



projectart works

PROPEL Programme 2017-20

**Creative Solutions for People with
Complex Needs and their Supporters**

Interim Evaluation Report 2018/19

Susan Potter, September 2019

"I like it at PAW because I can do my own drawing and painting. It's good to work with Mark and Annis. Mark is the handy man, he changes my water! I do get my own stuff now, every Tuesday when I'm at PAW. In the mornings, we do some team work but in the afternoon, I get to do my own stuff. After lunch, I do my own drawings. They come from my own ideas. I like doing it, it makes me feel happy! I meet my friends every time I come here. Is there anything that would make it better? No, I like it where I am."

Participant Artist, PROPEL 2018-19

"I have really enjoyed taking PAW's workshops off site during the past year, into schools and gallery settings. Working with new artists both within PAW team and from other organisations. I have also been reminded of the power of what we do on seeing support workers faces and the reactions of our new participants during our PROPEL workshops."

Team Member, PROPEL 2018-19

"Today we've come to the De La Warr Pavilion. It's so important that we come out, it gives a different perspective for everyone and also, we get to see the changing exhibitions. PAW had a show here some time back, so it's sustaining that relationship between PAW and the De La Warr. It's also good for the general visitors to see us here. It's nice to see our groups in different situations or settings, they have just as much a right to come here and do all of the things that other visitors might do. It's really important for us to be 'out there' so to speak, not to be shut away from the rest of the community."

Parent, PROPEL 2018-19

"The Peer Support Network has gone well this year, helping individuals with complex needs and their families stay connected and feel supported. There was a bit of a lull with changes in personnel but it's picking up again now. We have hosted training sessions and meet-ups that have provided real value for network members. We have also created a standalone Facebook page for the network, which is slowly attracting supporters and will help the network to grow further."

Team Member, PROPEL 2018-19

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Acknowledgements

Project Art Works would like to thank those individuals and organisations who have given their time, skills and resources to this study. Thanks are also due to those numerous PROPEL participants, family members, support workers and other stakeholders who have shared their insights and suggestions through the evaluation questionnaires, online surveys and individual interviews.

Susan Potter is grateful for the advice and support provided by the following individuals, in the collection of data and preparation of this brief interim report:

Kate Adams, Artist Director and CEO of Project Art Works
Wendy Routley, Head of Finance and Operations
Tim Corrigan, Creative Director
Matthew Pitts, Creative Programme Manager (until March 2019)
Katie Taylor, Creative Programme Manager (from June 2019)
Esther Springett, Community Networks Coordinator (maternity leave)
Jane Caley, Community Networks Coordinator (maternity cover)
Sally Bournier, Gallery and Project Coordinator
Martin Swan, Explorers Project Coordinator
Jessica Courtney Bennett, Communications and Project Manager
Patricia Finnegan, Programme Administration Assistant
Rachel Hine, Lead Artist
Annis Joslin, Lead Artist
Tony Colley, Artist Mentor
Andrew Cooper, Supporting Artist
Mark Daniels, Supporting Artist
Dion Downes, Supporting Artist
Sarah Dunne, Supporting Artist
Tom Lepora, Supporting Artist
Magda Patza, Supporting Artist
Georgie Scott, Supporting Artist
Maya Shapiro-Steen, Supporting Artist.

Project Art Works' PROPEL Programme is supported by the Big Lottery Fund, Monument Trust, Hastings CCG and Artworks Bridge.



1 Introduction

Project Art Works is the UK's leading artist-led organisation working with young people and adults who have complex needs, including those individuals, systems and services that support them. The term 'complex needs' embraces severe learning disability, autism and/or communication impairments, behaviours described as challenging, resulting in multiple and intersecting support needs. Project Art Works (PAW) delivers creative visual art projects promoting deep and authentic relationships between people who, because of their disability, experience extreme social isolation. To achieve this the organisation works in close partnership with health and social care professionals, artists and arts organisations locally, regionally and nationally.

Since 1997, PAW has forged a national reputation for the exceptional quality of its creative work with people with complex needs, their families, support workers, care providers, statutory agencies and cultural organisations across the UK. PAW is also recognised by Arts Council England as a leader in cultural diversity, via its collaborations with other leading arts organisations nationally to build awareness, empathy and support, extending community-based opportunities. Services provided by PAW include: 1:1 creative workshops, group participatory workshops, professional development, support for whole families, advocacy and advice, interventions to improve care outcomes. PAW's work is recognised as demonstrating innovation and excellence in person-centred approaches, leading to enhanced quality of life for individuals who require intensive support in order to lead full, creative and inclusive lives.

The PAW Team have extensive expertise in specialised systems of support, i.e. Personalisation, Total Communication, Positive Behaviour Support and the complex statutory systems for accessing this support. Specialist artists work intensively with participants on a 1:1 basis supporting them to engage with materials and creative processes and access a place of freedom and purpose not dictated by their disabilities. This expertise combines to form a hugely successful approach to making art in collaboration with children, young people and adults who have complex needs that is of exceptional quality.

With generous support from the Big Lottery Fund, PROPEL has been a new and innovative departure for Project Art Works (PAW). At a time when essential community based provision is at risk due to cuts in local government funding, there is an urgent and increasing need to support people with complex needs. PROPEL therefore proposes an expansive and integrated approach to improving outcomes in social care, empowering all people to thrive as members of their community. The PROPEL project began in September 2017 and has since been delivering three, thriving and interrelated areas of activity:

- i. Five day weekly provision of personalised, creative activities for individuals with complex needs.
- ii. Bespoke training, skill sharing and advocacy programme for families and support workers to increase their confidence and capacity as carers.
- iii. The development of 'Arch 1', a multi-purpose building, accommodating the aforementioned specialist provision, while offering free or low-cost resources for families.

This second interim evaluation focuses upon the provision of creative activities and the bespoke training programme only. It does not investigate outcomes related to the development of 'Arch 1'. The main aim of this brief report then is to explore the inputs, outputs and outcomes of PROPEL 2018-19 programme for participants and deliverers. The evaluation suggests many positive outcomes for those taking part during the past year, while also describing learning outcomes and recommendations to support the further development of PROPEL in 2019-20 and beyond. During the past year, PROPEL has engaged 12 highly skilled professional artists and three support workers to deliver 399 studio sessions to 34 individuals with complex needs. The project has continued to develop its unique Peer Support Network, providing 11 training, skill sharing and advocacy workshops for 98 parents, support workers, health and/or social care professionals.

In its second year, studio workshop provision has been extended, the Peer Support Network has engaged further with the wider community via its new Roadshow events and PAW has begun to deliver Encounter Days, all of which have increased awareness and understanding of the organisation and its work. In addition, PAW's unique charter 'Our Ambition and Rights for Personalisation' has been launched as part of the 'Arts, Rights and Representation' seminar at the De La Warr Pavilion in November 2018, attended by 122 key decision makers across the sectors of arts, health and social care. Described as 'inclusive', 'supportive', 'non-judgemental' and 'necessary' by those who have taken part in PROPEL during the past twelve months, the work of PAW via PROPEL and all of its accompanying programmes is impacting regionally, nationally and internationally. Time now needs to be devoted to reflecting upon the many achievements of PROPEL in its second year, prior to moving forward in the most sustainable ways.

"PAW is somewhere we can go for support, within our immediate vicinity and it has an enormous knock on effect. As word of the Peer Support Network gets out to families - along with PAW's wider work of course - more will benefit from its value. If we are talking about caring and supporting those families who need additional support in their caring roles, this is such a good - and necessary - model and it has provided a really strong foundation for us all to move forward."

Parent, PROPEL 2018-19

2 Methodology

Through consultation with the PROPEL Project Team, an evaluation methodology was proposed including both quantitative and qualitative measures. The aims of the PROPEL evaluation are to:

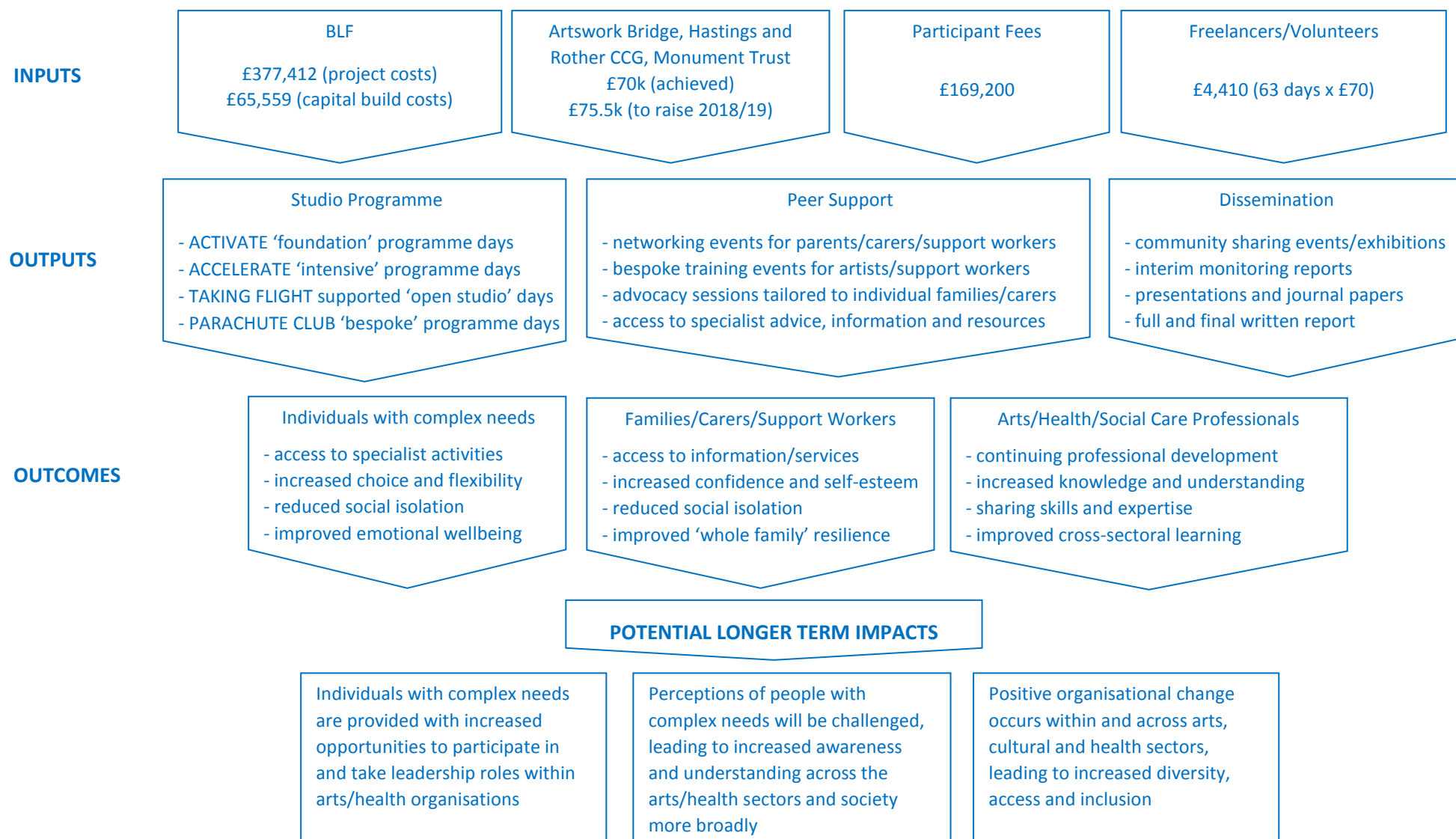
- Examine the inputs, outputs and outcomes for those individuals and organisations participating in PROPEL 2017-20
- Measure the successes of PROPEL 2017-20 against its prescribed aims and objectives, as established in the Big Lottery Fund's approved funding purposes
- Investigate potential longer term impacts of PROPEL via individual case studies
- Draw out any general lessons for effective practices for the further development and sustainability of PROPEL and the work of PAW more broadly.

Data for analysis was collected between September 2018 and August 2019 via the following means, in order to document and evaluate the processes, outcomes and impacts of PROPEL 2018-19:

- Planning meetings with PROPEL Project Team to establish aims and objectives of the independent evaluation, supporting the development of logic model, framework and tools
- 10 site visits, observing and documenting full range of PROPEL activity (i.e. artist planning days; studio workshop programme; visits to partner venues; Peer Support Network meetings; CPD workshops; exhibitions and special events)
- 56 formative questionnaires completed by individuals attending PROPEL project activity (participants, supporting artists, parents and/or carers, health and/or social care professionals)
- 20 formative audio recorded interviews completed with participants (including participants, supporting artists, parents and/or carers, health and/or social care professionals)
- 12 summative e.questionnaires completed by: PROPEL supporting artists and other team members
- Transcription, coding and analysis of quantitative and qualitative datasets, resulting in brief written interim evaluation report.

Following the model described in Figure 2.1 (over page) important themes have then been analysed, compared and contrasted from each set of data, in order to develop meaning and illuminate the findings. It is hoped that this method follows on logically from the objectives, to provide a robust and holistic evaluation to support the further development of PROPEL in 2019-20 and beyond.

Figure 2.1 PROPEL: logic model





3 Inputs and outputs

As described in Figure 3.1 (over), PROPEL 2018-19 achieved those inputs and outputs established at the outset and as defined in the Big Lottery Fund's approved purposes. In its second year, the project has successfully engaged 12 professional artists to deliver its studio programmes, including ACTIVATE, ACCELERATE and TAKING FLIGHT; 34 individuals with complex needs have been engaged to take part in 399 creative workshops, resulting in many positive impacts for participants and their families/carers.

Through PROPEL, PAW has established a new and unique 'Peer Support Network' (PSN), providing an innovative programme of bespoke training days, skills sharing workshops and advocacy events for those families and support workers of individuals with complex needs, thereby increasing their confidence and capacity as carers. In its second year, the PSN has delivered 11 events and two training days focused on e.g. Mental Capacity and Decision Making; Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance; Preparing for Adulthood and Personalised Pathways for individuals with complex needs, engaging with a total of 98 parents and/or carers, support workers, artists, health and social care professionals.

In terms of its virtual presence meanwhile, PAW: PROPEL has once again made positive use of digital and social media platforms during its second year (e.g. PAW website; Facebook and Twitter; YouTube), engaging with 12,544 broadcast/online (national and international) audience members. Finally, a highly successful media campaign and produced six films, resulting in 35 individual publicity items, comprising a wide variety of features, interviews and reviews.

Figure 3.1 PROPEL: overview of activity 2018-19

PROPEL aims	Inputs and outputs	Outcomes
<p>1 People with complex needs will be less socially isolated as a result of greater access to specialist activities</p> <p>2 People with complex needs will experience improved emotional wellbeing, increased choice and flexibility through creative provision</p> <p>3 Families/carers and support workers will experience increased confidence and enhanced knowledge, enabling them to better assist the person they support</p> <p>4 People with complex needs and their families will experience a greater sense of 'whole family resilience'</p>	<p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12 x freelance artists - 2 x support workers - 12 volunteers - 1 x creative programme manager - 1 x community networks coordinator. <p>Studio Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 x artist planning days - 37 x families engaged - 37 x individuals engaged - 399 x workshops delivered. <p>Peer Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11 x PSN events delivered - 34 x parents/family members and carers engaged - 64 x support workers, health/social care professionals engaged. <p>Professional Development and Team Wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 x Positive Behaviour Support Training Day - 1 x PATH Planning Training Day - 2 x Group Psychotherapy Sessions - 3 x Artist Planning Days - 14 x PROPEL delivering team/participants engaged. <p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 35 x media/publicity items produced - 6 x films produced - 11,601 x PAW website visitors - 587 x YouTube views - 187 x new Twitter followers - 169 x new Facebook followers. 	<p>Individuals with complex needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to specialist activities - increased choice and flexibility - reduced social isolation - improved emotional wellbeing. <p>Families/Carers/Support Workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to information/services - increased confidence and self-esteem - reduced social isolation - improved 'whole family' resilience. <p>Arts/Health/Social Care Professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continuing professional development - increased knowledge/understanding - sharing skills and expertise - improved cross-sectoral learning.

4 Outcomes

4.1 Individuals with complex needs

Through its regular artist studio programme, PAW provides bespoke support for young people and adults with complex needs, including those with profound and multiple needs. PROPEL has enabled PAW to deliver an extended five day, weekly personalised programme comprising the following three strands of activity.

i. **ACTIVATE** (Thursday Activate studio day)

Facilitated by two highly experienced artists and one trained support worker, this day is for individuals in need of positive and creative solutions to particular periods of transition in their lives. Workshops offer a wide range of high quality materials and equipment, which participants are encouraged to use in exciting and expansive ways. Delivering artists and support workers have training in specialist techniques, i.e. Positive Behaviour Support; Person Centred Active Support; Total Communication.

ii. **ACCELERATE** (Tuesday Studio day, Thursday Parachute Club and Friday Parachute Club)

Facilitated by experienced artist teams, participants are encouraged to engage in both individual and collaborative creative journeys. A wide range of media and processes are available including: painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, sculpture, animation and photography. Participants also have regular opportunities to visit exhibitions and events at galleries, parks and nature reserves within the area.

iii. **TAKING FLIGHT** (Wednesday 'supported' open studio day)

Young people and adults with complex needs are encouraged to develop their creative practice alongside an Artist Mentor, thereby exploring their potential as professional artists. The studio promotes a group ethos, with participants encouraged to develop, e.g. personal art practice; flexibility and choice; support of peers within the group.

Between September 2018 and July 2019, a total of 37 young people and adults with complex needs have accessed the PROPEL studio programme, resulting in 1,115 attendances during the second year of activity. In order to capture impacts upon PROPEL participants with complex needs, information was collected via a weekly 'outcomes scale' completed by facilitating artists, alongside interviews conducted with a small sample of participants and questionnaires completed by a broader range of parents, carers and support workers.

4.1.1 Questionnaire findings

Evaluation questionnaires were delivered to parents, carers and/or support workers to investigate the impacts of the PROPEL artist studio programme upon the individual with complex needs supported by themselves. Respondents included 14 parents/carers and five support workers, with questions closely aligned to the overarching aims of PROPEL:

- When asked about the main issues/needs faced by the person supported, respondents reported 'isolation' (21%), 'lack of appropriate and/or specialist services' (26%) and more significantly for PAW's PROPEL programmes, 'access to group activities' (53%)
- Asked to rate these issues and/or needs, all three were rated as 'important' or 'very important', with 79% respondents noting both 'access to group activities' and 'lack of appropriate support' (also 79%) were of primary importance.

The questionnaire asked parents/carers 'what impact does attending PAW/PROPEL's events and activities have upon you and the person you support?' As described in Figure 4.1 (over), responses were extremely positive regarding the support provided by PAW's PROPEL programme for those individual participants with complex needs and their parents/carers:

- Asked whether PAW: PROPEL 'provides access to specialist activities' for the person supported, 89% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 11% 'agreed'
- Asked whether PAW: PROPEL 'provides increased choice and flexibility', 58% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 37% 'agreed'; the remaining 5% 'disagreed'
- Asked whether PAW: PROPEL 'reduces social isolation', 63% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 27% 'agreed'; 5% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' and 5% 'disagreed'
- Asked whether PAW: PROPEL 'improves emotional wellbeing', 63% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 37% 'agreed'.

Parents/carers were then asked 'how does PAW meet your needs and/or the needs of the person you support?' As described in Figure 4.2 (over), responses once again suggested PAW's PROPEL programme is meeting the needs of the far larger majority of participants, through its highly personalised approach:

- Asked whether the 'support received from PAW is personalised to their needs', 79% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 21% 'agreed'
- Asked whether they 'felt in control of the services received from PAW', 68% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 26% 'agreed'; the remaining 6% disagreed
- Asked if 'the people at PAW genuinely care about the individual(s) they support', 89% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 11% 'agreed'.

Figure 4.1 PROPEL: outcomes for individuals with complex needs

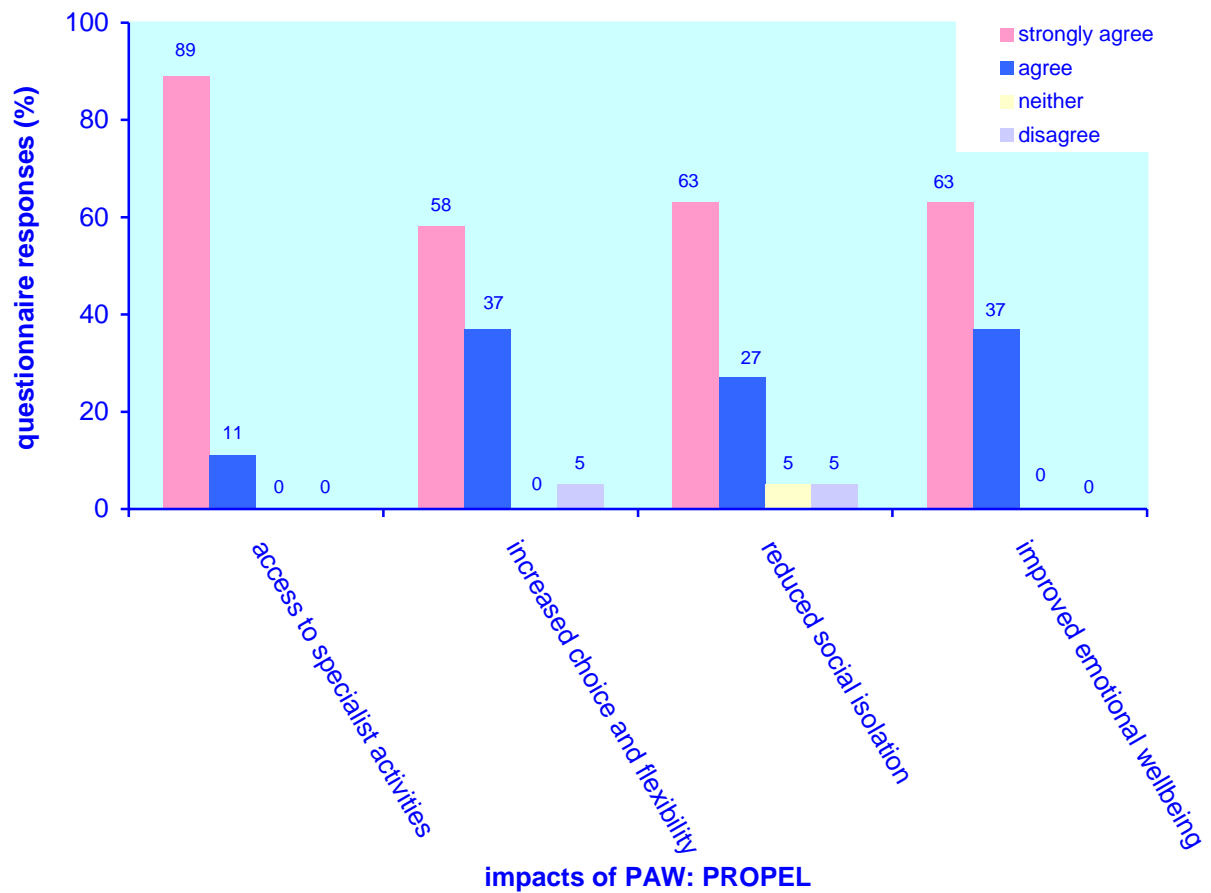
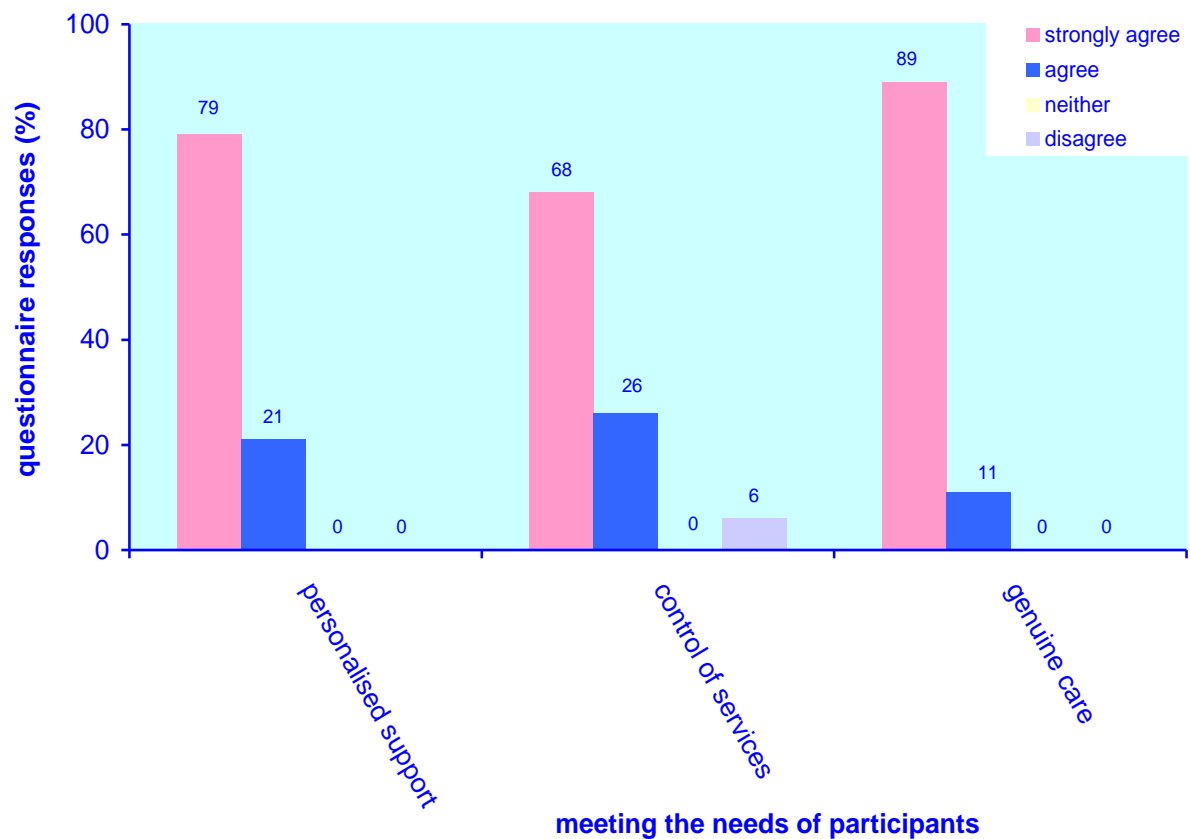


Figure 4.2 PROPEL: meeting the needs of individuals with complex needs



4.1.2 ACTIVATE findings

In addition to studying data from the aforementioned evaluation questionnaires, an analysis of the ACTIVATE (Thursday studio days) weekly register and outcomes scales completed across the year by delivering artist teams revealed the following findings:

- 37 studio days were delivered to eight individuals with complex needs between September 2018 and July 2019, resulting in 275 attendances from a possible total 296 attendances
- The small number of individual absences (21) from sessions was attributed to: participant's holiday; participant's ill health; transport issues
- Across the duration of the year, participants exhibited consistently high levels of engagement, enjoyment, decision making and communication. Positive outcomes were noted to correspond with, e.g. experimentation with creative techniques; relationship building between participants and supporting artists; receiving praise about their artwork from peers and artist facilitators
- As might have been anticipated, negative outcomes were noted to correspond with, e.g. participant ill health; a change in daily routine, medication and/or support worker(s).

4.1.3 ACCELERATE findings

Similarly, an analysis of the ACCELERATE (Tuesday studio days) weekly register and outcomes scales completed across the year by delivering artist teams revealed the following findings:

- 36 studio days and two museum/gallery visits (i.e. Hastings Museum & Art Gallery; De La Warr Pavilion) were delivered to eight individuals with complex needs between September 2018 and July 2019, resulting in 268 attendances from a possible total 288 attendances
- The small number of individual absences (20) from sessions was attributed to: participant's holiday; health and/or social care appointments; participant's ill health; transport issues
- Across the duration of the year, participants exhibited consistently high levels of engagement, enjoyment, decision making and communication. Positive outcomes were noted to correspond with, e.g. experimentation with new materials and/or creative techniques; relationship building within the group; receiving praise about their artwork from peers and artist facilitators
- As might have been anticipated, negative outcomes were noted to correspond with, e.g. participant ill health; relationship issues; coping with extreme heat; coping with new environment during museum/gallery visits; a change in daily routine and/or medication.

4.1.4 TAKING FLIGHT findings

Following on, as analysis of the TAKING FLIGHT (Wednesday supported studios) weekly register and outcomes scales completed across the year by delivering artist teams revealed the following findings:

- 35 studio days and one gallery visit (i.e. Towner Art Gallery) were delivered to seven individuals with complex needs between September 2018 and July 2019, resulting in 215 attendances from a possible total 245 attendances
- Individual absences (30) from sessions was attributed to: participant's holiday; participant's birthday; participant's ill health; adverse weather and/or transport issues
- Across the duration of the year and as with other studio sessions, participants exhibited consistently high levels of engagement, enjoyment, decision making and communication
- Positive outcomes for participants were noted to correspond with, e.g. experimentation with new materials and/or techniques; beginning a new artwork and/or project; a sense of achievement in completing, exhibiting and/or selling artwork
- Negative outcomes were once again associated with, e.g. participant ill health; upset at home and/or during the journey to PAW; ; a change in daily routine.

4.1.5 PARACHUTE CLUB findings

Finally, a combined analysis of PARACHUTE CLUB (Thursday and Friday supported studios) weekly registers and outcomes scales completed across the year by delivering artist teams revealed the following findings:

- 67 studio days and four field trips (i.e. Explorers trip to Scotland; MK Gallery; Towner Gallery; Photoworks) were delivered to 14 individuals with complex needs between September 2018 and July 2019, resulting in 357 attendances from a possible total 392 attendances
- The small number of individual absences (35) from sessions was attributed to: participant's holiday; participant's ill health; health and/or social care appointments; transport issues
- Across the duration of the year and as with other studio sessions, participants exhibited consistently high levels of engagement, enjoyment, decision making and communication
- Positive outcomes for participants were noted to correspond with, e.g. experimentation with new materials and/or techniques; a sense of achievement in completing, exhibiting and/or selling artwork; being in a new environment; relationship building within the group
- Negative outcomes were once again associated with, e.g. participant ill health; upset at home and/or during the journey to PAW; a change in daily routine and/or support workers.

4.2 Families, carers and support workers

As described previously in this report, a main aim of PROPEL is to provide bespoke training, skills sharing and advocacy for families and support workers, thereby increasing their confidence and/or capacity as carers for individuals with complex needs. The now established Peer Support Network (PSN) brings together people who have complex support needs, families, carers, support workers, commissioners and service providers to share their knowledge and experience. The PSN is an initiative developed in direct response to a need articulated by those individuals and families who engage with PAW.

During the past year, PROPEL has delivered 11 PSN events, attended by 98 members. Each forum explores the lived experience of disability, celebrating best practice and working constructively with providers to identify/find solutions to gaps in services, information and provision. Network members are encouraged to work together to achieve successful personalised pathways for the people they care for and support. The PSN programme also features bi-monthly Network Catch-ups where participants work together, increasing local intelligence while supporting them to make informed decisions. The PSN Summits meanwhile are designed to facilitate discussions between service users and providers - with invited specialist speakers in health and social care - via participatory and/or practical workshops. Recent PSN workshops, training sessions and forums have focused on the following key issues: Mental Capacity and Decision Making; Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance; Advocacy and Independent Representation; Positive Behaviour Support (PBS); Personal Independent Payments (PiP); Preparing for Adulthood and Personalised Pathways for individuals with complex needs.

Evaluation questionnaires were delivered to parents, carers and/or support workers to investigate the impacts of the Peer Support Network upon themselves and/or their wider families. Respondents included 18 parents, five PA/support workers and four health and/or social care professionals, with questions once again closely aligned to the overarching aims of PROPEL and the PSN.

- When asked about the main issues/needs faced by the person supported, respondents reported 'isolation' (11%), 'lack of appropriate and/or specialist services' (15%) and more significantly for PAW's PROPEL programme, 'access to group activities' (74%)
- Asked to rate these issues and/or needs, all three were rated as 'important' or 'very important', with 78% respondents noting 'isolation', 85% respondents noting 'access to group activities' and all respondents (100%) noting 'lack of appropriate support' were of primary importance.

The questionnaire then asked PSN members 'what impact does attending PAW/PROPEL's PSN events and activities have upon you and the person you support?' As described below and in Figure 4.3 (over), responses were extremely positive regarding the assistance and advocacy provided by the PSN:

- Asked whether the PSN 'provides access to information/services' for the person supported, 70% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 22% 'agreed'; 4% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' and 4% 'disagreed'
- Asked whether the PSN 'reduces social isolation', 56% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 40% 'agreed'; for the remaining 4%, this question was not applicable
- Asked whether the PSN 'improves members' skills and expertise', 60% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 33% 'agreed'; the remaining 7% 'neither agreed nor disagreed'
- Asked whether the PSN 'increases members' confidence and self-esteem', 70% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 30% 'agreed'
- Asked whether the PSN 'increases members' coping mechanisms', 52% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 30% 'agreed'; the remaining 18% 'neither agreed nor disagreed'
- Asked whether the PSN 'improves whole family resilience', 41% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 40% 'agreed'; the remaining 15% 'neither agreed nor disagreed'
- Asked whether the PSN 'gives members a greater understanding of how to plan for the future', 56% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 18% 'agreed'; 18% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' and 4% 'disagreed'. For the remaining 4%, this question was not applicable.

Finally, PSN members were asked 'how does PAW meet your needs and/or the needs of the person you support?' As described in Figure 4.4 (over), responses once again suggested PAW's programmes - including the PSN - are meeting the needs of the majority of parents/carers and support workers:

- Asked whether 'support received from PAW is personalised to their needs', 52% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 36% 'agreed'; 4% 'neither agreed nor disagreed', 4% 'disagreed' and for the remaining 4%, this question was not applicable
- Asked whether they 'felt in control of the services received from PAW', 44% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 33% 'agreed'; 11% 'neither agreed nor disagreed', 4% 'disagreed' and for the remaining 8%, this question was not applicable
- Asked if 'the people at PAW genuinely care about the individual(s) they support', 78% respondents 'strongly agreed' and 18% 'agreed'; the remaining 4% 'neither agreed nor disagreed'.

Figure 4.3 PROPEL: outcomes for PSN members

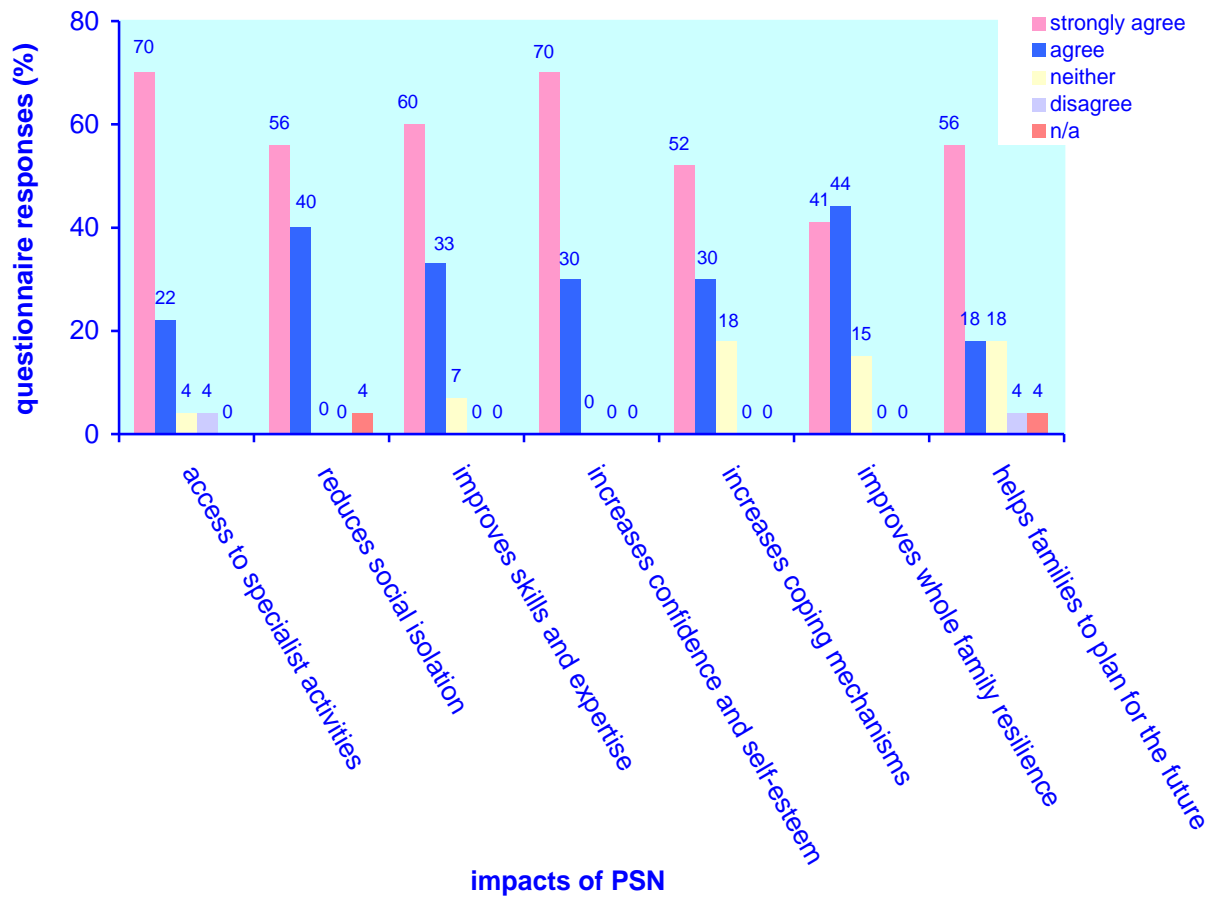
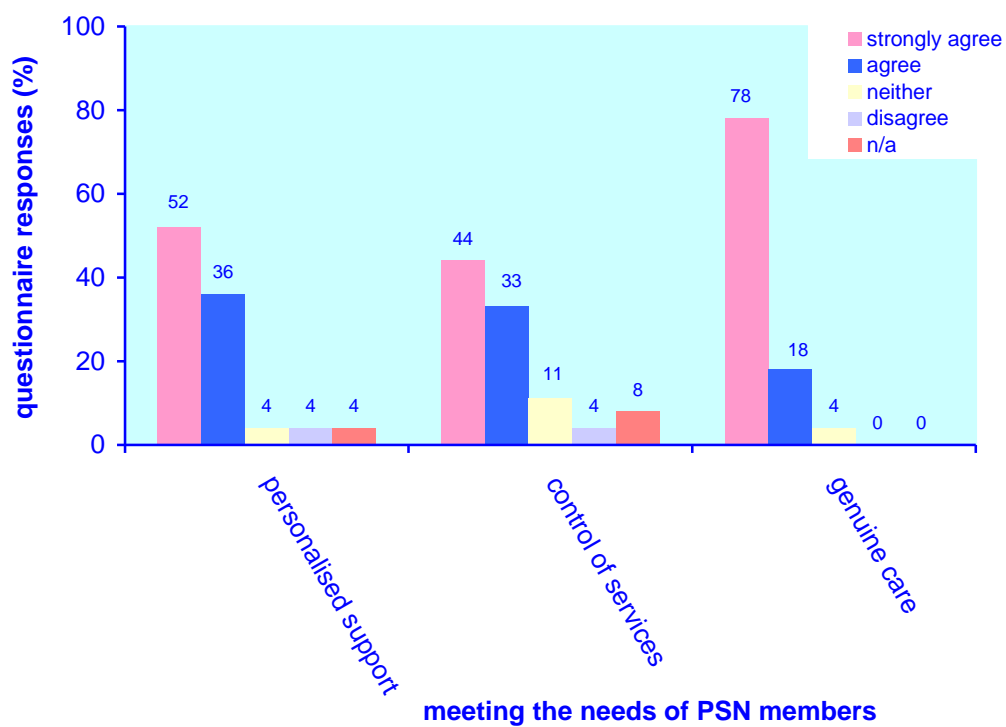


Figure 4.4 PROPEL: meeting the needs of PSN members



4.3 Supporting artists and volunteers

The PAW programme delivery team is highly experienced in bridging contemporary art and social care. PAW's Director, Kate Adams MBE, is a visual artist and has extensive experience of running a highly respected personalised provision for her son (34 years) who is profoundly disabled. Her experience as a parent/carer is central to the organisation's responsive and informed approach. Tim Corrigan is an artist filmmaker with extensive experience of video production. He has worked with children and adults with severe neurological impairments on projects for PAW since 1998. He oversees the creative development of PAW's programmes, working closely with artist teams, participants and families.

Katie Taylor is PROPEL's new Creative Programme Manager - following the departure of Matthew Pitts - and is responsible for conducting extensive consultation with artist teams, project participants, support workers and families in order to deliver a truly coherent and inclusive creative programme. Jane Caley meanwhile is the Community Networks Coordinator (temporary maternity cover for Esther Springett), designing and delivering all Peer Support Network (PSN) activities and events, while also consulting with education, health and social care professionals across the region.

An experienced specialist artist leads each project and as PAW's work develops, the pool of specialist artists needed expands. PROPEL has already provided opportunities to train new artists broadening a 'bank' of those with a socially engaged practice. With the current changes in economic landscape, there has been an increased demand for cross sector partnership working, expertise that is being developed as part of PROPEL. The project has also encouraged PAW to increase its annual number of volunteers from 7 to 15. All of PROPEL's delivering artists and support workers are now offered training in specialist techniques, i.e. Positive Behaviour Support; Person Centred Active Support; Total Communication.

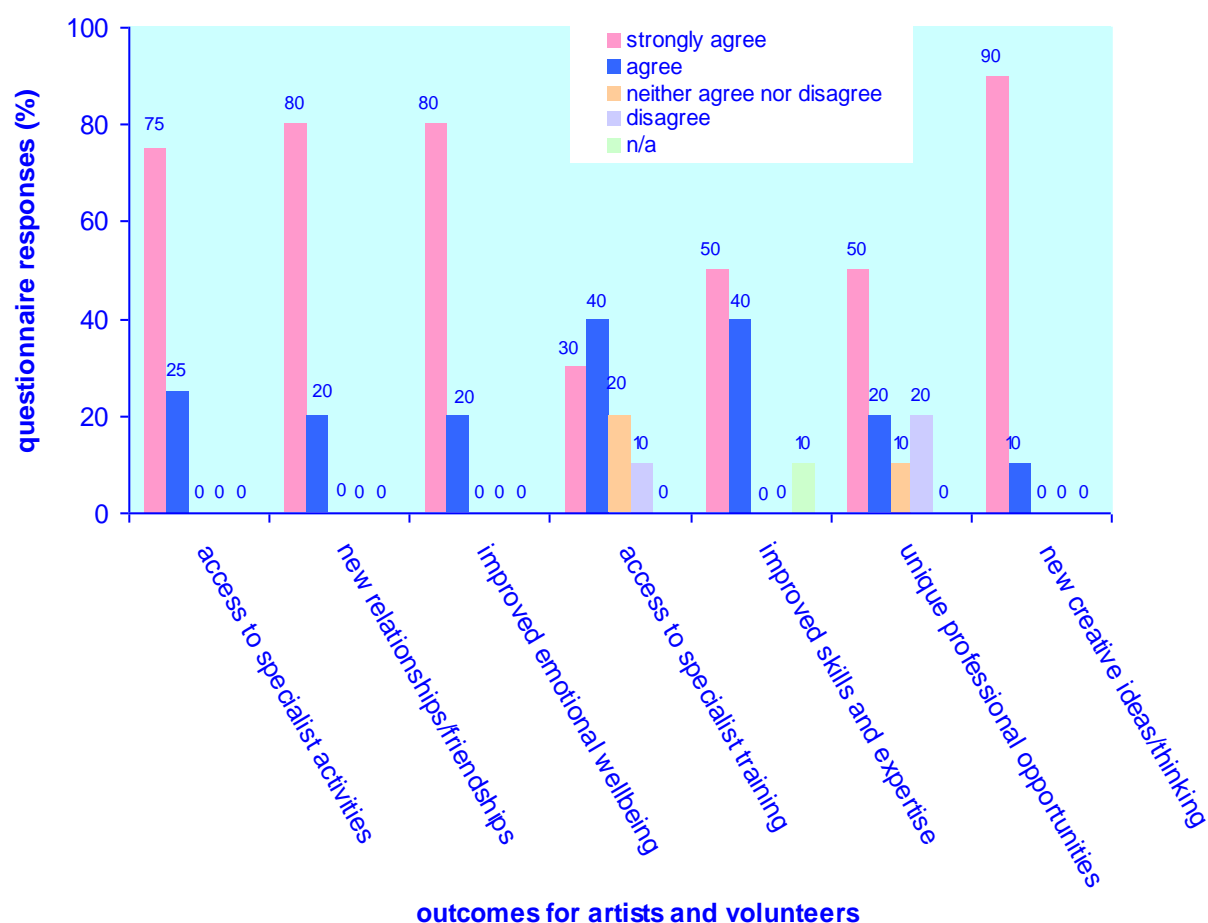
Evaluation questionnaires were delivered to PROPEL's supporting artists and volunteers to investigate the impacts of the project upon both themselves and those individuals with complex needs they work alongside. Respondents included ten artists/volunteers, with questions closely aligned to the overarching aims of PROPEL.

- When asked about the main issues/needs faced by the individuals they support, respondents reported 'isolation' (60%), 'lack of appropriate and/or specialist support' (30%) and more significantly for PAW's PROPEL programme, 'access to group activities' (10%)
- Asked to rate these issues and/or needs, all three were rated as 'very important' or 'important', with 50% respondents noting 'isolation', 60% respondents noting 'access to group activities' and 50% respondents noting 'lack of appropriate support' were of primary importance.

The questionnaire then asked artists and volunteers ‘what impact does working with PAW have upon you and/or your own professional practice?’ As described below and in Figure 4.5, responses were extremely positive for those individual artists/volunteers working with PAW in delivering PROPEL:

- Asked whether working with PROPEL ‘builds new relationships/friendships’, 80% respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 20% ‘agreed’
- Asked whether working with PROPEL ‘improves emotional wellbeing’, 80% respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 20% ‘agreed’
- Asked whether working with PROPEL ‘provides access to specialist training’, 30% respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 40% ‘agreed’; 20% ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’ and the remaining 10% ‘disagreed’
- Asked whether working with PROPEL ‘improves skills and expertise’, 50% respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 40% ‘agreed’; for the remaining 10%, this question was ‘not applicable’
- Asked whether working with PROPEL ‘provides unique professional opportunities’, 50% respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 20% ‘agreed’; 10% ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’ and the remaining 20% ‘disagreed’
- Finally, asked whether working with PROPEL ‘stimulates new creative ideas and/or thinking’, 90% ‘strongly agreed’ and 10% ‘agreed’.

Figure 4.5 PROPEL: outcomes for artists and volunteers





5 Learning

Findings suggest PROPEL 2018-9 resulted in benefits for the larger majority of stakeholders, including i.e. individuals with complex needs, their families and support workers; delivering artists and volunteers; health and social care professionals. This second brief interim evaluation has also resulted in valuable insights to assist the forward planning of PROPEL in its third year. The following learning outcomes are for consideration by PAW in order to assist the processes of reflection, discussion and development. This section aims to raise those issues deemed most important, in supporting the next phase of PROPEL. Data collected via internal monitoring, evaluation questionnaires and on site interviews explored specific themes, with findings presented as follows:

- Programme strengths
- Programme challenges
- Programme learning
- Suggested developments.

5.1 Programme strengths

Data collected from the full range of stakeholders via interviews and evaluation questionnaires attests to the strengths of PAW's unique work and PROPEL more specifically. As described in Figure 5.1 below, PROPEL 2018-19 was once again noted to include a number of significant features which have contributed to both its successful delivery and continuing quality outcomes, e.g. multi-sensory, person centred programmes; enabling choice and independence; highly skilled and experienced practitioners; supporting whole family resilience.

Figure 5.1 Programme strengths

Multi-sensory, person centred programmes

"On a very basic level, having a space where people can be creative and messy makes quite a big difference. That's good for X because he knows that if he drops something or makes a mess, it's not a big deal here. Everyone is equipped to be patient and kind no matter what. It's also about the history of the people. He is working with Y at the moment and has developed a particular connection with them. It's very much an intuitive and non-verbal connection and there is something quite profound about it. Several of us have witnessed and commented on it."

Enabling choice and independence

"It's such a brilliant way for my daughter to express herself. She clearly likes making art and to a great extent, it's unique to her. She has 'eye gaze' which has been out of action for a while - which is frustrating - but we had got to the stage where she was choosing her own colours and so on. That has been brilliant in enabling that level of independence and choice. Ultimately, she relies on everybody else for everything and so, if the people she engages with try to help her make her own choices, that is really important."

Highly skilled and experienced practitioners

"The staff at PAW don't make assumptions about what a person is or isn't capable of. You can go to many other projects where it does feel like this is a space for disabled people but they don't really give them any credit as being individuals. They don't consider that these individuals might have any thought processes themselves, that often goes hand in hand with the misunderstanding of people who are non-verbal. It's often assumed that because X doesn't speak, she has no thought processes. She most certainly does!"

Supporting whole family resilience

"I came along today because the PSN provides something quite unique for parents and carers. For me, coming here and being with other parents in a similar situation is so important. In many ways, I attach that 'feel good' factor to this time. It provides me with a space to reflect and to breathe. All of a sudden, that emotional and physical load I'm carrying when I arrive has been lifted. I am still aware of it but it has been lifted for a short time. You feel that there are no constraints upon you here. You can flow, move in and out of the discussion, say whatever you want to say without judgement."

5.2 Programme challenges

In addition to those aforementioned strengths, as with other comparable projects comprising a range of stakeholders and a wide diversity of participants with specific needs, PROPEL experienced certain challenges during its second year of delivery. As described in Figure 5.2 below, key issues over the past months appeared to be focused upon: engaging new families in PSN events; coping with challenges in families' lives; communication across artist teams; meeting families' diverse needs and expectations.

Figure 5.2 Programme challenges

Engaging new families in PSN

"The individuals and families we support have very complex lives and often aren't able to find time to attend our PSN sessions, or engage in dialogue about how we could make the sessions more accessible for them. It's often the same faces or very small numbers attending. However, those who do attend derive a lot of benefit and a summary of each event is shared with all other network members, so hopefully those benefits extend beyond direct attendees."

Coping with challenges in families' lives

"There seems to be an increase in the strain upon families that then finds its way into the studio. Both the studio programmes - more especially Parachute Club and Activate - and the core team then field emotional exchanges from families and carers who are very often at the edge of coping. This can tip into areas of counselling that we are not all equipped for."

Communication across artist teams

"Despite being a small team working in the same space and having regular meetings, it often feels like there is lack of clarity about what is happening/has been happening at Project Art Works in general. This is probably in part due to the part-time nature of many people's roles meaning there is limited crossover, which means sudden changes are made to existing plans, or decisions often happen at the last minute."

Meeting families' needs and expectations

"My only comment would be around the summer holiday break. We are having seven weeks away from PAW for the summer and that is hard for us. Two months is a long time for the participants. They don't understand and they find it a bit unsettling, then you've got quite a lot to make up for when you start up again. Perhaps there are some people here who are able to do other things, but for X, there is very little that she can be a part of. It's good for everyone to have a break - staff as well as the users - it's just that seven weeks is a very long time for us."

5.3 Programme learning

Through its unique creative programmes and professional training days, PROPEL has enabled those participants with complex needs, their parents and carers, PAW's artist teams and volunteers to develop valuable new skills and learning. As described in Figure 5.3 below, learning outcomes reported by PAW's supporting artists, volunteers and wider team included: the importance of external validation for artists' work; the wealth of skills and experience held within the team; the importance of appropriate volunteer support; a recognition of diverse programme needs, impacting upon capacity and delivery; a recognition of the need to support staff mental health and wellbeing.

Figure 5.3 Programme learning

Importance of external validation

"I feel that there has been a real shift this year, with looking at artist development and encouragement around submissions. There has been a real focus on putting individuals with a specific practice forward for competitions like the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize. Through these submissions, we are raising confidence in individuals work and a wider awareness around neurodiverse artists."

Staff skills and experience

"The photography project challenged participants and artists alike, contributing to our creative development. With Georgie coming in on the project – sharing her particular skillset – it reminded us that there are many 'specialists' who work at PAW. This initiative provided new and exciting opportunities to learn from each other."

Value of volunteer support

"We had a volunteer for a short time who properly understood paint and who helped us prep the studio at the start of the day, which made that tight time schedule/rush less stressful. He was like a technician volunteer who also understood the subtleties and sensitivities of the participants we were working with."

Capacity and delivery

"Due to the amount of work happening externally with EXPLORERS, we haven't held as many internal exhibitions in Arch 1 this year. These exhibitions have proved to be a celebration of our artists work and can be a real moment for those artists who don't put forward so much for exhibitions externally. They are also a great way to connect the circles of support around our artists."

Supporting staff wellbeing

We have instigated a wellbeing programme - with core artists and team members - involving a group conversation every six weeks or so and facilitated by a psychoanalytical psychotherapist who is very experienced in working with organisational teams. We had one facilitated session in July and will meet again in October. This has provided an opportunity to share information and preoccupations with work across the studios and office, revealing some very interesting experiences and insights.

5.4 Suggested developments

In addition to describing those strengths and challenges reported during the delivery of PROPEL 2018-19, participants were asked for suggested changes and/or improvements in future phases of the project. As described in Figure 5.4 below, suggested developments included: improved channels of communication across PAW team, PSN members, artists, families and support workers; improved management and maintenance of studio resources; a buddying scheme for families in need of support; recognising the value of consulting with families regarding PAW's wider capital developments.

Figure 5.4 Suggested developments

Channels of communication

"We need to be communicating more with families and support workers to make sure they are more connected to the studio. There have been a couple of incidences where new members didn't understand the work we are doing or its value. This resulted in artists and makers missing sessions, as their studio days weren't given priority. We also need to improve on communications going home with artists. Perhaps a regular newsletter or more open studios, including exhibitions that celebrate all artists' work and engage with stakeholders."

Management of studios

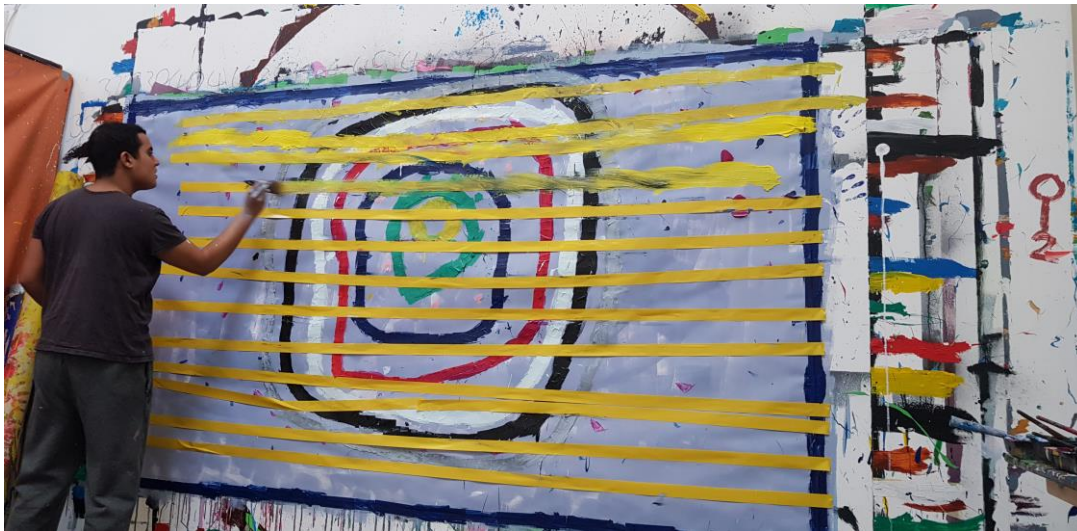
"The studio spaces have been stretched to capacity this year. With new teams and artists who may not be aware of activities that precede or follow their days, the organisation and maintenance of materials and equipment can be hard to manage and there is much chaos in all areas of storage. This is a core problem and one which we are aware of. It perhaps requires a strong lead and also a new role of studio manager. We are discussing this as a team."

Buddying scheme for families

"It would be really helpful to have a buddying scheme for when you have to attend those tricky meetings with health or social care professionals. Although there are those organisations set up to act as advocates, they are often quite difficult to access and there is a long waiting list. Often you need it immediately, when there is a crisis or similar and there isn't anything for that. Even just someone who could help you to put things in perspective and tell you that it will all be okay. Or you need someone to come with you, just so that they hear what is being said and can take notes if your mind is a bit all over the place."

Consultation with families

"With the PAW architects in mind, they need to be aware of the space needed for adult wheelchairs, which are really large these days. They need to consider all of the potential equipment people might need and provide adequate space for that. The physical considerations are so important in terms of accessibility but also, it's really important not to make it 'too disabled' if you see what I mean? So access is just part of the fabric of the place, less like a hospital and more like a gallery or studio space. It might cost a bit more money in the short term but that's what is needed."



6 Recommendations

- PAW is recommended to share the findings of this evaluation report with all delivering team members and other stakeholders in order to: discuss the inputs, outputs, impacts and learning outcomes from PROPEL 2018-19; acknowledge financial and in-kind support; celebrate shared achievements; refine aims and objectives of PROPEL and PAW's wider work in 2020 and beyond.
- PAW is recommended to take account of those individual factors contributing to the positive outcomes of PROPEL 2018-19 (i.e. the delivery of multi-sensory, person centred programmes; activities enabling participant choice and independence; the recruitment of highly skilled and experienced practitioners; the importance of external validation for artists' work via exhibitions and events; the wealth of skills and experience held within and across the PAW team), thereby ensuring the successful delivery of PROPEL and PAW's wider work in 2020 and beyond.
- PAW is advised to take account of those developments suggested by participants and deliverers for the next phase of PROPEL (e.g. improved channels of communication across PAW team, PSN members, artists, families and support workers; new opportunities for PROPEL artists to exhibit their work, both regionally and nationally; ensuring the maintenance and management of studio resources; continuing provision for supporting team members' health and wellbeing; a buddying scheme for families in need of support; consultation with families regarding PAW's wider capital programme developments), maximising the potential benefits of PROPEL, while supporting all future initiatives developed by PAW.
- PAW is recommended to begin investigating the means for sharing the eventual impacts and learning outcomes from PROPEL 2017-20 across the wider arts, health and social care sectors through e.g. further exhibitions of PAW: PROPEL artists and/or artworks in community settings; journal papers, publications and conference presentations with a focus upon improved health and wellbeing for individuals with complex needs.



7 Summary and conclusions

This second interim evaluation has examined the inputs, outputs and outcomes of PROPEL 2018-19, as experienced by participants and delivered by Project Art Works (PAW). The findings have once again revealed many positive outcomes resulting from this unique programme, for those individuals and families engaging with PROPEL. This brief evaluation has also reported valuable learning outcomes and recommendations, to support potential improvements and developments of PROPEL in 2019-20 and beyond. The programme has achieved the aims and objectives established by PAW in its second year, as approved by the Big Lottery Fund.

PROPEL 2018-19 has resulted in benefits for the full range of stakeholders, including i.e. individuals with complex needs; their parents, carers and support workers; PAW's delivering artists; health and social care professionals. As described in this report, outcomes for participants with complex needs described in this report include: access to specialist activities; increased choice and flexibility; reduced social isolation; improved emotional wellbeing. For members of the now established Peer Support Network (PSN) meanwhile, outcomes include: access to information and services; increased confidence and self-esteem; reduced social isolation; improved 'whole family' resilience. Finally, outcomes for PROPEL's delivering artists and volunteers evidenced by the evaluation include: continuing professional development; increased knowledge and understanding; sharing skills and expertise; the stimulation of further creative activity.

In its second year, the successful delivery of this groundbreaking and far reaching programme has undoubtedly been due to the shared vision, energy and commitment of all PROPEL programme team members, with support from PAW's wider staff team and volunteers. As PAW extends PROPEL alongside its new and diverse ventures, time should now be taken to discuss the achievements of PROPEL during the past two years, prior to moving forward in the most sustainable manner for all involved.