This is a measure of both the young person’s circumstances in relation to education, employment and training, and also their risk of dropping out of employment, education or training (including support needs).

Six of the Momentum projects worked with young people in this age group and four of these were able to measure progress against the Framework. Overall, 38 per cent of participants aged 16-18 made progress against the Framework. One of these projects, Swansea City Opera, noted that they had worked with a qualified youth worker to identify 15 participants who had progressed along the Framework.

Engage Cymru reported that all their work focuses on improving access for young people, with a strong focus on hard-to-reach young people, which fits well with the objectives of the YEPF. Cwmni'r Fran Wen reported that they try to achieve outcomes within the context of the YEPF; through this the project is able to further demonstrate impact, so many local agencies are now keen to refer young people to the project.

2.4 Education, employment or training

Overall, 36 per cent of participants aged 16-24 moved from being NEET (not in employment, education or training) to being in employment, education and/or training. A total of 31 per cent of participants aged 16-18 and 41 per cent of participants aged 18-24 moved from being NEET to EET. This suggests that the expansion of the Momentum projects to include the 18-24 age group has led to clear, positive outcomes for this group.

The hard outcomes that projects measured were not mutually exclusive; moving from NEET to EET was a specific outcome, as was moving into employment, further education, an apprenticeship or a work placement.

³ Welsh Government, Youth Engagement and Progression Framework
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/youthengagement/?lang=en>

- 14 per cent of participants aged 16-24 moved into employment (6 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 21 per cent of 18-24 year olds);
- 17 per cent of participants aged 16-24 moved into further education (16 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 17 per cent of 18-24 year olds);
- 6 per cent of participants aged 16-24 gained an apprenticeship (1 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 11 per cent of 18-24 year olds); and
- 12 per cent of all participants aged 11-24 gained a work placement (8 per cent of 11-16 year olds, 12 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 24 per cent of 18-24 year olds).

Projects provided examples of participants who had gained employment following the project. Some of these had gained employment within the arts, while others had gained different forms of employment. Action in Caerau and Ely reported that one participant “*has now got their CSCS card and is picking up regular labouring work and awaiting an apprenticeship opportunity*”, while another “*is now working in the Western Leisure Centre as a centre assistant. They completed their National Pool Lifeguard Qualification alongside the Momentum project.*” One Swansea City Opera participant was offered a record contract for one song with a company in the USA. A Cwmbran Centre for Young People participant has gained employment in a toy shop.

Case study: Entering employment

Action in Caerau and Ely

The participant attended a drop-in session at the Dusty Forge a couple of months prior to the project and was interested in a career in construction. He had finished school a couple of years before and spent a year in college studying motor vehicle mechanics, but dropped out because of a death of a close family member. He recalls how he lost his way in life and became very reclusive and was prescribed anti-depressants as he felt he could not cope with the loss. During the course, he quickly proved to be one of the most valuable, proactive and capable members of the group. He would turn up early every day and stay late, helping with setting up and clearing away at the end of the day. The participant said he enjoyed learning the practical skills needed to carry out the course as he saw that they were relevant to him and to his aspirations for a career in construction. As soon as the project finished the student was able to find contract work through connections he had made with St Fagan’s Museum whilst the project was installing art on the site. The project is still in discussions with two larger construction companies to secure him an apprenticeship but in the meantime he continues to find work as a labourer for contracted jobs.

Projects also provided example of a wide range of training or education opportunities taken up by participants. Two participants from the engage Cymru project applied, and were accepted, onto a college place to study art as a result of participating in the project. One Swansea City Opera participant has accepted a college place at Rubicon Dance Company, one has been accepted to study performing arts at a local college and another is studying IT through ACT Training. A participant from the Swansea YMCA project has now started a college course in Health and Social Care.

“Taking part in the Momentum project has benefited [the participant’s] academic qualifications and personal growth. He has been accepted to study Art and Design at college with a degree in sculpture in his long-term plans. This is a direct result of taking part in the Momentum project.”

Teacher, engage Cymru.

Case study: Entering further education

Cwmbran Centre for Young People

When the participant started the project she was staying with a family member but soon afterwards became homeless and dropped out of sixth-form. With the support from the staff she was able to move into a hostel and the project team continued to attend meetings with her. She had grown up helping to care for her disabled mother who had later been placed in a home. During the project, she made friends easily within the group and when engaged achieved everything aimed for including essential skills improvements. She wrote an article for the magazine and enjoyed visiting local areas to take photos. She also set up a music group with some friends and gained the confidence to sing in front of an audience at a CCYP awards evening. She expressed a wide range of different career ideas for her future but was unsure which path to take. She has since achieved a place in college and is studying a Level 1 Hair and Beauty qualification.

2.5 Volunteering

Regular volunteering, either to learn or as a route to work, was also measured as a hard outcome for participants aged 16-24. Overall, 34 per cent of participants engaged in volunteering (42 per cent of 16-18 year olds and 28 per cent of 18-24 year olds). Volunteering includes volunteering with the organisation running the Momentum project and/or with an entirely different community initiative.

Some participants have continued to volunteer with their respective Momentum projects. Cwmni'r Fran Wen notes that 11 out of their 12 participants continue to volunteer regularly with the company. Four participants from the Head4Arts project volunteered to assist with the delivery of a craft activity at Arty Party, a community event. Other participants have moved on to volunteer with other community organisations and initiatives, often as a result of signposting by the Momentum projects. Swansea YMCA found that "*referrals to Swansea Council for Voluntary Services proved to be a beneficial progression route for young people keen to do volunteering work*". A Cwmbran Centre for Young People participant has been volunteering and playing an active role in an exchange project with the UNA Exchange (an international volunteering organisation) creating opportunities for young people to travel.

3. Soft outcomes

Soft outcomes have been delivered in every Momentum project. Soft outcomes include a range of personal outcomes (such as improved self-confidence and self-esteem) as well as project-specific and employability skills. They also form a strong basis for the achievement of hard outcomes, and progression to further, more sustained engagement, particularly when dealing with vulnerable young people.

3.1 Measuring soft outcomes

The Momentum projects acknowledged that measuring soft outcomes can be challenging; *“soft outcomes are more subjective and harder to measure. It can be difficult to determine whether improvements are a direct result of participating in the project and how long a positive effect might last”* (engage Cymru). Nonetheless, all projects measured soft outcomes for their participants and they provided insight into the methodologies they adopted to do so.

Many projects used a range of approaches, both to reflect the diversity of soft outcomes they were trying to measure and to ensure that the outcomes were assessed from more than one perspective. In addition, many projects took undertook both a baseline and an end-of-project assessment, to best reflect improvements in soft outcomes across the timeframe of the projects. For example, lead artists in engage Cymru kept a log measuring progress and staff from delivery and external partners also provided input. Engage also measured soft outcomes at the start and end of the project and worked with an independent evaluator.

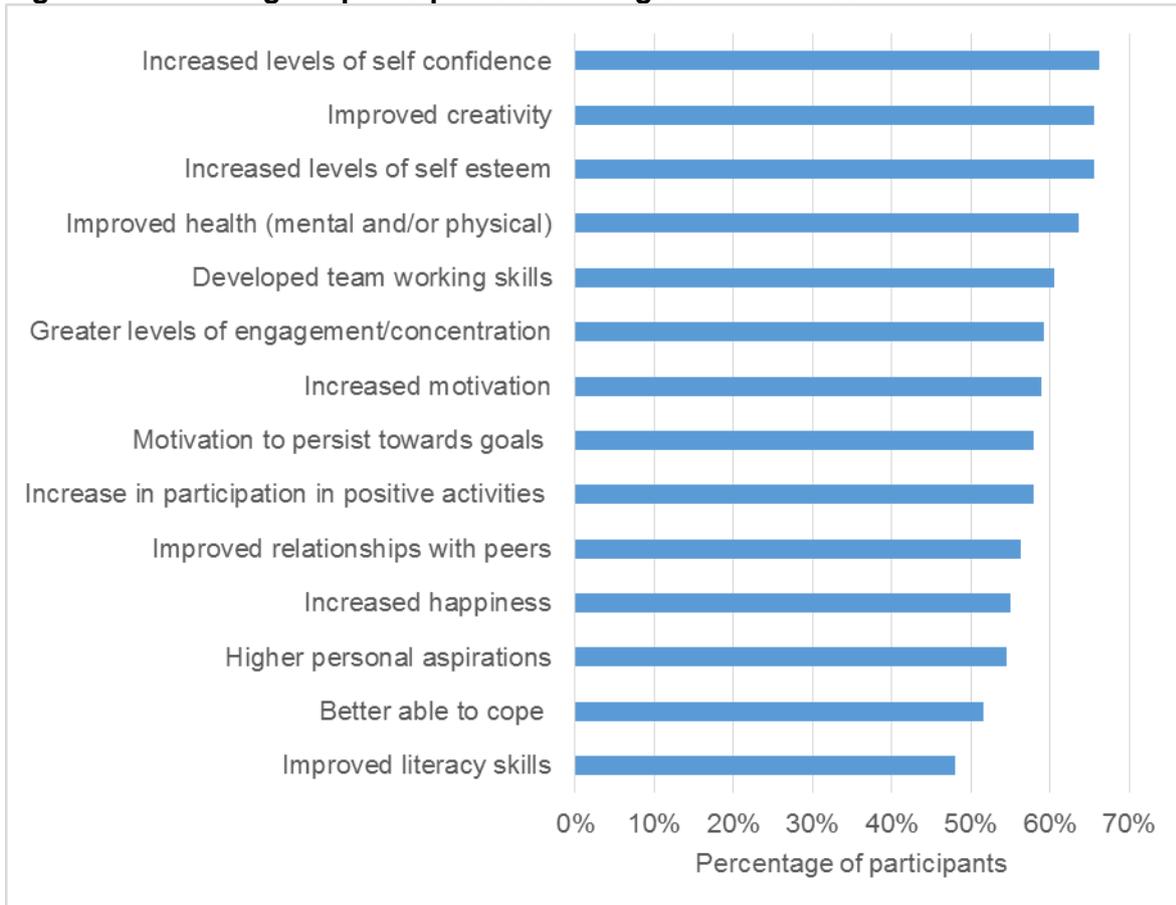
Clwyd Theatre used a variety of approaches depending on the outcome, including a register of activities, an attributes assessment, self-assessment, the quality of work and lead person observations. Cwmni'r Fran Wen ran a creative workshop as an indirect way of assessing and observing the soft skills of participants. They found this to be particularly effective alongside one-to-one sessions and conversations with parents and relevant agencies.

A few projects have identified ways in which their measurement of soft outcomes could be improved. For instance, North Torfaen Communities First would like to ensure a project officer is in place early enough to undertake a baseline assessment. Head4Arts would like to focus on improving how they measure improvements in literacy; *“all of the projects contained elements where literacy and numeracy were integrated into the activities, but we have not developed a way of capturing progress.”*

3.2 Personal outcomes

A large range of soft personal outcomes were measured in all 11 projects. These ranged from personal attributes such as confidence and self-esteem, to improved physical and mental health and improved literacy skills. The percentage of participants achieving each soft outcome varies between 48 per cent (improved literacy skills) and 66 per cent (increased self-confidence). There is no major difference in soft outcomes between the different participant age groups.

Figure 3: Percentage of participants achieving soft outcomes



N=314

Source: Momentum projects' monitoring data

All projects were able to provide evidence of this wide variety of soft outcomes for their participants, including case studies demonstrating the progress of individual participants.

In particular, projects emphasised the improvements in social skills and self-awareness amongst participants. For example, Community Music Wales reported that participants became more confident in expressing themselves and being more aware of other's needs. Swansea YMCA noted that participants *"have all developed meaningful relationships and some have demonstrated an increased ability in managing feelings and conflict. Young people have developed communication and social skills and been able to clarify their personal attitudes, values and beliefs."* Action in Caerau and Ely emphasise the friendships that have formed amongst participants.

"The project has assisted the young people to develop a strong sense of self-belief and identity. They now feel worthy and have a voice to express their feelings, thoughts and opinions. They feel valued and really understand the ethos of teamwork having developed such strong bonds with their peers."

Valleys Kids evaluation report.

Projects also reported that participants became more motivated and were willing to engage enthusiastically with the activities (often in contrast to their usual attitudes). Cwmni'r Fran Wen reported their project provided *"an opportunity for young people to showcase their skills in order to build confidence and to get a sense of achievement. We have seen self-confidence developing quickly after this along with a 'can-do' attitude."* An artist working

with Clwyd Theatre found that one participant in particular *“has shown their full potential and hunger to learn and get involved.”* As such, projects emphasised the sense of pride and self-confidence developed amongst participants, particularly when displaying work to the public. Cwmbran Centre for Young People found that participants *“produced all their own images and supported each other well. This peer led outcome was very positive and encouraged the young people to feel a sense of pride in their engagement.”* North Torfaen Communities First found that one participant in particular was empowered by her talent and the encouragement of it, and gained a huge amount of confidence and self-esteem as a result.

“The staff have been shocked at how much the learners are getting involved and exposing themselves within this environment. Here at the Learning Centre it is a joy to hear all the laughter coming from the work spaces and seeing our (often withdrawn) learners making such an effort. We are making such big steps that on the outside seem small.”
Teaching Assistant, Clwyd Theatre project

A few projects focused specifically on raising the aspirations of participants, encouraging them to consider how they would like their futures to look and to encourage them to believe they can achieve such a future. For instance, Action in Caerau and Ely’s i~chair project invited young people to create something new, positive and ambitious from simple flat pack furniture. Using the creative process, the young people were encouraged to imagine their lives in 10 years; the places they would sit, the people they would like to be and the positions they’d like to hold. The i~chair workshops specifically aimed to strengthen positive ambition including military service, national identity, a mechanic, exercise, money and cars.

Similarly, the Clwyd Theatre project comprised a series of elements designed to encourage hope, engagement, aspiration, reinvention and transformation through engagement with the arts. These concepts were encapsulated in two key phrases used in the project’ *“Look Both Ways”* and *“Think It, Think It, Be It”*. Engage Cymru provided some examples of how the aspirations of participants had been raised: One participant had not considered a college course, but was inspired to apply for an art course; and a headteacher noted that the project had drawn out one of her pupil’s desires to succeed in life.

Case study: Soft outcomes

Valleys Kids

The participant joined the project as a very shy, introverted and reluctant young man. From the outset, he was very hesitant to participate and in particular could not sit in a circle setting. Teachers recognised that he had very few peers to confide in. He disclosed that his evenings and weekends were predominantly spent sitting at home using the computer. He also had low attendance at school and was reluctant to work in a classroom, where group activities are essential. Through gentle encouragement and a specific art form in place to engage him, the participant slowly began to find his voice in the room. He gradually participated in group warm-up activities and by the end of the project felt very comfortable to join in the circle and share his reflections about the work with the rest of the group. His communication and confidence improved dramatically. In particular, he had made a definitive decision at first that he would only be behind the camera and didn’t want to feature on the final film. However, this was challenged in a supportive way and in the end he was happy to be filmed and interviewed. This was a significant achievement and testament to the nature and importance of creativity in his education.

Case study: Soft outcomes

North Torfaen Communities First

The participant came from the traveller community was identified for the Capture Project to raise her self-esteem and confidence. It was hoped that engaging with such practical projects, she would continue to engage more easily in education. The participant found it very difficult to maintain a relationship with her peers, both within her community and with non-travellers. She was found to be quite antagonistic at first. However, she soon changed her attitude when she recognised her talent in photography and being praised for her creative expression softened her hard exterior. She proved herself to be the most creative of the entire project. Once fully engaged in the project, she took what was taught at each session and explored the themes in more depth at every opportunity. She gained a real sense of pride at seeing her work at the end of each session and was clearly empowered by her talent and the encouragement of it, gaining a huge amount of confidence and self-esteem as a result. Culturally speaking, she has managed to break down a number of barriers; attending an exhibition in Cardiff with one member of staff, engaging with another school to complete a GCSE in Photography. All of these elements are often problematic for members of the traveller community, due to issues around confidence and trust.

Case study: Soft outcomes

Clwyd Theatre Cymru

One of Clwyd Theatre's participants is diagnosed with selective mutism. He is in year 10 but remains in the key stage 3 group due to his limited verbal communication. He tends to interact more with the younger pupils, has very limited academic ability and lacks confidence in many social situations. It was significant, therefore, that a few sessions into the project, he started to initiate conversations with the artists: "*One of the highlights was with Learner 1, we played a game where someone is in the circle – on Tuesday he said three different things. It was a big moment because he expressed himself [verbally].*" The Learning Centre staff recognized this was a huge achievement for him; "*He has been so vocal this week.*" For a learner diagnosed with selective mutism, these achievements are considered exceptional.

3.3 Project-specific and employability skills

Projects reported that participants also develop a wide range of project-specific skills - meaning artistic, creative and technical skills relating to the project's chosen art form. Engage Cymru's project developed participants' photography skills (using a camera, composition, editing, printing, exhibiting) as well as printmaking, metalwork, book-making, sewing and displaying artwork. Valleys Kids saw their participants develop creative writing skills (including improved literacy), performance skills and improvisation skills.

Participants in the Action in Caerau and Ely project learnt how to undertake artistic research, review an exhibition and how to engage the public in the arts. In many cases, project staff and artists were impressed with the level of skill demonstrated by participants. A Clwyd Theatre artist commented that they had "*managed to teach some very advanced techniques and also record lots of very high quality material with the group. I am overjoyed.*"

North Torfaen Communities First felt that one of their participants displayed “*exceptional*” photography talent and were disappointed she couldn’t go further and achieve a Silver Arts Award qualification.

Some of the projects place a clear emphasis on developing participants’ employability and business skills, to provide a foundation for employment or self-employment within or outside the arts sector. For example, engage Cymru reported that working with a digital artist was particularly successful; participants enjoyed the activity, but it was also valuable in providing them with digital skills for employability. Engage feel this is a particularly important element of the project; developing skills for the rapidly-growing creative skills sector in Wales and acknowledged that “*we’re not doing the arts projects in a void, we need to contextualise them and make them relevant.*”

Cwmbran Centre for Young people developed a greeting card project, with the potential to provide a sustainable business model to the young people. “*This resulted in a business plan, trade stand, sales pitches and ideas designs with a Dragon Den style business event at the Young Enterprise Awards*”, as well as offering opportunities to work in professional environments with industry mentors, giving them a vital link into employment. A team of their young people has also emerged to take the project’s Identity magazine forward as a sustainable social enterprise.

Cwmni’r Fran Wen also specifically focuses on integrating the project with their wider work, providing professional industry opportunities for the participants (see case study below).

Case study: pathways to creative industry

Cwmni’r Fran Wen

The model of the Cwmni’r Fran Wen project specifically aims at providing a route for young people into the creative industries. Stiwdio’r Frân Wen is an innovative model for working with young people not in employment, training or education who are interested in the Arts and Creative Digital Media Industry. The studio acts as any normal graphics design or media studio, with real clients and real commissions. The project therefore works on developing their skills while they work on professional commissions, providing value experience for their portfolios. They worked with local agencies to produce products linked to customer requirements, for instance a promotional video, websites and logos. Consequently, learners were able to see the relevance and purpose of their work. Throughout the project there were opportunities to learn more about being self-employed and business management, for instance creating a simple business plan, invoicing and contracting. At the end of the project, three participants received official commissions from the Cwmni’r Fran Wen including mobile graphics for Drych, marketing support and designing posters.

“You might be thinking “could he not have learnt that stuff in school or college”. The short answer is “no”. No, because the experience of being treated as a professional in my field was something completely new for me, and others here as well. In this project, I did not only learn how to use new software equipment I also learned how to deal with clients and how to run a business.”

Cwmni’r Fran Wen participant

4. Delivery and recruitment

4.1 Meeting targets

The Momentum projects have exceeded their overall target for the number of young people to be engaged. A total of 314 participants were engaged compared to a target of 234.⁴ In the 11-16 age group, there were 171 participants compared to a target of 129, in the 16-18 age group there were 68 participants compared to a target of 66 and in the 18-24 age group there were 75 participants compared to a target of 39. With regard to equal opportunities, 10 per cent of participants were of BME (Black Minority Ethnic) background, 14 per cent were disabled and 24 per cent had protected characteristics.

4.2 Recruiting and retaining participants

The Momentum projects used several key approaches to recruit participants, primarily partnerships, advertising and artist involvement. For example, Community Music Wales' recruitment of participants was through partner organisations, including three Youth clubs, GISDA and CAIS. Swansea YMCA used a variety of advertising methods; *"there is advertising at YMCA Shops, an on-site TV Channel, poster locations at YMCA Swansea and other partners in the community, YMCA Swansea Website and social Media...emails were sent to the community and staff and volunteers attended Events, Networks and Forums."* As well as using a variety of advertising methods, Cwmni'r Fran Wen's artists also circulated information within their own circles.

Many of these recruitment methods were successful in terms of recruiting a good number of interested young people. Where committed partnerships were in place, recruitment worked very well. North Torfaen Communities First had strong existing relationships with the partner schools which made recruitment a simple process; *"the schools have very good partnerships with Communities First and will embrace any creative project."* Head4Arts found that their project had recruited most successfully in an area where the partnerships were strongest, with senior school staff fully committed and able to provide detailed background information on the participants.

Recruitment was also effective when partners or projects themselves had good relationships with the target group. North Torfaen Communities First reported that recruitment was made easy by the positive relationship between staff and pupils at the partner schools. Swansea YMCA already had positive relationships with the target group; *"YMCA Swansea has a long-established, positive relationship with its community and facilitate on-going extensive consultations with young people, partners and the community, in order to identify and support the needs. The need of the Y Arts project had already been identified and young people had informed YMCA Swansea that they were keen to be involved in the project."*

Projects which recruited from a variety of sources found this approach effective. Cwmni'r Fran Wen made use of established partnerships, social media, a website and traditional advertising (e.g. leaflets). Having the lead artist involved in the recruitment process was also effective for Cwmni'r Fran Wen, who noted that *"the help in recruitment from the artists meant that we could reach places that we as a company could not."* Action in Caerau and

⁴ It is worth noting that initial targets were formulated by projects at a very early stage and do not necessarily perfectly reflect later project delivery e.g. projects may have decided it was more effective to work with a different age group.

Ely also felt that including the lead artist in the recruitment process would have led to more effective recruitment.

However, some projects did face challenges with recruitment. The majority of these challenges result from a lack of committed, effective partnerships. Whereas Head4Arts had recruited easily in one area, they struggled in another area with less commitment from partners, difficulty gathering a case conference team and several false starts with partnerships unable to provide enough background information on participants. Swansea City Opera found that both their pilot and second phase Momentum project suffered from a lack of initial, active engagement from local youth workers. Action in Caerau and Ely also struggled to access a key partner database, which was to be the programme's first port of call for identifying young people to recruit.

A minority of projects also faced recruitment challenges where the targeted young people did not already form an established group; relationships needed to be built from scratch and the nature of the group was more fluid. Swansea City Opera did not work with a pre-existing group and forming a group of participants took significantly longer than envisaged. Community Music Wales struggled to recruit through one of their key partners, CAIS, since they needed to rely on the transient presence of young people at a secure accommodation centre.

Many projects faced some difficulties in retaining the full cohort of participants, but this was usually attributed to the nature of the target group. For example, engage Cymru reported that *"the composition of the group varied widely, with four participants attending all or nearly all of the sessions and three attending just one or two. This reflected the young people's general disengagement and the need for the programme"*. Head4Arts' Merthyr project worked with a local Gypsy/Traveller community and faced significant challenges in retaining a core group of participants, due to issues such as behavioural problems, police interventions and cultural barriers.

However, most projects which faced such difficulties managed to establish a committed group of participants, such as North Torfaen Communities First's Abertillery project which lost a few participants early on but retained a strong core of participants. This successful retention of participants has been based around the committed and flexible approach of all partners; interest in the art forms and the activities developed; the trust and friendships developed through the projects; and of course the determination of the young people themselves to succeed.

4.3 Delivery and management

All projects were generally positive about the success of their chosen art forms in engaging the participants. Engage Cymru was pleased with the art forms chosen, having chosen them after the participants were recruited, so the correct forms could be chosen to best match the participants' interests and abilities. Community Music Wales felt that photography worked well to engage the young people, noting that *"photography is easily accessible"*. For them, it also worked well as both a team and solo activity.

Swansea YMCA found that its professional recording studio was an effective 'hook' for drawing in participants. As well as the art form itself, displaying the participants' work through exhibitions or similar activities is seen as an effective way of encouraging pride amongst participants and gaining the involvement of the community. Clwyd Theatre found that a variety of art forms including theatre and music worked best to engage young people with mental health issues.

Case study: Effectiveness of the art form

Community Music Wales

The participant attended the Forum Theatre project. She is a full-time mother in a low-income family, living with her partner and their young children in social housing. As a result, she was somewhat isolated from her peers and at times lacked self-confidence. She responded exceptionally well to the Forum Theatre process and fully engaged with the activities presented. She used the Forum Theatre performance to explore a number of issues including a disempowering experience of the benefits system and the challenges of accessing financial support and information from government agencies. However, of particular note was how the group process and Forum Theatre approach enabled her to reflect upon and process her characters' relationships, especially the communication between her character and the character's partner, entwined with the challenges of parenthood. It allowed her to recognise and acknowledge what she did and didn't want from the relationship she has with her partner.

Many projects emphasised how important flexible delivery was for their success. Flexible delivery ensured that participants were supported when necessary and could engage with the project in their preferred manner. Cwmbran Centre for Young People offered a high level of support and space offering a drop-in session along with structured sessions. These made it easy for the young people to access the space, resources and staff at a time to suit them.

Engage Cymru felt that a key success factor was allowing the young people to exercise an element of control, for instance choosing between landscape and portraits within a photography project, deciding on the pieces to be made within a sculpture project and selecting which image to screen print onto a t-shirt or include in a memory book. Head4Arts found that artists engaged participants well when they encouraged them to create individual pieces and designs based on their own interests. Swansea YMCA noted that participants were, "*coming into the project at different stages of their development and taking ownership of their journeys.*"

Case study: Flexibility in responding to participant interests

Head4Arts

The participant was referred to the project from Brynmawr Comprehensive School. She was identified as having quite a number of barriers, including poverty, a travelling background, neglect, lacking confidence, some hygiene issues, and instances of bullying. She had a complex demeanour especially when undertaking new tasks, which tended to disrupt her learning quite considerably in class. During the first few weeks of the programme she needed a lot of encouragement to participate in the sessions. The project staff noticed her passion for manga art and so encouraged this aspect of her work. When she realised that she could incorporate some of her Manga characters into her work, she was encouraged to become much more participative in the project. The project team also recognised that she was doing a huge amount of research and drawing outside of the sessions and so encouraged this, leading to her requesting a new journal after 10 weeks. The participant was also keen to link her manga designs with fashion. She was very excited to hear that the project would be taking them to a fashion presentation; "*Is there going to be a fashion show? I can't wait. I will have to take my journal with me and draw some inspiration.*"

Projects also recognised that staff need to play a mentoring role for the participants, noting that projects are often not pure arts projects, but also provide personal development and support for individuals. Cwmbran Centre for Young People found mentoring roles helpful for the participant, noting that *“the support workers were very aware of daily barriers and challenges the individuals faced and were in the best placed position to help the young people recognise their achievements and understand barriers thus helping them move forward.”* Engage Cymru’s project adopted a team approach to lead sessions, thereby ensuring that one-to-one support was available for participants when needed.

On the whole, projects were delivered smoothly, though some faced logistical challenges. Some, such as engage Cymru, reported that working with small groups had been key to success. Others, such as North Torfaen Communities First, felt the length of their sessions worked well, allowing in-depth understanding of the art form. Community Music Wales found that running 4-hour long sessions worked well, but they were intense and sometimes the participants were hard to control, for instance after the break when there was less structure. They also faced challenges getting the participants out of school grounds (which the lead tutor felt would be better for their creativity), but managed to arrange permission and transport.

Head4Arts also struggled to engage participants after the school prevented them from leaving the grounds. Head4Arts also found it difficult to ensure attendance when a partner school insisted on holding sessions after school hours, but this improved slightly after persuading them to start the sessions just before the end of the school day. In Community Music Wales’ project, participants from GISDA came from across Gwynedd and it was sometimes difficult to get the same young people coming every week due to transport or other issues.

In particular, a small number of projects found that elements of their work could not always start immediately on schedule, or ‘hit the ground running’ due to the complex circumstances of their target participants. Such elements needed a longer lead-in time than was possible within the timescales of the Momentum programme.

For instance, Head4Arts’ Merthyr project worked with young people from the Gypsy Traveller Community where a process of slow engagement through taster activities was considered the most effective approach. A raid on the site then necessitated delays in these taster activities and the project struggled to gain initial background information about the new participants. A modified project was later run. Community Music Wales also found that more time was needed to work with CAIS’ tenants in secure accommodation. This demonstrates the need for slow, long-term introduction and engagement when working with certain target groups.

5. Partnerships

5.1 Effective partnerships

Momentum projects have developed and, in some cases, sustained a wide range of effective partnerships when designing and delivering their activities. For projects key partners included schools and colleges, fellow arts organisations, youth groups, community groups, third sector organisations and charities. Cwmni'r Fran Wen developed partnerships across the arts, social services, education, and local businesses, *“we worked with organizations, charities, professional artists and commercial companies including Nant y Glyn Forest School, Cofis Bach, Galeri, Custom Pedal Boards, Ceg, Pigtown Theatre, Gŵyl Arall, Glasfryn, National Trust and Digartref.”*

Some partners worked with local Communities First teams which was also a key focus of the pilot phase of the programme. For Head for Arts this partnership was a positive example of working together to address the local needs of young people along with developing a sense of shared ownership in the project, *“the Communities First team were unstinting in their efforts, offering staff with expertise in working with young people and provided valuable support as needed.”*

In many cases strong partnerships allowed projects to identify the support needs and aspirations of young people and link these to the design of the projects. North Torfaen reported that links with the schools and the related staff were fully established before the project began. *“through understanding the project’s expectation and outcomes, the related school support staff easily identified and recruited suitable young people.”* Through developing a common understanding of participant needs and aspirations projects were able to develop tailor-made workshops and sessions for young people and receive appropriate support and co-ordination from all the organisations involved.

Many projects worked with the same partnerships established during the pilot phase of the programme. These partnerships were deemed particularly effective, with partners demonstrating a good level of commitment to the projects. Continuity and the development of established partnerships have contributed to developing trust, commitment and an opportunity to build on impact. Valleys Kids chose to capitalise on the success of the previous year working with the same three schools and creating the best conditions for young people to progress; *“we wanted to further embed our practice in a schools context and encourage a true partnership between the pupils, the teachers and ourselves.”*

Engage Cymru found that their three established partnerships worked effectively and smoothly, with excellent communication. *“Working with established, previous partners was a conscious choice – project delivery time was relatively short and the remit was ambitious. The external partner needed to understand and support the project from the beginning.”* Clwyd Theatre found that they have developed a good relationship with the Head Teacher of the Learning Centre which has allowed them to build on previous impact as well as focus on new desired outcomes through working in partnership.

For some projects sustaining the partnerships at the end of the project offered the potential for further progression routes into education and employment through extended work placements and volunteering opportunities. Cwmbran Centre for Young People reported, *“we can now deliver Arts Awards qualifications at Entry and GCSE level. As a partnership we continue to develop our plans to complement the support services and opportunities available.”* For Action in Caerau and Ely, *“the Communities First team were able to signpost the participants to local and appropriate opportunities for employment, training or education.”*

5.2 Partnership challenges

Some projects nevertheless faced challenges due to difficulties in setting up partnerships and a lack of buy-in from some partners during the project's duration. These challenges particularly made recruitment difficult as this process comes at the start of the project when partnerships may just have been formed. From the evidence provided by projects it appears that newer partnerships tended to face these problems more than established partnerships. For Engage working with a new partner *"initially proved a challenge: sessions were cancelled or rescheduled at short notice, and communication was difficult."*

A few projects faced communication challenges with partners and as a result found activities hard to deliver on a day-to-day basis. Others noted the bureaucratic processes involved in trying to create and maintain partnerships, especially to several projects working with schools. Several projects also reported a lack of interest or understanding of the potential of the arts as an engagement tool. As Valleys Kids noted, *"we think there needs to be more communication across teachers and departments if creative work is to be fully embedded in the school, we hope that the new Arts and Creative Learning Plan will assist with these key messages."*

Timing was also an issue when delivering activities, particularly for some projects working with schools. Clwyd Theatre Cymru reported that the demands of the curriculum meant that they were allocated only one or two sessions a week to engage with the learners. For Valleys Kids teachers have struggled to incorporate the creative plans developed through the projects as a result of time pressures. In addition, several projects reported that their good relations with were very dependent on individual teachers and that when staff changed it could have negative impact on the project and wider partnerships.

6. Continuity and sustainability

6.1 Continuity between project phases

Nine of the eleven projects had participated in the pilot phase of the Momentum programme in 2013-14. As such, these projects were able to demonstrate how their projects had developed and improved between the pilot and second phases of the programme.

Projects found that their ability to demonstrate hard and soft outcomes helped with forging new partnerships and recruiting participants. Valleys Kids found that during this second phase, *“the teachers have also grown in confidence and can really see the merit of the work, this creates a very positive environment where everyone feels they can participate and succeed.”* Cwmni'r Fran Wen had found it a little more difficult to recruit during the pilot phase, when they could not demonstrate positive outcomes; having evidence and case studies has made recruitment easier this time.

The pilot phase of the project allowed projects to learn valuable lessons on how to deliver the second phase projects. For example, Head4Arts learned that failing to involve the school in Brynmawr during the pilot phase was a mistake and so pledged to engage and communicate with the school early during the second phase; their Brynmawr project was successful as a result. Swansea YMCA learnt that *“it was important to create a ‘creative environment’ that was inclusive, but also that was set up with alternative forms of expression for young people who were likely to become disengaged.”* They therefore created an Art Space, which included ‘break out’ areas.

Engage Cymru had previously learned that asking the lead artists to support participants through their accreditation placed too much pressure on them. This time, other support staff were provided to help with the log book for accreditation, so that lead artists could focus on the creative element of the project.

A few projects also found that employing the same members of staff provided an element of continuity to the participants and the project. Many of the project managers were involved in the design and delivery of pilot projects and were enabled to further develop their ideas and activities through the second stage. This also ensured that lessons learned from the pilot phase were carried over to the second phase. Clwyd Theatre employed the same Monitoring Officer in order to provide monitoring consistency between project phases and re-employed other staff in order to maintain good relationships with participants.

“The continuity of the staff team was important and contributed to the high levels of learner engagement and progression. The learners who had participated last year had already built relationships and trust with the CTCTYP staff. This noticeably reduced the considerable amount of time it takes these learners to trust, accept and engage with new adults.”

Clwyd Theatre evaluation.

Some of the projects also identified value in continuing to work with some of the young people from the pilot phase. Clwyd Theatre worked with some of the same young people from the Momentum pilot phase and so had learned about their interests and aspirations and were able to build on these. They also found that *“this helped the group to settle more quickly and the work to progress earlier than in the pilot project”*. One of the participants from the pilot phase of the engage Cymru project took up a leadership role within the new project. Valleys Kids continued to work with some of the participants from the pilot phase, supporting these participants to progress and to provide peer support for the new participants.

Case study: value of long-term, continued intervention

Valleys Kids

Valleys Kids' Crossing Over project made a decision to continue to work with the eight participants from the Nurture Group with whom they had previously engaged during the pilot Momentum phase. They felt it was important to ensure that the project enabled them to move on in a sensitive and supportive way, so that they could capitalise on their achievements and prepare themselves for their final formal year in school. In consultation with teachers project staff felt it was important to prepare them both emotionally and academically for their forthcoming GCSEs. The participants continued to develop their original play and became involved in Valleys Kids' Visual and Contemporary Arts Project acting as Community Consultants and further 'crossing over' into new arts activities where they are now fully engaged. The project therefore demonstrated the value of long-term intervention. Significantly, the project also worked with twelve new participants with profound emotional, social and educational needs; but issues with which the older Nurture Group had also struggled. With this group the project worked incrementally as they have in the past but this new group of children also worked directly with the older more experienced Nurture group, three of whom now volunteer with the group. The younger Nurture group achieved good ASDAN qualifications, an indication of how peer-led working can accelerate learning.

6.2 Project sustainability

The projects are generally reliant on Momentum funding to run these projects in their current forms. However, some projects have various methods for continuing project activities and their impact.

In terms of continuing project activities, Community Music Wales have secured some continuation for their project and are planning to deliver activities in south Wales after their Gwynedd-based project. Their partner GISDA will continue the course and they are developing a tool for learners and adding a music element. Overall, the training had a very good response and Community Music Wales are aiming to make it part of their revenue stream now. Momentum has shaped engage Cymru's thinking on developing a pilot 'Summer Arts College' for the same target group. Cwmni'r Fran Wen are looking into developing the studio into a social enterprise, for instance some of the participants have already been commissioned by the studio.

For many projects, ensuring an effective exit strategy or progression route for participants is key for sustaining the project's impact. Action in Caerau and Ely emphasised that an exit strategy must be given equal weighting to recruitment and the project activities and Theatre Clwyd recognise that strong partnerships can provide the best progression routes for participants. A particularly effective element of some projects has been to integrate participants into the project partners' wider work.

"All young people have a move-on Action Plan, which is supported by youth workers and a referral system to support young people in the community."

Swansea YMCA evaluation

Cwmni'r Fran Wen noted that offering participants opportunities to engage in their wider work ensures the best support for participants, develops their interest in the arts in general and encourages them to get involved in other activities. Swansea YMCA refers to other projects in the community, such as Arts Projects with The Glynn Vivian, or young people

are able to take advantage of in-house opportunities and provides each individual with a move-on action plan.

Case study: Referral to other projects as exit strategy

Swansea City Opera

The participant was a competent dancer prior to the project, but had limited experience of different art forms. He presented himself as very confident, but also displayed chaotic traits and was often disruptive to the group. Over the course of the project, his concentration and team-working skills improved and he emerged as a role model and leader. To continue this positive momentum and encourage his interest in dance, the project team referred him to Rubicon Dance and he has now accepted a college place here to continue his dance education.

Case study: Engagement in other project activities as exit strategy

Swansea YMCA

The participant was referred to the Y Arts program by Social Services and is a 15 year old young man, who was accessing an Alternative Curriculum program but had stopped attending. He had gone through some severe bullying at his school and this had affected his confidence and his mental health and he was under the supervision of the Community Psychiatric Nurses. He had developed a habit of self-harm and had a history of substance and alcohol misuse. He reluctantly expressed some enthusiasm towards some art forms such as filmmaking and music recording. The participant grew dramatically during the life of this project. Following the project, he has taken part in a variety of additional, optional workshops such as filmmaking, and is not only recording covers in the studio, he is now recording original songs. He is now receiving support from other local projects in his search for a job and has gained a qualification in Group Music Composition Skills Level 2, Credits 3.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

Delivering hard outcomes

All Momentum projects have delivered at least two hard outcomes (and usually more) for participants. The most common hard outcome for young people in all projects was gaining a qualification, with 57 per cent of all participants (aged 11-24) achieving this. Gaining accreditation is particularly beneficial for young people who are seeking to reengage in education or employment, giving them confidence, raising aspirations and developing further progression opportunities. Qualifications aligned with project activities has reinforced the learning taking place and encouraging a sustained approach by projects to developing specific skills.

A total of 60 per cent of participants aged 11-16 improved their school attendance levels during or following the Momentum projects. It is significant that those participants who improved their attendance levels are reported to have engaged positively when at school. Arts activities delivered by projects have played a key role in providing a 'hook' in terms of encouraging engagement with learning. Projects have successfully sustained this engagement and have enabled teachers and trainers to build on progress and enthusiasm.

36 per cent of participants aged 16-24 moved from being NEET (not in employment, education or training) to being in employment, education (EET). The number of participants (41%) aged 18-24 who moved from being NEET to EET indicates that the expansion of Momentum to include this group has led to positive outcomes for these individuals, building on a previous evaluation recommendation. Projects are successfully building on the recommendation from the first evaluation to develop partnerships and exit strategies in order to offer additional progression routes.

Participants have progressed into a wide range of opportunities in employment, education and volunteering. This illustrates the range of progression opportunities being promoted by organisations, including opportunities to volunteer within the organisations themselves. These progression opportunities have ensured that the positive outcomes achieved by some young people are being sustained and they are being given opportunities to further develop their skills and engagement in a wider community setting.

Delivering soft outcomes

Soft outcomes have been delivered in every Momentum project including a range of personal outcomes as well as project-specific and employability skills. All projects noted the importance of soft outcomes in forming a base for the achievement of hard outcomes, and progression to further, more sustained engagement. Soft outcomes have included confidence and self-esteem, improved physical and mental health, and improved literacy skills.

Many of the projects have placed a clear emphasis on developing participants' employability and business skills. These are providing participants with a foundation for employment or self-employment within or outside the arts sector as well as offering opportunities to work in professional environments, with artists, educators, businesses and

industry mentors. Again, this builds on a recommendation from the previous evaluation of Momentum and illustrates the overall development of the second phase of Momentum.

Recruitment and retention of participants

Momentum projects have exceeded their overall target for the number of young people to be engaged. Recruitment has worked particularly well where committed partnerships between a range of organisations are in place. The successful retention of participants has been based around the committed and flexible approach of all partners and the attractiveness of the arts as an engagement tool.

All projects were generally positive about the success of their chosen art forms in engaging the participants and many matched the art form to the participants' interests, abilities and aspirations which had a further positive impact on recruitment and retention. There has been additional impact on participants' self-confidence when displaying or performing work to the public

A few projects did have issues with both recruitment and retention of participants. This was largely down to a lack of initial, active engagement from organisations working with young people NEET, communication and behaviour issues, and the transient nature of the target groups.

Management and delivery

On the whole, projects were delivered smoothly, although some faced challenges with recruitment and retention outlined in the previous section. The flexible delivery approaches developed by organisations nevertheless ensured that the vast majority of participants were supported when necessary and could engage with the project in their preferred manner. This has enabled the projects to meet, and in some cases exceed, their target numbers in terms of participation and hard and soft outcomes.

Projects used a range of approaches to assessing their own impact and effectiveness in order to reflect the diversity of soft and hard outcomes they were delivering. Many projects undertook both a baseline and an end-of-project assessment, to best reflect improvements in soft outcomes across the timeframe of the projects. For some projects the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) was a useful tool to measure progress and illustrate the impact of projects. Projects found that their ability to demonstrate hard and soft outcomes has helped with forging new partnerships and recruiting participants.

Partnerships

Momentum projects have developed a wide range of effective partnerships when designing and delivering their activities. Key partners included schools and colleges, fellow arts organisations, youth groups, community groups, third sector organisations and charities. In many cases strong partnerships allowed projects to identify the support needs and aspirations of young people and link these to project design. Through developing a common understanding of participant needs and aspirations projects were able to develop tailor-made activities for young people and ensure appropriate support and co-ordination from all the organisations involved.

Some projects worked with local Communities First teams which was also a focus of the pilot phase of the programme and these built on successful partnerships developed during that period. The benefits of these partnerships included support with recruitment and signposting to progression opportunities. Many projects worked with the same partnerships

established during the pilot phase of the programme. This continuity has contributed to developing trust, commitment and an opportunity to build on impact and embed good practice

Some projects nevertheless faced challenges due to difficulties in setting up partnerships and a lack of buy-in from some partners during the project's duration. These challenges made recruitment difficult as this process comes at the start of the project when partnerships may just have been formed. Communication challenges and perceived bureaucratic processes involved in trying to create and maintain partnerships were other reported issues. Timing was also an issue when delivering activities, particularly for some projects working with schools.

Continuity and sustainability

Most of the projects funded through the second phase of Momentum participated in the pilot phase. This continuity has enabled projects to build on lessons for recruitment, management and delivery and also develop more sustained outcomes for some participants. For several organisations employing the same members of staff has provided an additional element of continuity and consistency of approach. Some of the projects also identified value in continuing to work with some of the young people from the pilot phase. This has allowed opportunities for more sustained outcomes and promoting additional skills through peer learning and leadership.

For many projects, ensuring an effective exit strategy has been key for sustaining impact. A particularly effective element of some projects has been to integrate participants into the project partners' wider work. This is allowing them to take advantage of in-house opportunities for additional learning, skills development, or volunteering.

Some projects are also focused on sustaining partnerships in order to respond to other funding opportunities and offer young people an ongoing range of engagement opportunities. This all contributes to the sustainability of outcomes and opportunities to further develop arts engagement activities aimed at young people NEET across Wales. These activities can link to action plans such as Creative Learning Through the Arts and wider Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government strategies relating to engagement, creative learning and employment.

7.2 Recommendations

1. Projects should continue to work on developing the employability and entrepreneurship of participants, including through the development of business and self-employment skills.
2. All projects should give particular consideration to developing exit strategies for participants, to ensure any positive impact is maintained and a suitable progression route is available.
3. Projects should be flexible in considering which qualifications are most suitable for each project element and aim to match them with individual participants' needs and aspirations.

4. Roles and responsibilities should be formalised for wholly new partnerships before the start of project delivery. This will help to ensure commitment from partners unfamiliar with the requirements of Momentum projects.
5. Projects should consider how partnerships developed during project delivery can be maintained and can best support the delivery organisations' wider work with young people NEET and in the community.
6. The Momentum programme should continue to support participants aged 18-24, having demonstrated successful outcomes for this age group during this second phase.
7. Future iterations of Momentum should link closely to the wider goals of Arts Council of Wales relating to engagement with the arts and creative learning.