

Moray Wellbeing Hub Project

**“you don’t need to wait for the strategy
before you can start doing good work...”**

Learning and Evaluation Report

April 2017



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1. Background

Moray Wellbeing Hub Project is a programme delivered across the Moray local authority area in North East Scotland. The programme envisions a future key milestone in its evolution to be the establishment of a new legal entity that fits with a Social Enterprise model in order to take forward mental wellbeing and community empowerment action and activities across Moray. To date it has been delivered through the vehicle of Moxie Media Community Interest Company.

This report focuses on activity between April 2016 and March 2017, during which period the programme has benefitted from funding obtained from two sources. These are the Self-Management Transformation Fund, administered by the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (The ALLIANCE) and The Community Innovation Fund, administered by See Me Scotland.

2. Introduction

This report is provided by independent evaluation consultants engaged through Be Good, Be Social, a third sector support and innovation organisation and provider of training and events. The data collection methods that provide the material that inform this report were largely undertaken by the programme themselves with Be Good, Be Social only being appointed retrospectively in order to undertake an appraisal of this data and attempt to draw out key themes and learning from this. Four end of programme interviews with key stakeholder/partner individuals are the only primary research undertaken directly by the authors of this report.

It is the aim of this report to convey some understanding of the impact the programme has attained throughout 2016 – 2017 and to present the most useful learning that can be drawn out of the data available. This should be of relevance to MWH and other similar programmes, as well as wider stakeholders, including professional groups and community members into the future.

3. Programme Activity and Reach April 2016 - March 2017

Table 1 Programme Activity 2016 – 2017

Activity	Total Occurrences	No. of participants	Location(s)
Café events & project celebration	15	322	Forres (8), Elgin (2), Buckie, Lossiemouth, Dufftown, Keith.
Outreach to existing & emerging networks	68	Est. 2,200	Moray wide
Communications	697	>100,000	Moray wide
Community Champions training courses	7	106	Elgin

Table 2 Programme Participants Age and Gender Breakdown

Gender	Males			Females			Total no. of individual participants
	Age Group	Under 30 years	30 to 50 years	Over 50 years	Under 30 years	30 to 50 years	
Recruited Champions	3	16	11	12	34	25	101
Community Café's / Drop-in's	12	37	39	89	39	73	265
WRAP Facilitator Course	0	2	1	2	5	7	17
Living Life to the Full – Training for Trainers	0	2	1	0	8	5	16
ULab	1	3	3	0	2	6	15
See Me Community Champions Course	1	3	2	2	1	9	18
Honest, Open and Proud	0	0	2	0	1	5	8

4. Overarching Aims of the Programme

The Moray Wellbeing Hub project aims to create new community and virtual spaces that welcome everyone to live more mentally healthy lives. To do this MWH works to empower individuals to use their life experiences to better understand and self-manage their wellbeing as well as to provide support for others.

5. Methods

The following data collection sources were able to be analysed within the available resource and so inform this report:

- Documentary analysis of MWH programme documents
- Pre and Post programme questionnaires/reflections completed by Moray Wellbeing Hub Champions
- Pre and post training course questionnaires completed by Moray Wellbeing Hub Champions and other participants
- Feedback forms on individual events (drop-ins/community cafés) completed by Moray Wellbeing Hub Champions and other participants
- Discursive interviews carried out via telephone with Key Partners Stakeholders by independent consultants. The following lists the roles of those interviewed and provides a synopsis of their involvement in the programme:
 - IV1: Network Officer, Scottish Recovery Network, Key Partner throughout, fellow member of local area change network, involved in Making Recovery Real partnership through the change network, as are MWH.
 - IV2: Volunteer Co-ordinator, Moray Third Sector Interface, Key Partner in identifying/sourcing prospective programme participants.
 - IV3: Elected Member, Moray Council, Key Partner in establishing a local approach and plugging into existing networks and resources, involved with Forres Area Wellbeing Network.
 - IV4: Head of Mental Health, Moray Health and Social Care Partnership and Chair of Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership, Key Stakeholder in terms of encouraging, supporting, giving direction and engaging in mutual knowledge exchange.

For more info on the questionnaires used please contact Moray Wellbeing Hub

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Community Champions Course

Figure 1 Baseline Measure of Participant Understanding of Intended Course Outcomes and Perception of Peer Support Among Participant Group

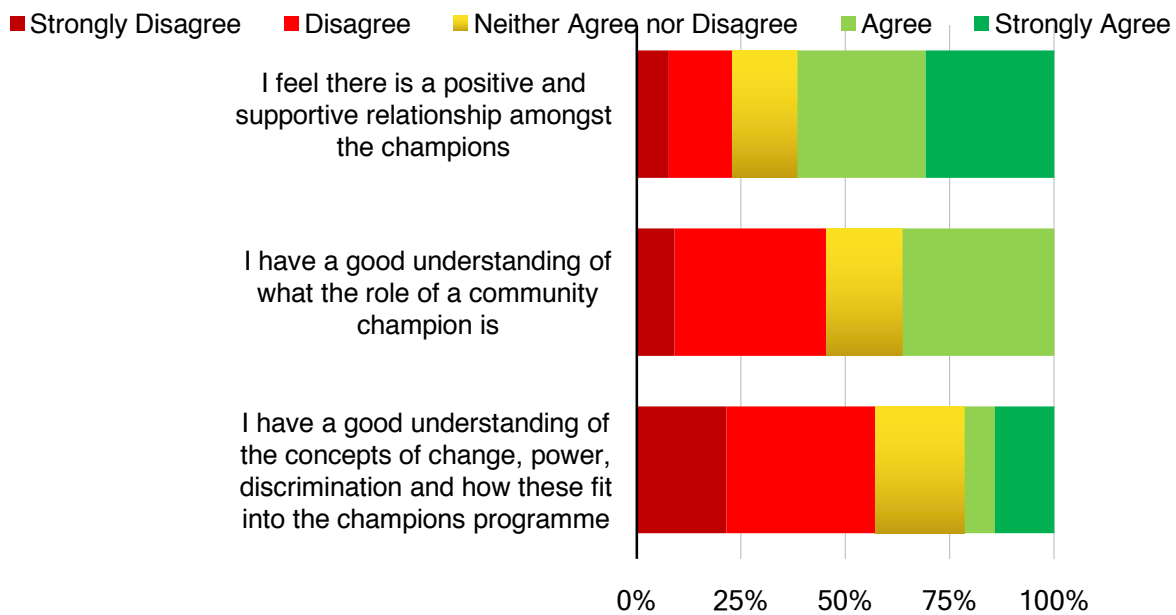


Figure 2 Follow-up Measure of Participant Understanding of Intended Course Outcomes and Perception of Peer Support Among Participant Group

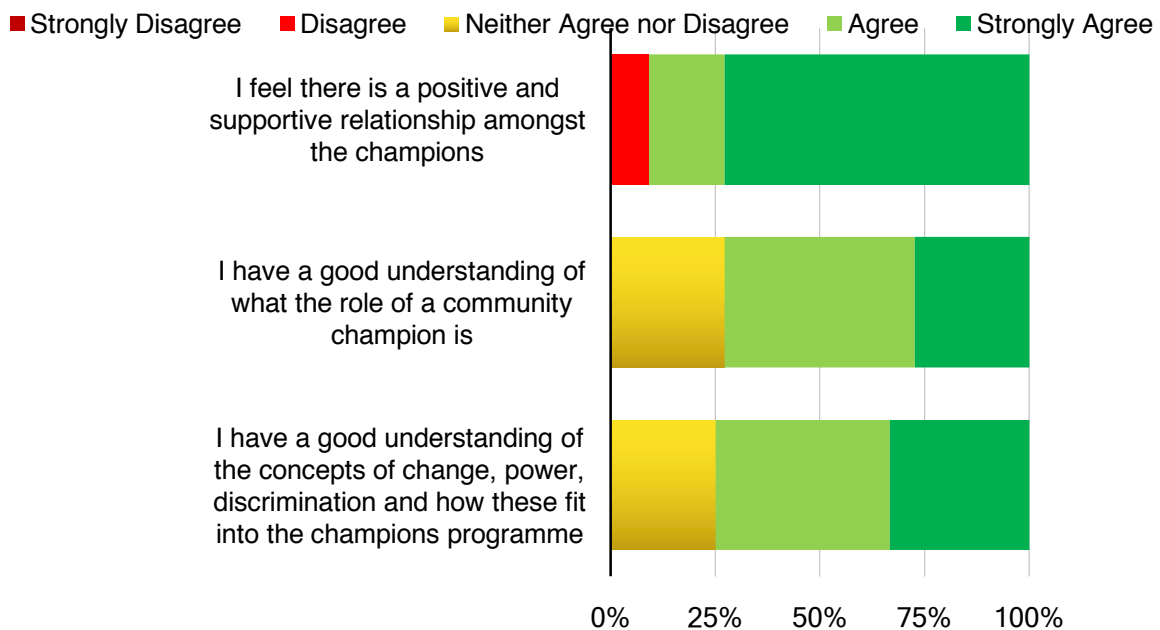


Figure 3 Baseline Measure of Outcomes from Group Activities

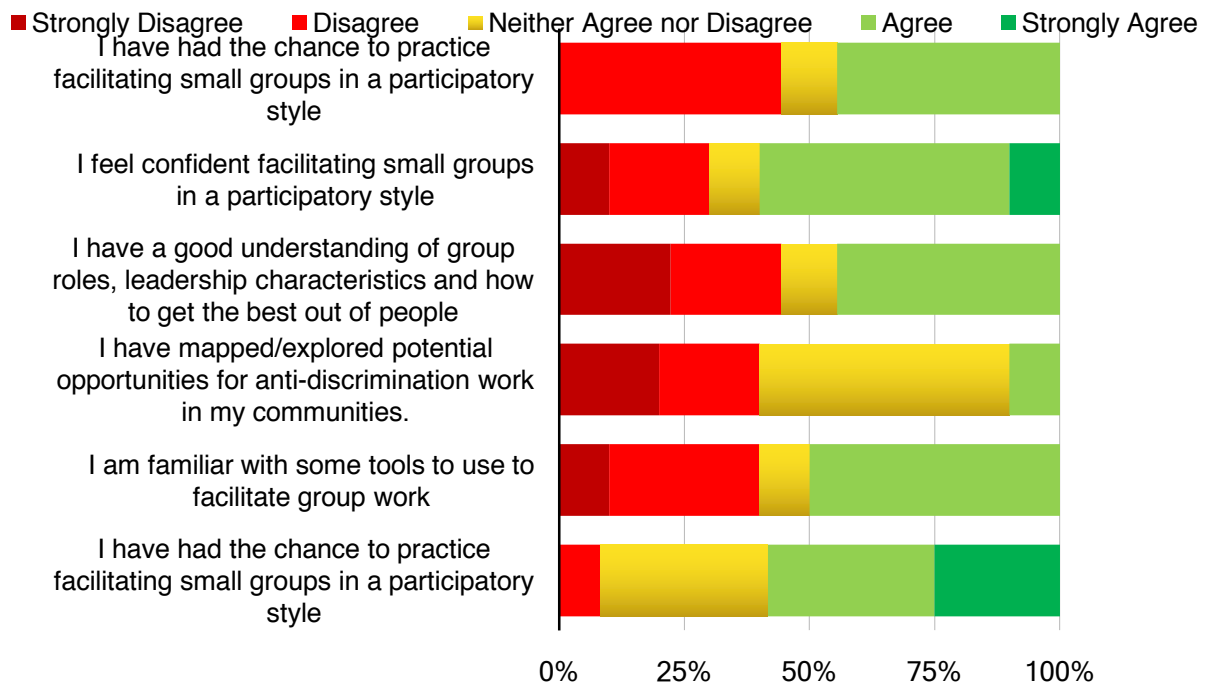


Figure 4 Follow-up Measure of Outcomes from Group Activities

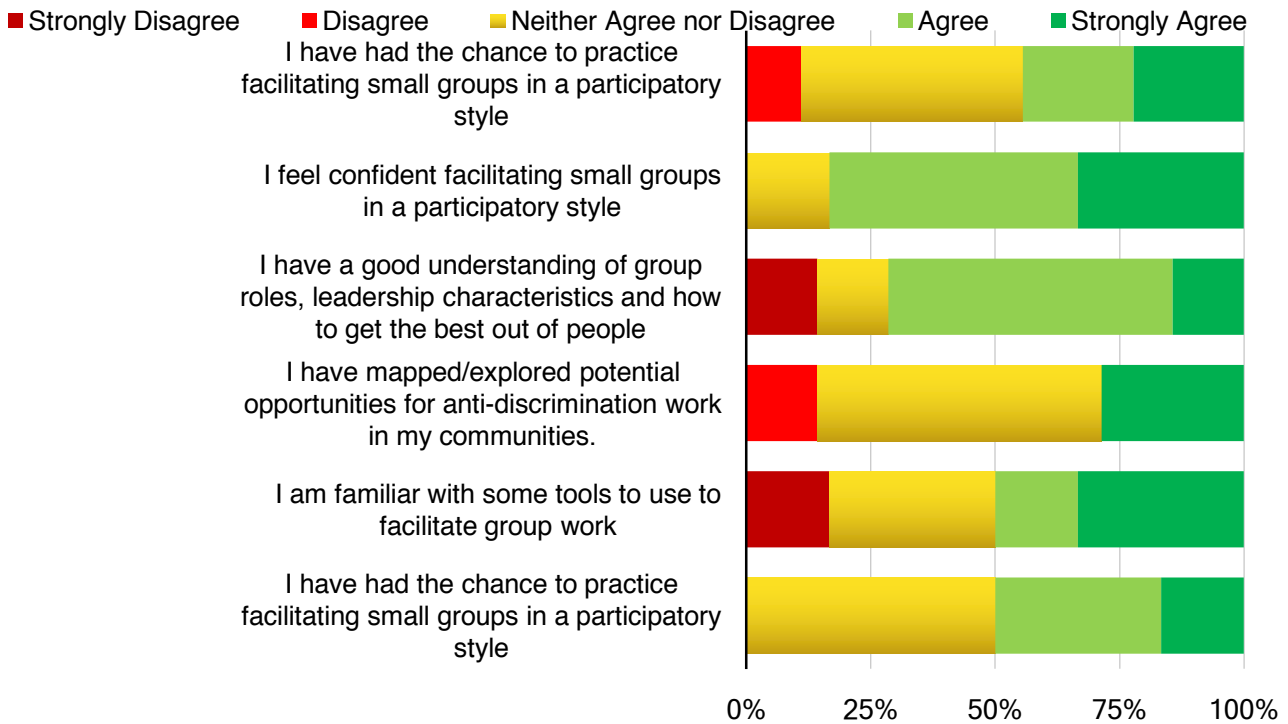


Figure 5 Baseline Measure of Participant’s Perception of Self Efficacy in Engaging with Relevant Activities

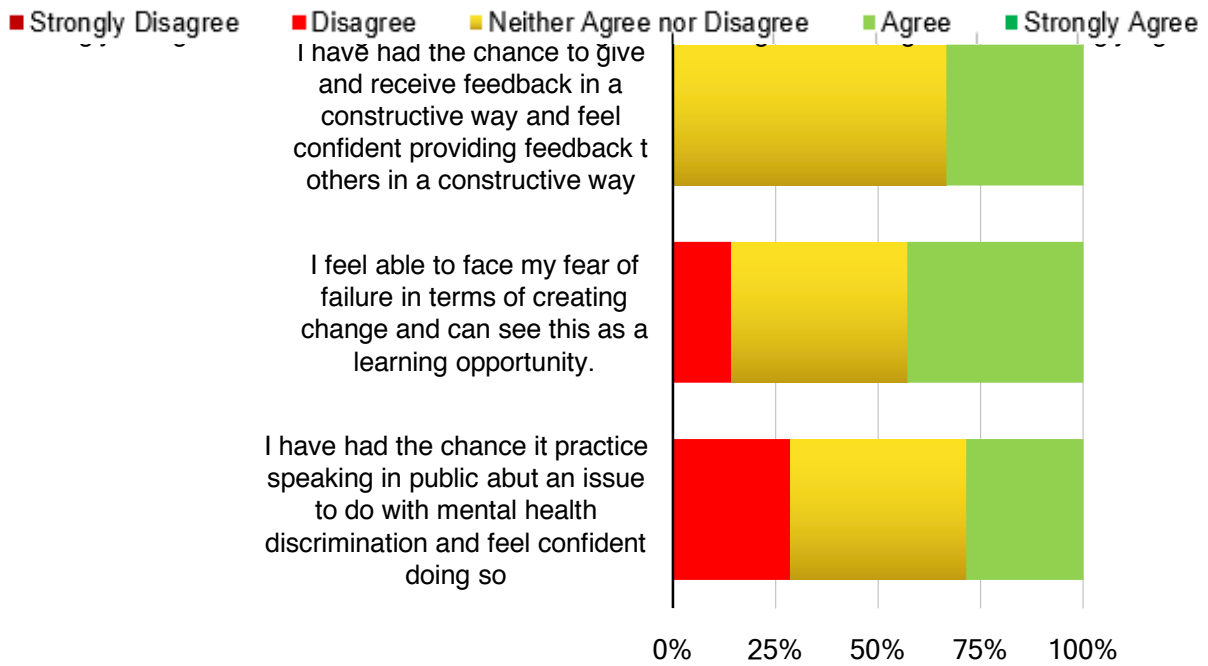


Figure 6 Follow-up Measure of Participant’s Perception of Perception of Self Efficacy in Engaging with Relevant Activities

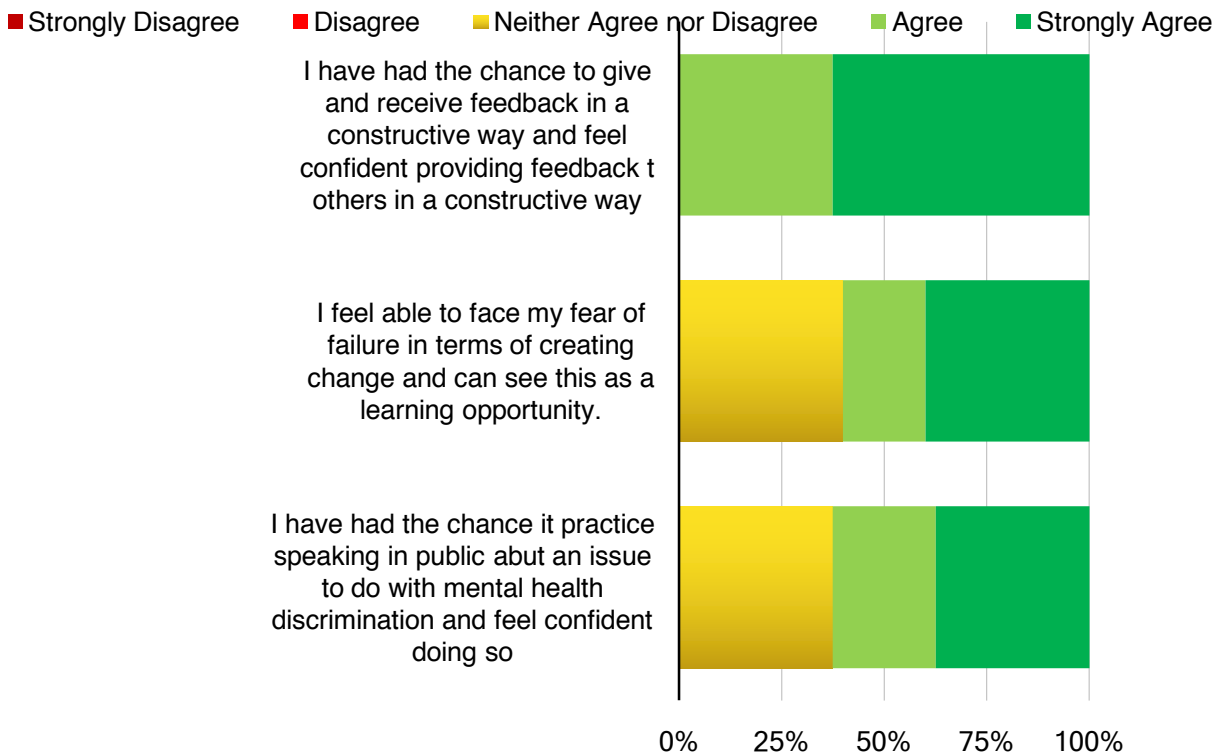


Figure 7 Baseline Measure of Participant’s Ideas and Confidence in Taking Forward Mental Health Action into the Future

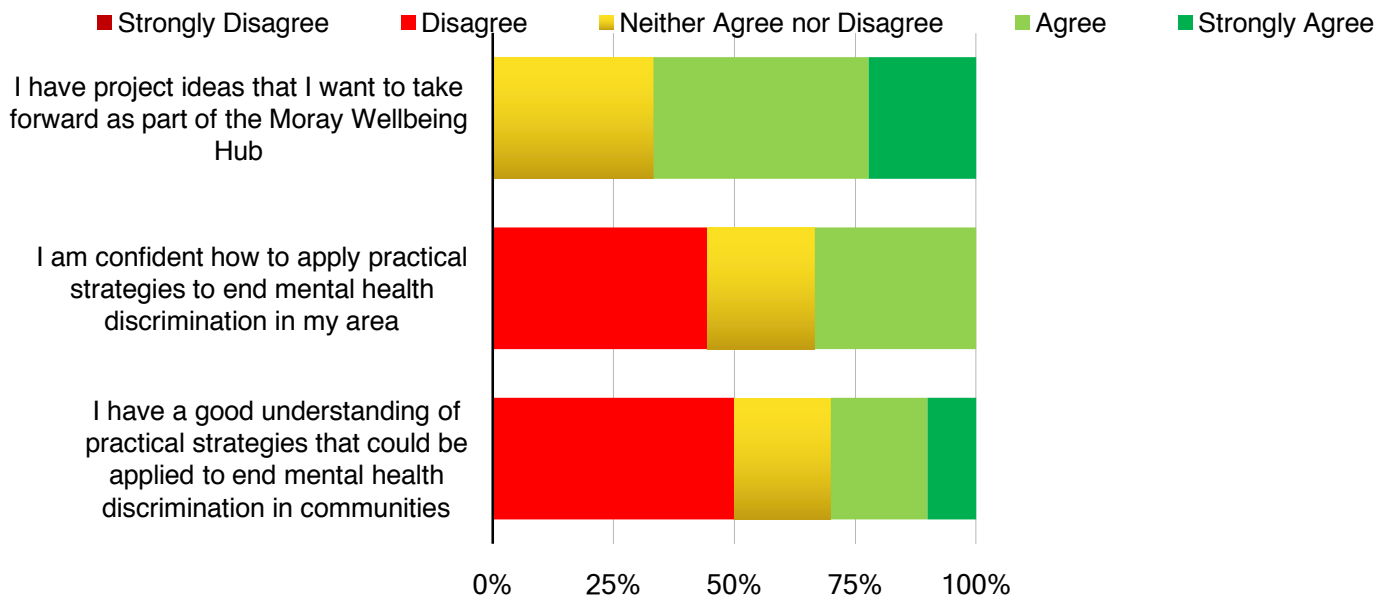


Figure 8 Follow-up Measure of Participant’s Ideas and Confidence in Taking Forward Mental Health Action into the Future

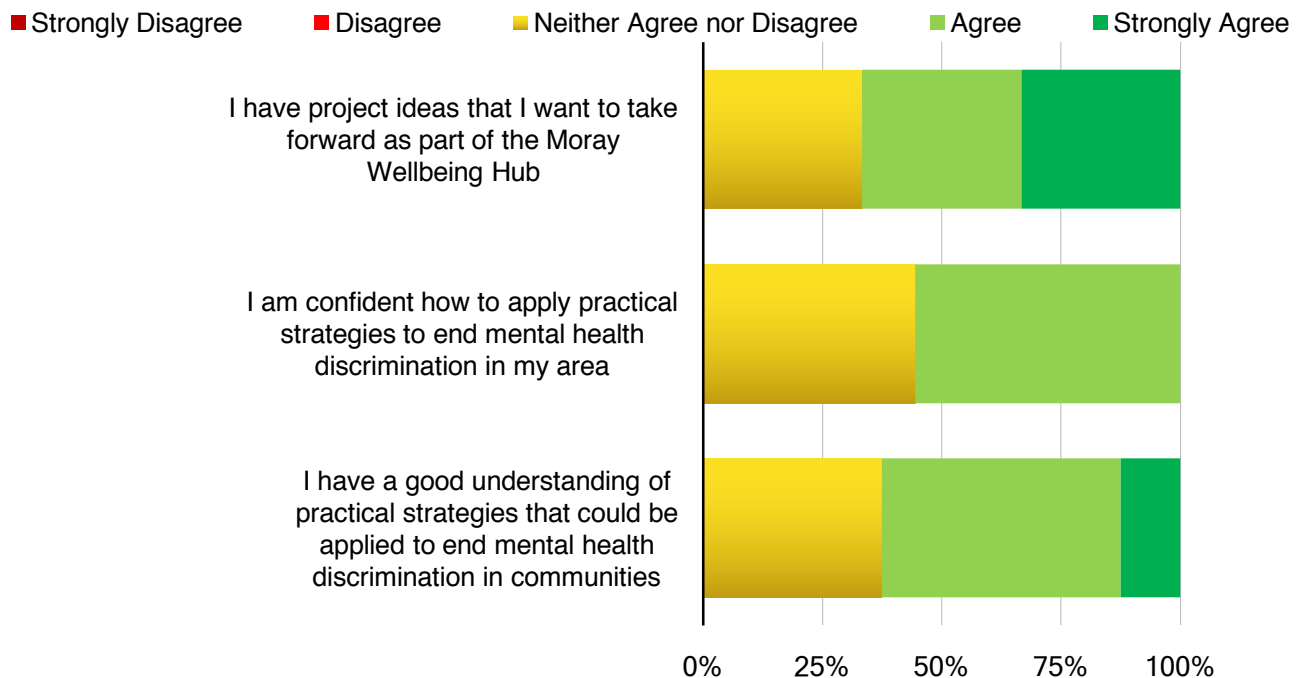


Figure 9 Baseline Measure of Understanding of Personal Safety and Power Sources

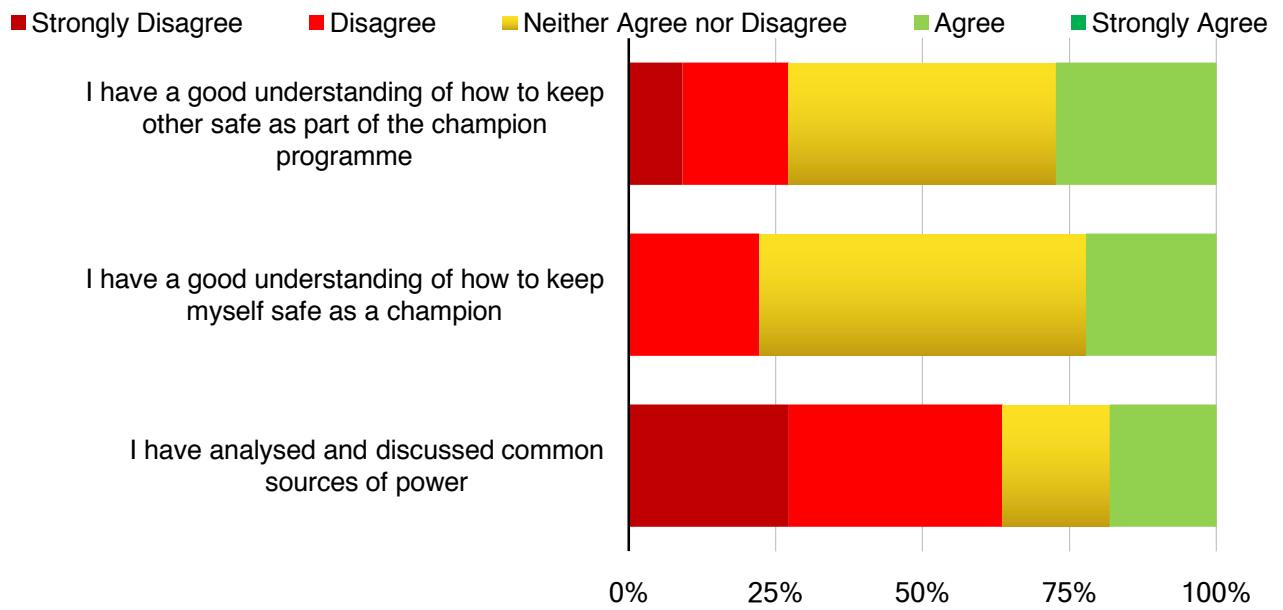


Figure 10 Follow-up Measure of Understanding of Personal Safety and Power Sources

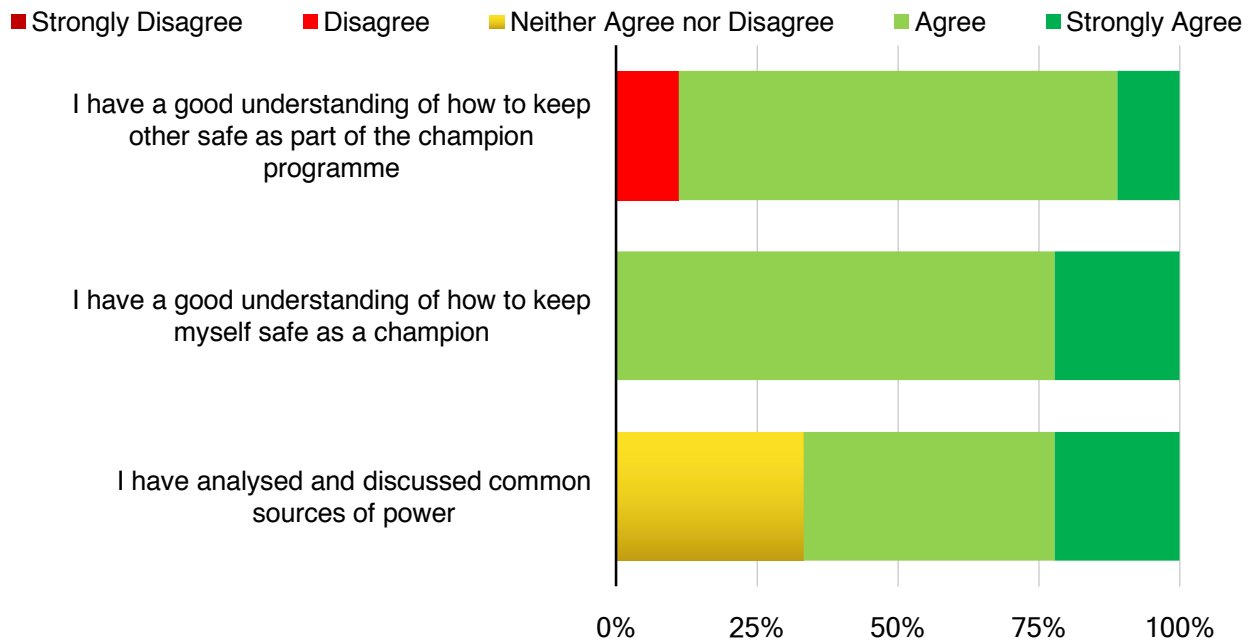


Figure 11 Baseline Knowledge of Tools for Working with Others and Project Planning

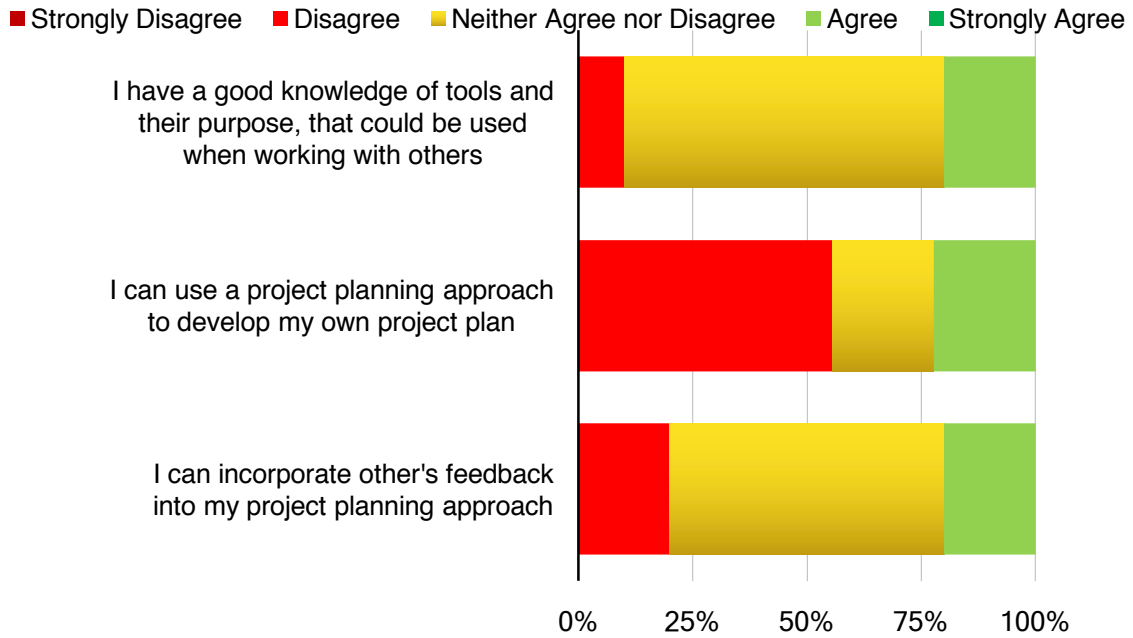
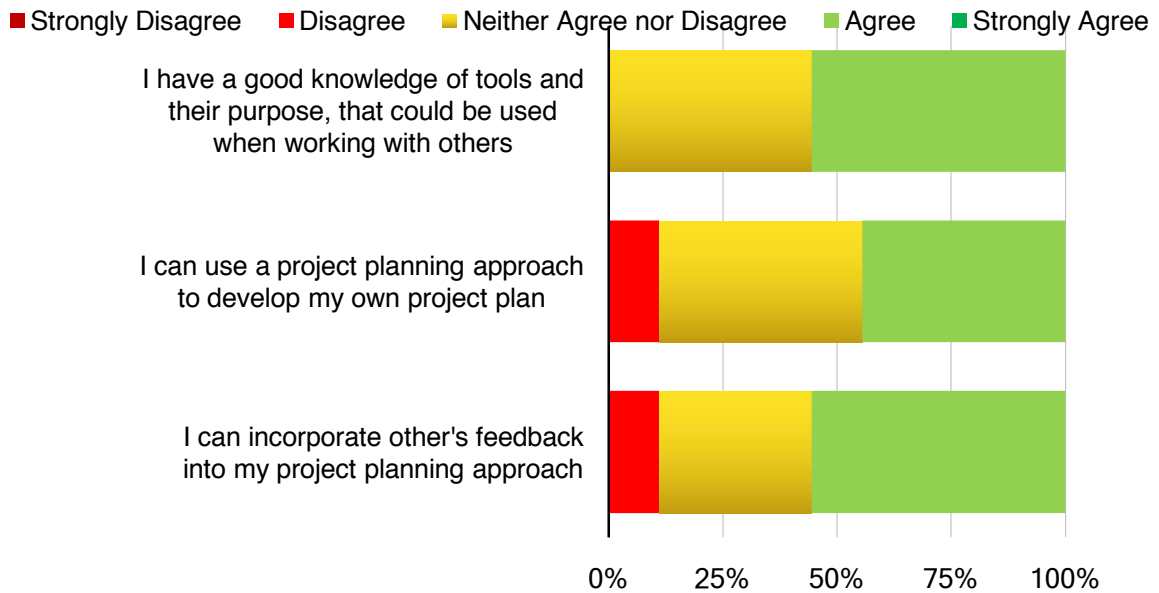


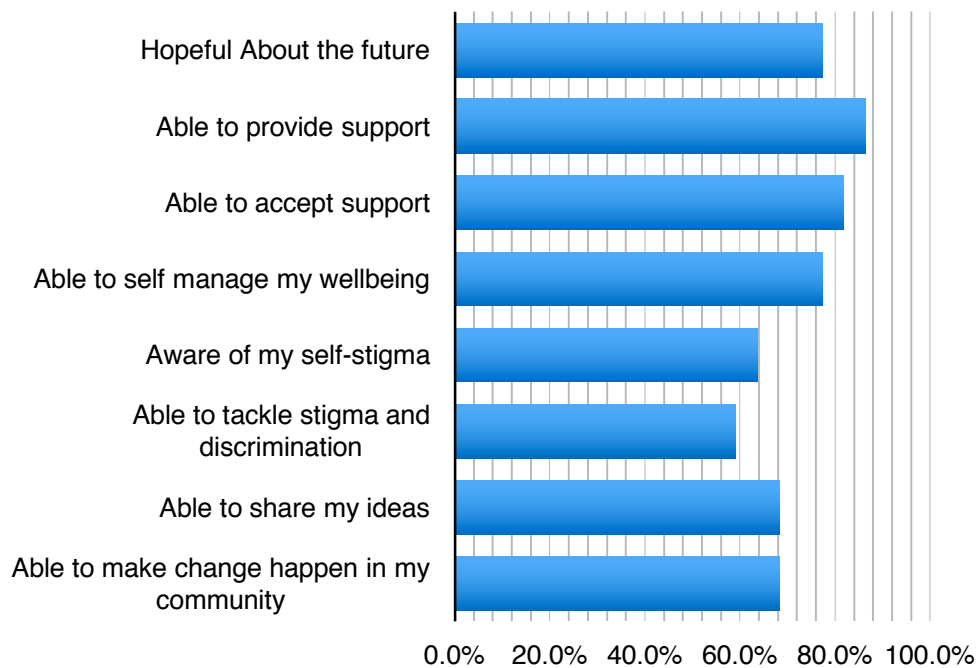
Figure 12 Follow-up Knowledge of Tools for Working with Others and Project Planning



In Figures 1 to 10 above a strongly positive movement is apparent in terms of proportions across most measures between baseline and follow-up. The more modest, though still positive, movement across figures 11 and 12 is perhaps indicative of the more ambitious nature of these measures and perhaps offers pointers for consideration in the design of any material relative to progression activities for individuals who have completed this course.

6.2 Impact of Programme on Community Champions

Figure 13 Proportion of Community Champions in Agreement that their Experience of Moray Wellbeing Hub Impacted on them in Terms of Feeling Increasingly Enabled as per each of the Following Statements



6.3 Emergent Key Themes from Critical Rapid Appraisal of Project Generated Qualitative data:

A range of powerful testimony has been captured from Champions and others involved in the programme. Such a range is perhaps indicative of the ultimately truly unique experience of each of us in matters of mental health.

Sociability and Potential Two Way Therapeutic Effect of Peer Support

One theme common to many was the importance of the opportunity to share their experience with others whose own experience shared some commonalities and crossover. To what extent this represented a peer-to-peer therapeutic effect for some *vis a vis* more of a morale boost and motivation conferred by the socialisation opportunities is an aspect that may be interesting to explore through further exploration of existing and future data.

“A wonderful way to connect with like-minded souls in a geographical area I have just moved into. A joy to connect with people who want to work with together to make things happen. A new chapter in the shift of power dynamics around mental health.”

“I'm not alone, many other people have, are, or will go through similar or worse things.”

Certainly the opportunities for socialising presented by the activities of the programme are highly valued by a large number of participants, whether this be in providing initial avenues out of isolation or just the

chance to meet like-minded individuals, including people from different backgrounds, and begin to collectively take ownership of an initiative geared around enhancing something as important as personal wellbeing.

An Atmosphere of Trust

The programme has evidently been successful in engendering an atmosphere of trust among participants in the various activities undertaken. This has been highly valued in terms of the importance of such in being conducive to individuals being able to open up and share their experiences with each other.

“Meeting people who have no hidden agenda, just being supportive”

“It has made talking about mental health easier”

The Important Role of Self-Management

Increased awareness of the very importance of self-management in terms of the role it has to play in personal wellbeing, together with becoming equipped with greater tools that enhance capacity for self-management are further prevalent twin themes.

“I now have a set of tools and am part of a recovery community that acknowledges that you can have good mental wellbeing and a MH diagnosis... radical! I also have developed supportive friendships.”

“It has shown me that what I was doing was good and that many others also have learned ways to manage wellbeing that do not have to involve medications.”

Mental Wellbeing as a Spectrum Rather than a Series of Defined Conditions

The concept explicitly mentioned in the quote above, that of moving beyond a diagnosis, or certainly not being defined by diagnosis and that it is possible to manage certain conditions rather than necessarily have to become ‘cured’ was a theme of importance to some individuals.

Throughout the programme a sense seems to have been garnered, among participants, of mental health as something we all experience, and that needs nurtured, rather than speaking in terms of good or bad mental health, or purely in terms of diagnoses.

“I, the same as everyone else, experience crisis and challenges all the time. (I have realised) the importance of facing things and/or seeking support.”

“I can see more clearly that instead of good or bad mental health its part of a continuum and requires awareness and work for everyone in crisis or not.”

Understanding the Therapeutic Potential of Peer Support

As has already been touched on another important element that is strongly conveyed through many participant's testimonies is the increased confidence, and perhaps, therapeutic effect from using learning from one's own experience to help others.

Again, the particular extent as to which this is of value in a therapeutic sense, is an important area in which allocation of further resource in terms of data analysis of the existing datasets, and indeed through further data collection, whether within the current participant cohort, or via future programmes, could potentially prove fruitful in elucidating further. It is clearly a valuable area on which to focus future well designed research, given the potential double bottom line impact to be attained.

"The Hub has introduced me to others like me who are champions for positive mental health and it has given me an opportunity to reach out more to my community."

"Being around good and nice people with the same problems and giving each other support and advice which was helpful to me."

Exploration of the appropriateness and feasibility of application of various validated quantifiable measures on this front would seem to be a reasonable area for consideration among stakeholders involved in this field of work. The most obvious of whom of course are perhaps the participants who are involved in this very programme.

Resilient, Connected Communities

A broader theme that comes through strongly from the testimonies is a sense that the impact of the programme goes beyond the direct effect on participants and the new connections made between them. Additionally, there is a strong sense that the cascading effect on others in the wider community, such as family, friends and colleagues, means that work such as that being undertaken by MWH is having a significant impact in building more aware and resilient communities as a whole, communities more equipped to collectively deal with the challenges that naturally arise throughout life.

"It's supporting existing services and creating a network of support for all in Moray"

"Whole of Moray it's made people aware that there is support and groups to help you cope with your issues and needs and not isolated as you would be if waiting on NHS services to help"

"It has really brought people together, brought out the best in people, and offered new opportunities to members. It feels like the beginning of a positive uprising which will genuinely and effectively tackle mental well-being issues in Moray and inspire other communities, too."

When this theme is considered alongside the data on reach of the programme presented in section 3 above it is not difficult to comprehend the wide ranging and powerful potential of this work to contribute to a healthier, fairer, more understanding and connected society, one in which the solutions to many of the challenges faced by communities are better able to manifest from within the communities themselves.

6 Emergent Key Themes from Discursive Interviews held with Key Programme Stakeholders/Partners

A key strength of MWH hub, highly valued by respondents, has clearly been in its flexibility and openness. That it has not been constrained by bureaucratic referral forms or complicated inclusion/exclusion criteria has been particularly valued by those who referred volunteers/participants onto the programme.

IV2: “Sometimes programmes that work with people want to try and fix people, but this can hamper people, MWH has been very good at showing volunteers how they need to be aware of their own mental wellbeing. It has been extremely useful for people who are ‘not ready’ in that we know that MWH will work with people to find out where people strengths lie and what is right for them and so we as an organisation now have somewhere to go with such folk, so it has opened up new options.”

This flexible, non-proscriptive approach has been central to having achieved a truly person-centred approach. That Mental Health is everywhere and issues are often somewhat hidden, makes this even more important. Equally important is the community based approach and the focus on mental wellbeing, rather than mental health conditions, and the awareness of the need to mitigate the potential for stigma to arise.

IV3: “There is lots of hidden work that goes on, and hidden need in the communities. People have underlying issues and are not necessarily accessing their GP. MWH explores all that and are changing the language, which is important, to help people realise that everyone has to look after mental wellbeing.”

The added value that MWH provided to the work of other local organisations is another striking theme that is conveyed by stakeholders and one that has been another massive strength of the programme, whether this be the local TSI, volunteer organisations, statutory mental health organisations, local higher education institutes, national organisations such as Scottish Recovery Network or other local community based organisations.

IV1: “If the hub (MWH) hadn’t been there, then we would’ve had to go out and do the meeting new people and attracting them in to our work etc. In terms of our workload and resources it’s been a massive help.”

IV2: “The opportunity for university Health and Social Care students to experience volunteer opportunities and placements at MWH has been so important. There’s the exemplar case of one particular student from a psychology background. They were unsure of their career path post-graduation and whether they would stick with their current field. Once I had linked them to volunteering at MWH they absolutely blossomed in the role. Gaining experience of the person centred approach and the different culture from what they’d previously experienced as well as the more holistic and wider picture of the landscape that is gained via the hub’s whole community approach, as opposed to what would have been gained in one siloed service provision, led to this individual deciding on their future career route, and organising the next steps to take on such. Having been influenced by the culture of MWH, and being retained by the Psychology profession as a result, the work that this individual goes onto achieve in the future,

will to some extent have been made possible by the work of this programme, while it may be impossible to ever fully measure this, I have no doubt that it is extremely important.”

IV4: “We’re now about to enter into implementation of the Moray mental health strategy, very much focusing on recovery. The work they’re (MWH) doing is bang on in terms of what we’re trying to achieve, for example engaging with communities, those that are hard to reach, those that wouldn’t normally come forward to discuss mental health. They’re delivering psychological therapies - low intensity high volume, we call them, for example Living Life to the Full and Wellness Recovery Action Planning.”

That MWH isn’t system driven, for example not being overburdened with complex referral processes, as previously mentioned, is viewed as vital. Within this the fact that MWH provides training and influences other organisations, including statutory organisations, is seen to be useful in contributing to a necessary culture shift and ‘hitting it from both ends’ so to speak.

One respondent felt that the programme was particularly appealing to men, who traditionally have been found to be relatively more difficult to engage with such opportunities. Very simply the positive focus on wellbeing in the name of the programme was thought to be important on this front. As was the clear feeling that people were valued by the programme and were instilled with a sense that they had something to contribute, rather than simply being brought into another system.

IV2: “The hub can change with people”

The funding that has been provided by both of the major funders for 2016-2017 cannot be underestimated in terms of importance. As well as instilling confidence and a sense of validation and self-belief in the work of the individual who was the key actor in setting up the programme, the nature of each of the funding streams facilitated rather than precluded the flexible approach that has, as outlined, been so crucial to the effectiveness of the programme.

IV1: “It’s been great to see how it developed from an initial idea to [the CIC] having legal status confirmed and a network of over 100 champions. It provides a vehicle to work with and interact with people in Moray with their own lived experience. The key to success was the project securing funding from the ALLIANCE and See Me. It allowed the programme manager to work full-time on the project where they wouldn’t have been able to otherwise”

Future sustainability of the organisation and the initiative was the key concern of respondents as a whole and the fact that two of the organisations interviewed here have at the time of writing already committed funding to the continuation of the programme is telling in itself, and can only bode well in terms of MWH progressing towards its objective of establishing itself as a vehicle that fits within a social enterprise model.

IV4: “I want to see it sustained; the potential is there to do good things and go further.”

IV3: “The Social Return on Investment of a programme like this would be really interesting to look at. How the impact cascades out through connections is really important and interesting.”

IV1: “For people with lived experience of mental health issues, they have to challenge the self-stigma before they’ll have the confidence to challenge stigma more generally in the community. This first year has been about providing the confidence and tools to do so, and to enable people

to challenge stigma. Part of the funding given to the Hub for the next year is to organise a revitalised Moray wellbeing festival in October. This will play an important role in raising the profile of the Hub and of wellbeing in the Moray area. The events that are part of that will be events that attract the wider community, and not just the network of champions and other individuals already involved.”

IV4: “Well, I work for the HSCP - until November I was actually an NHS person, so it was working for the mental illness service that was my primary concern, for example people with schizophrenia or people with severe and enduring mental illnesses. What MWH is doing is focusing less on that and more on the community and the general level of wellbeing that is out there. Poor mental health is almost everywhere you look, MWH has identified that, helped people come forward, and is working on improving it. They’ve trained 18 WRAP facilitators and have established a network of around 100 people around their Community Champion programme... have done remarkable things, I don’t think there’s anywhere in Scotland that comes close to that. They’re helping the HSCP with the Good Mental Health for All in Moray strategy, there is now an implementation plan for the strategy. Doing Living Life to the Full and the WRAP facilitators is really in line with Good Mental Health for All in Moray, and MWH was doing this work before the strategy implementation plan... you don’t need to wait for the strategy before you can start doing good work.”

IV1: “The champions are leading by example in terms of self-management - as the project develops and people are getting out into the community and talking to others, I would hope many others would be encouraged to take on board the tools and resources that are available for people to manage their mental health and wellbeing. There is still a lot of work to be done to challenge stigma within the wider community. Over the next year this should be the priority - potentially having a physical hub or presence in a high street location.”

The particular challenges inherent in grassroots initiatives becoming established was flagged up by one respondent. Especially when such programmes include an element of attempting to instigate culture change within long established structures and services. Among respondents to this evaluation there is a tangible commitment to and passion for helping ensure that the correct support is put in place in the future to allow it to continue to flourish, which is testament to the value of the work undertaken to date by MWH.

IV4: “MWH has come to the point where it realises it needs a board of directors or something around the programme manager, [and so is doing this] and possibly it would’ve been much better if this point had have come earlier. The programme manager has thrived through this. But the pressure to deliver is enormous and there is a risk for anyone in such a position, because there is such pressure - trying to lead things. In some quarters there’s been some difficult discussions, and some, perhaps some of the longer serving clinical staff that work in the mental health services, would question the value of all this. But if I was the funder I would be struggling to see what better way there was to address the cultural change towards self-management - this has people being supported by people they know, perhaps that they live close to, and people they trust, and finding ways to move forward.”

IV4: “Extremely good value for money, absolutely in line with the strategic direction... tying into the implementation of the Moray Mental Health Strategy, but also tying into other agendas; as

an example, the Making Recovery Real project has actually been energised by what MWH was doing - the potential for folk to collide and trip each other up when doing similar projects, that hasn't happened, in the true sense, the whole has been much greater than the sum of the parts [in Moray] and MWH has really been a very important part of that. That's down to the strength of the individuals around it. And some of the cohesion and common understanding out there of what the strategic direction is, and us giving people the headroom to get on with something, and not interfere, or get in their way."

Witnessing the impact on individuals that has come from involvement with the programme was the most powerful lasting impression that each of the respondents were left with from their own involvement.

IV1: "Seeing individuals develop - I can think of a number of people who I first met 18 months or two years ago at some of the Making Recovery Real initiative events, and to see them blossom and become much more confident and advocates for recovery and for mental health and wellbeing in Moray... The project has helped to challenge stigma, particularly - I would say - self-stigma, amongst the group of people who have been involved."

IV2: "Through the MWH workshops I've seen a dramatic increase in self-knowledge and management. People could get involved and the hub would find a role."

Equally important has been how the hub has worked together with other organisations in order to complement and strengthen the overall network of mental health related resource in the Moray area.

IV3: "How the programme has been able to fit with other existing programmes has been wonderful, it has been able to take advantage of existing networks and work together with people who know each other well. We've seen real get up and go and pulling together and mutual promotion of each other."

6.5 Summary of some key learning points

- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had increased understanding of intended course outcomes and improved perception of peer support among participant group.
- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had increased understanding, knowledge and experience of group work and relevant tools for enhancing mental wellbeing through this.
- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had improved perception of self-efficacy in engaging with relevant activities.
- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had enhanced capacity and confidence for taking forward their own ideas in mental health action into the future.
- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had enhanced understanding and experience of analysing factors around personal safety and power sources.
- Upon completion of the programme a greater proportion of participants had enhanced their knowledge of tools for working with others and project planning, albeit to a lesser degree than the preceding points, which may be of interest in planning the content for any future work of MWH or extraneous progression routes for participants.
- The data provided by responses to questions around 'willingness to challenge stigma in the community' display a decrease in willingness upon project completion. It is possible that this was due to the perception at the time of completion of the baseline measure that this formed part of a selection process for inclusion in the programme, which could well have led to an artificially higher score being entered here (due to the reason of this likely confounder, these results are not presented in this report). Managing expectations clearly at the outset could help to mitigate this possibility in the future. Early (pre-programme inception) engagement with external, independent evaluation support could be useful to this end.
- In terms of challenging stigma, a theme arising in the data contained herein is that this begins with self-stigma, successfully negating any sense of this is perhaps a necessary first step to individuals becoming more equipped to successfully challenge stigma if and where it may arise in the wider community. This is an area that would benefit from further research however.
- Mental Wellbeing as a spectrum that affects everyone and that everyone can move along at different times in their life, rather than being characterised by a set of pre-defined conditions, is a concept that resonates strongly with individuals.
- A focus on 'mental wellbeing' rather than 'mental illness', or even 'mental health' is important in promoting engagement, possibly in particular among males who are generally more difficult to engage, and is important in setting the tone for the wider cultural change that is intended to be impacted, partly through changing the language traditionally used around mental wellbeing.
- Opportunities for social activity and increasing social connectedness is one of the key facilitators of beneficial impacts of the programme.
- The therapeutic effect of using one's own experience in helping support others, deserves further in depth research.
- Engendering an atmosphere of trust is vital to the above.
- In exploring how future research into the therapeutic effect of using one's own experience to help others, the cohort of individuals who have been part of this programme would present an opportunity as a logical starting point from whom to gain insight into likely useful measures that could be used, and to the perceived appropriateness of existing validated academic tools.

- A key strength of the programme, related to the flexible approach previously highlighted, has been embodiment of the capacity to work to people's strengths and evolve with people, this has helped to engender a sense of collective ownership and helped participants to feel truly involved and self-directed – it's been successfully coproduced, 'done with' rather than 'done to'. This feature is likely to remain a critical success factor in future development and is one on which a focus should be retained as the organisation itself develops further.
- There exists a strong sense conveyed by various respondents, that the cascading effect on others in the wider community, such as family, friends and colleagues, means that work such as that being undertaken by MWH is having a significant impact in building more aware and resilient communities as a whole, communities more equipped to collectively deal with the challenges that naturally arise throughout life. This however, is very difficult to quantifiably measure.
- A key strength has been the programmes' flexibility and openness. That it has not been constrained by bureaucratic referral forms or complicated inclusion/exclusion criteria has been particularly valued.
- The above has worked in tandem with allowing a truly person centred approach to flourish.
- Much added value has been gained by other organisations through the activity of MWH.
- Influencing culture change among other organisations, for example through providing training and awareness raising sessions, is crucial to the future of the programme.
- Future development must be adequately supported by relevant stakeholders and be well thought out in aspects such as workload pressures, organisational development and articulation of realistic outcomes and expectations in order to be sustainable.
- The catalytic effect of the funding provided for the period covered by this report has already been successful in attracting funding from other sources for future development.
- Future development would benefit early engagement with external evaluation and learning support in order to enhance the likelihood that data collection methods will be useful and adhered to, as well as to optimise wider potential associated research opportunities relevant to the work.
- There is likely to be much wider learning, greater than this current evaluation is resourced to uncover, to be gained from MWH's role as a grassroots catalyst for change, particularly in harnessing and using the voice of lived experience in influencing other organisations and helping to shape the nascent local mental health strategy.