

SOUNDING CONFLICT: FROM RESISTANCE TO RECONCILIATION

MUSICIANS WITHOUT BORDERS

MUSIC BRIDGE AND TRAINING OF TRAINERS 2017 REPORT

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PART I

Musicians without Borders, Music Bridge Programme (April and May 2017) Research Report

1.1 Research Overview

This report is in two parts covering a period across seven months' training with Musicians without Borders in Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. The research aims in Part I to understand the short and long-term effects of the Musicians without Borders' Music Bridge training programme on participants who were undertaking the 2017 programme in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Part II engages with the international Musicians without Borders' training in Ede, the Netherlands, which is a 'pedagogical level' above the Music Bridge training programme. Five of the participants at the Training of Trainers programme were also involved with the Music Bridge training in Derry/Londonderry (from across the three Year groups). Three surveys were compiled and administered on four occasions in collaboration with, and at the request of, Musicians without Borders as part of the PaCCS funded Queen's University Belfast four year project, Sounding Conflict: From Resistance to Reconciliation (2017-2021). The research was conducted by Prof. Fiona Magowan (Principal Investigator) and Dr Jim Donaghey (Research Fellow) during two sessions of the Mwb training programme 'Music Bridge' in Derry/Londonderry (1-5 April and 20-24 May 2017) and by Dr Donaghey at the 'Training of Trainers' programme in Ede (23-28 October 2017). The Music Bridge surveys sought to examine the development of creativity as well as trainees' senses of personal and interpersonal relationships to place and community music-making practices in Northern Ireland and international participatory contexts. The surveys sought to assess the extent of the effects of Mwb's training through their principles of 'equality, safety, creativity, inclusion and quality' (Mwb Curriculum Guide 2017) by asking about:

- a). perceptions of peace and applications of nonviolence in creative practice during and post Mwb training.
- b). the programme's effects upon trainees' perceptions of its wider role in relation to the arts in Northern Ireland.
- c). broader socio-economic, political and infrastructure dynamics including the impact of the arts past and present in creating safe and peaceful communities.

These issues are also at the heart of the concerns that Musicians without Borders are examining in other cultural settings, as articulated in their Theory of Change (see Appendices A and B). The surveys further complement and provide new data for Musicians without Borders' training evaluations, revealing the comparative development of trainees in two different year groups (Years 1 and 2 April 2017) and across two periods of training (Year 1 cohort only between the April and May 2017 training periods). This report also analyses the survey findings of the Training of Trainers programme conducted by Dr Donaghey in Ede, the Netherlands, as well as comparing the findings from the two training contexts.

1.2 Methodology

The MwB facilitation programme comprises four blocks of training across each year, with three levels (Year 1 and Year 2 are discussed here). Our research with Musicians without Borders in Derry/Londonderry took place across two fieldwork periods of the third and fourth training sessions in April and May 2017. Surveys were carried out in conjunction with semi-structured interviews with each of the participants, though information from the interviews is not included here. In each case, information on participants' age range, gender, employment circumstances and nationality was collected. Surveys were completed anonymously and voluntary participation in the project followed informed consent guidelines with the right to withdraw at any time. In April 2017, the training of Years 1 and 2 ran consecutively across five days, with one day of overlap between the two groups. Year 1 completed four days' training and Year 2, two days. Seven Year 1 participants and four Year 2 participants completed surveys. There were five women and two men in Year 1 and two men and two women in Year 2. The surveys covered trainees from a range of nationalities (from Australasia, Europe and the UK), with a higher proportion of women than men overall. The April survey comprised thirty-five questions and it was administered to both Year 1 and Year 2 participants at this time. Questions 5, 28 and 29 asked each participant to rank their answers on a score of 1-6. This ranking of importance has been represented on the charts numerically, with 1 being the least important and 6 the most important.¹ **These rankings are also displayed in the cumulative charts, but in these cases the numerical ranking becomes arbitrary and so has been removed from the y-axes – the comparative aspect of these charts remains informative however, and is indicated from 'least' to 'most'**. Questions 10-12 considered the ease of attending the course and participants' recommendations for the programme. Moving beyond the direct impacts of the programme on their learning, the latter part of the survey considered participants' views of its relevance to the arts in Northern Ireland more widely, with questions (22-29) on the benefits of music for peacebuilding and promoting nonviolence. The final part of the survey (30-35) reflected upon the nature of sound and music in improving senses of safety and relationship to place and peacebuilding. Question 35 asked participants to circle all options that apply. (Question 17 was designed to examine visual responses to emotion through an emotion curve. The analysis is not included in this report, though see Magowan 2017).

In May 2017, at the end of the fourth and final training programme, we conducted a survey with Year 1s only. We surveyed the same cohort as in April, though only five of seven were able to take the survey (two had to leave the programme early before the survey took place). The May survey was shorter than that in April, comprising eight key questions that we had found most beneficial from participants' responses in the April training programme. Thus, in this second, revised survey, questions were reduced from thirty-five, with four questions remaining the same. These are Questions 1a, 5a, 6a and 7a (see May Survey A below). Our findings follow, firstly, transformations **within the third session of the Year 1 Music Bridge programme**, secondly, **between the third and fourth sessions** and, thirdly, **between the Year 1 and Year 2 cohort**. In each example below, the same information is compiled in two charts. The first chart illustrates the range of individual

¹ The survey ranking stated '1' as being the most important down to '6' as least important. However, for ease of visual analysis, the numerical ranking is reversed in the charts throughout, i.e. a top ranking of 1 is given the numerical value '6', second place ranking is given '5', third is '4', fourth is '3', fifth is '2' and sixth placed ranking is given a value of '1'. 'No answer' is given a value of zero.

responses, while the second chart represents the cumulative totals of ranking across different options.

2. Analysis of Findings

2.1 Transformations within Year 1 Session Three, 2-5 April 2017, Survey A

The April 2017 Year 1 training cohort reported that they had all taken part in arts or music programmes or projects previously, although none had been involved with MwB before they began the Music Bridge programme. Questions 1-4 asked about participants' involvement in this and previous programmes, as well as about the skills they acquired. All participants noted that they "loved" it, one commenting that "it's just amazing", responding that they had acquired new skills, ranking them on a scale of 1-6 as follows:

Year 1 Derry/Londonderry Training Programme

Q.5. Please rank the following skill areas by the degree to which they were developed within the programme. Creative, technical, performance, people skills, group facilitation skills or communication skills.

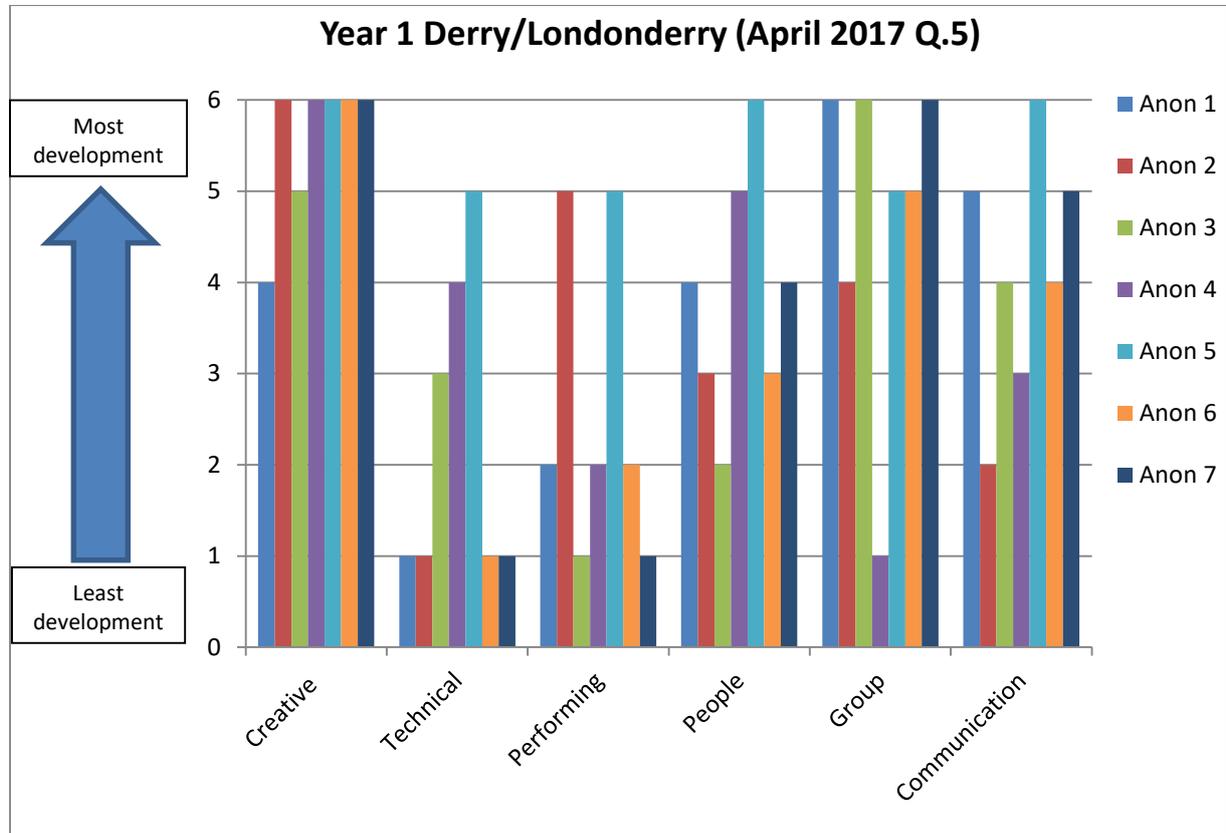


Fig 1.1 Q.5. Ranking of Skills, Year 1 April, Survey A



Fig. 1.2 Cumulative Ranking of Skills, Year 1 April, Survey A

Notably, in the breakdown of skills development above, **two-thirds of this Year 1 cohort in session three emphasised the creative element** of the programme as delivering the greatest skills enhancement. **Group facilitation skills** were seen as important² to all but one trainee who ranked it the lowest, while **people and communication skills** were also considered to have been developed to a relatively strong degree, in third and fourth place. Responses to both the **performing and technical aspects** of creative practice received the **least emphasis** in this training period by Year 1 students. Performing skills were also the most varied of the responses by trainees, with two participants rating them highly (5) and the other five participants rating them very low in development (1 or 2). One person also viewed technical skills development as important (5) but this category also had the most participants rating it as the lowest area of development. These variations may also indicate differences in musicality and music backgrounds of the trainees.

There is considerable variation among individual responses to this question, as indicated in the first chart above, which was further reflected in their responses to question 6. It asked participants what else they gained from taking part. Their answers included, recognising more “general leadership skills”, “more confidence in working with diverse groups, different ages and personalities, more patience and empathy”. Another participant noted how there was a transfer of skills within the group and that the programme offered “good networking opportunities”.

In response to Question 12, ‘Would you recommend the programme to other people?’, each of the participants variously noted that it would be beneficial for “**Other musicians** who want to work with children”; “**Personal growth** [in order] to better understanding of music making”; “For anyone interested in **teaching and or community work** [because of an] increase in creativity, in sharing joy and increasing empathy” and for “Anyone with musical abilities who works in **community arts or social services**” and “**youth leaders** in particular”.

All Year 1 session three participants are intending to employ these skills in their respective communities and creative contexts. Questions 6-9 explored this further. For example, in Question 7, ‘How might these skills help you/your group/your community?’, trainees reflected upon how their new skills might help them to organise workshops, to lead classes in theatre and the arts or in refugee centres. While one participant stressed the ability to engage more empathetically “in complex or difficult situations”, the others all viewed their transferable skills in more **practical terms**.

Distinctions that participants make between **emotional and applied outcomes** raise important questions about differences between their perceptions of **creative** (creativity, performing) over **practical skills** (group facilitation, communication, technical and people skills). However, there is the potential for further nuancing and clarification of these terms in the programme, as the distinction between creative and practical skills or emotional and applied outcomes should not be considered entirely separate categories. Creativity, for example, inheres in the ability to engage with and communicate effectively with other people and with groups, while emotional intelligence is important in delivering effective practice-led activities with behavioural, attitudinal or cultural change. A shift in participants’ understanding of this distinction appears to take place by Year 2 as outlined in section 3.

² Scores from 4 to 6 are taken here to be ranked as important, relative to the six-point scale.

Finding 1: Participants identified a range of benefits such as engaging with youth and social services and increasing personal fulfilment and development. Their responses allude to multiple, overlapping and diverse spaces of participatory capacity-building. This involves a range of personal and interpersonal transitions and emotional transformations, from “sharing joy” to “increasing empathy”.

2.2 Transformations across the Programme: Year 1 Session Two, May

In the fourth and final May training session for Year 1, we asked four of the same questions again to see what kinds of transformations had occurred between these two sessions. This cohort was smaller than April with five instead of seven respondents. There was **considerably greater consistency** in all areas among respondents to the question of the degree to which particular skills such as creativity, performing, technical, people and group facilitation were ranked, which may be influenced by the smaller group size.

Year 1 Derry/Londonderry May 2017 Survey B

Q1a. Please rank the following skill areas by the degree to which they were developed within the programme.

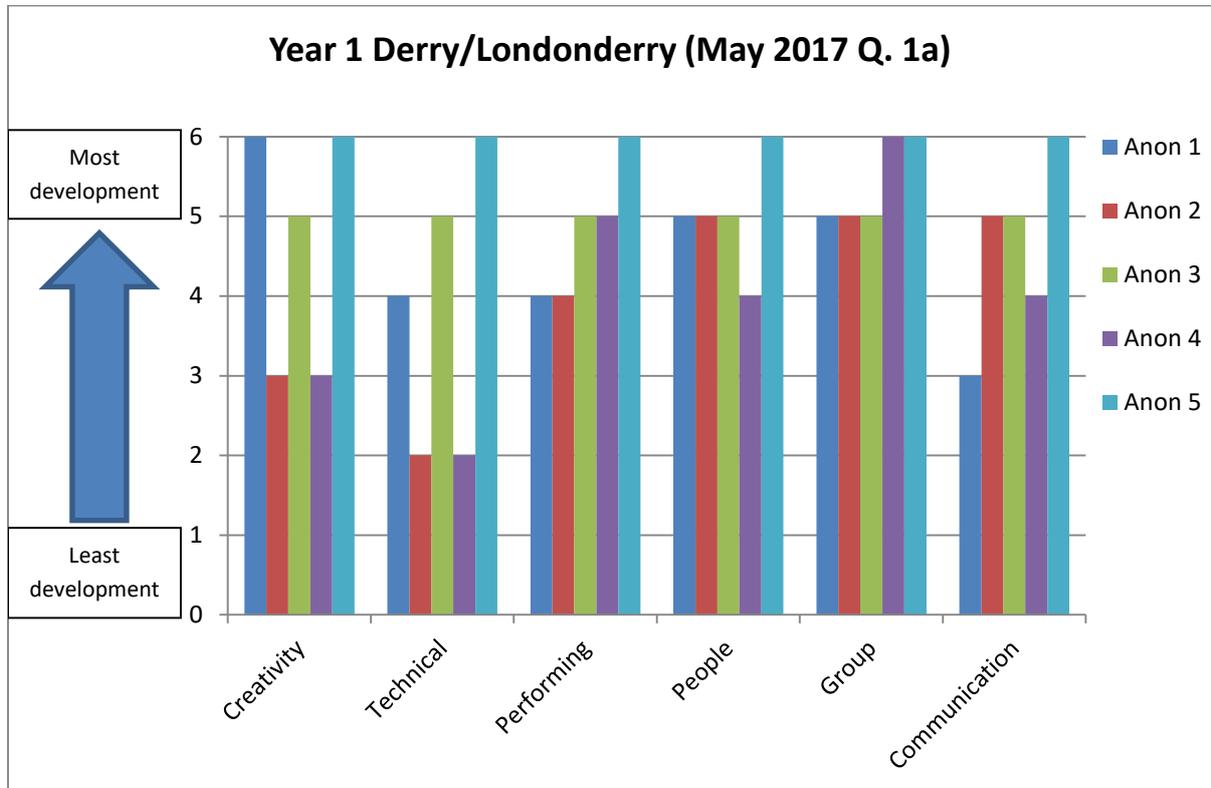


Fig. 2.1 Ranking of Skills, Year 1 May, Survey B

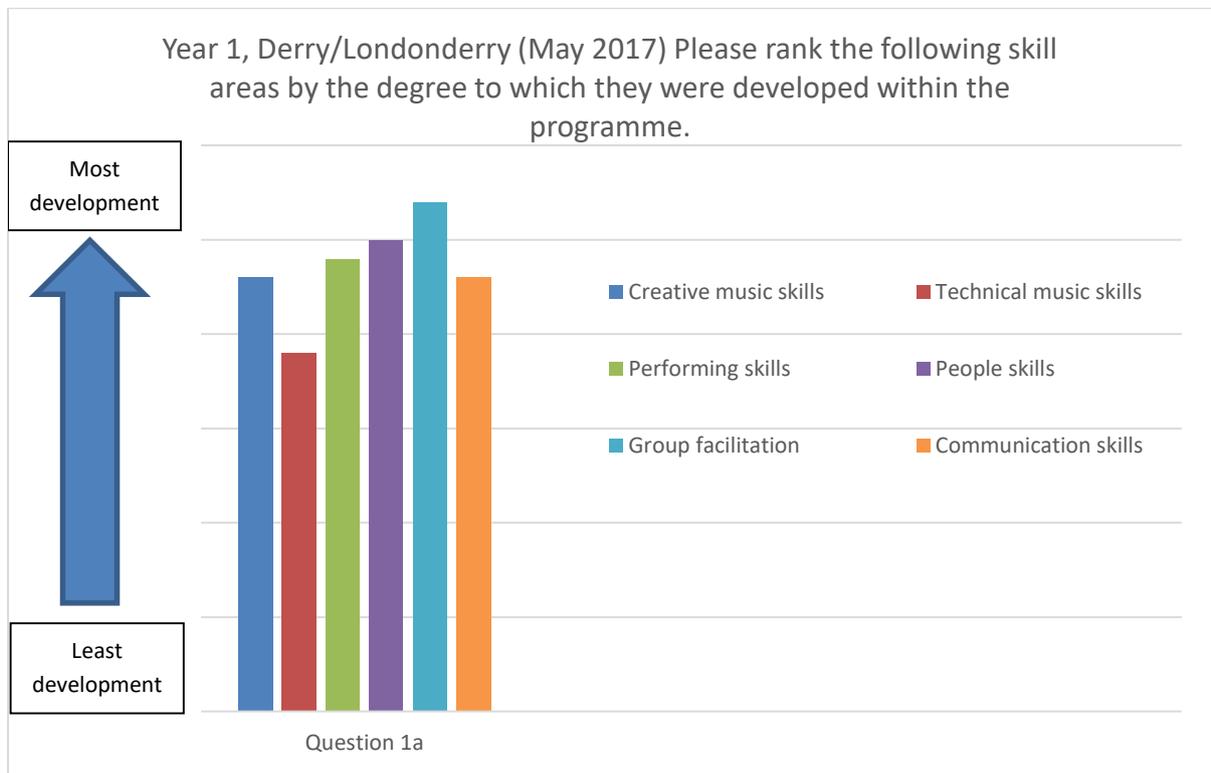


Fig. 2.2 Cumulative Ranking of Skills, Year 1, May, Survey B

In the fourth Year 1 session, **group facilitation** is more heavily emphasised than it was in session three, followed very closely by people and performance skills with creativity and communication only marginally lower. Technical skills remain the least important, though there is an increased emphasis in this area also. An emphasis on creativity has decreased significantly over the course of the two sessions. Two individuals however, still rated creativity most highly but this was not the case for performance or people skills.

In the Music Bridge programme over the course of three years, participants have the opportunity to explore facilitation through community arts activities, programmes and events. The effect of the MwB programme on Year 1 trainees outside of the training was ranked on the basis of whether it had impacted on their interest in attending various events and activities. Year 1 noted an **increased interest in education or training, they were more optimistic that individuals can make a difference and more hopeful for the future of their community**. There was little difference in the respondents' answers to these questions between the two sessions.

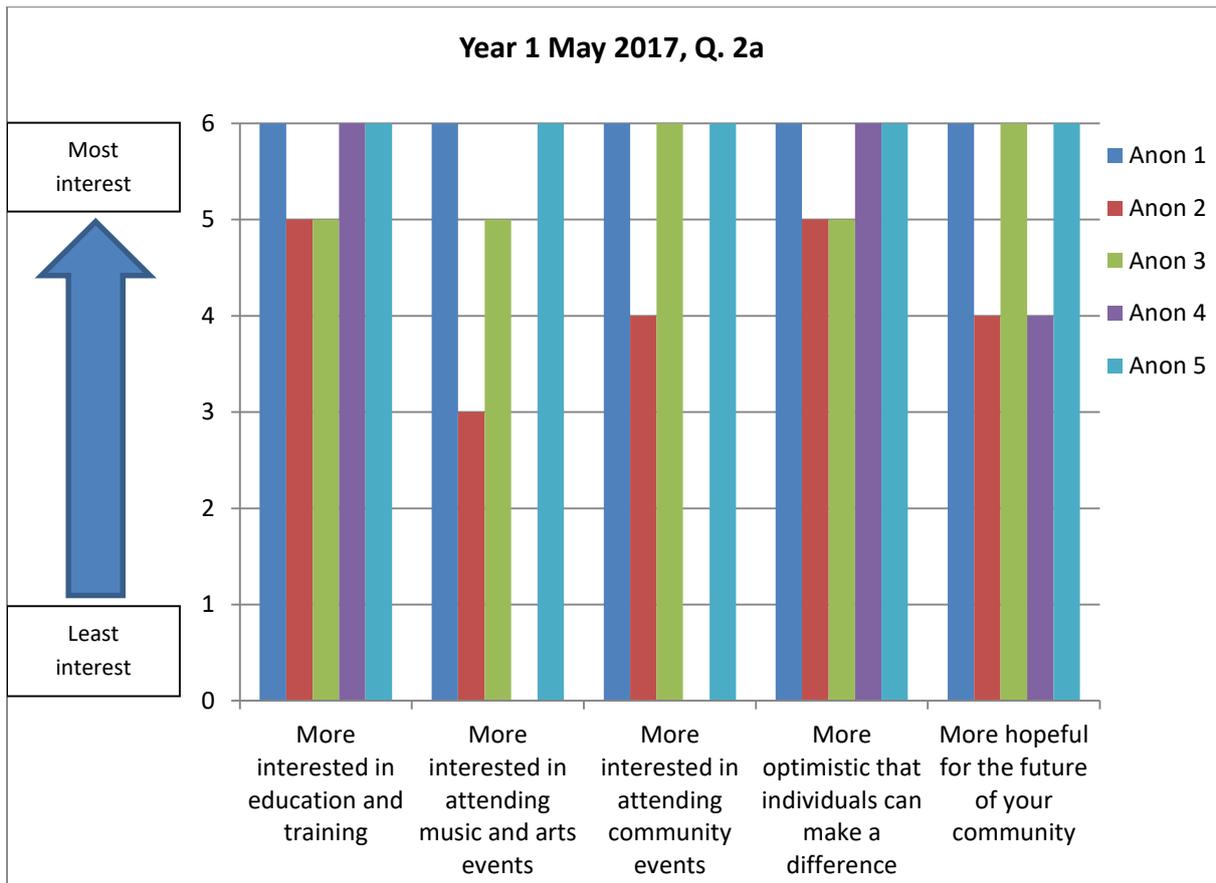


Fig. 2.3 Attendance at external activities, Year 1 May, Survey B

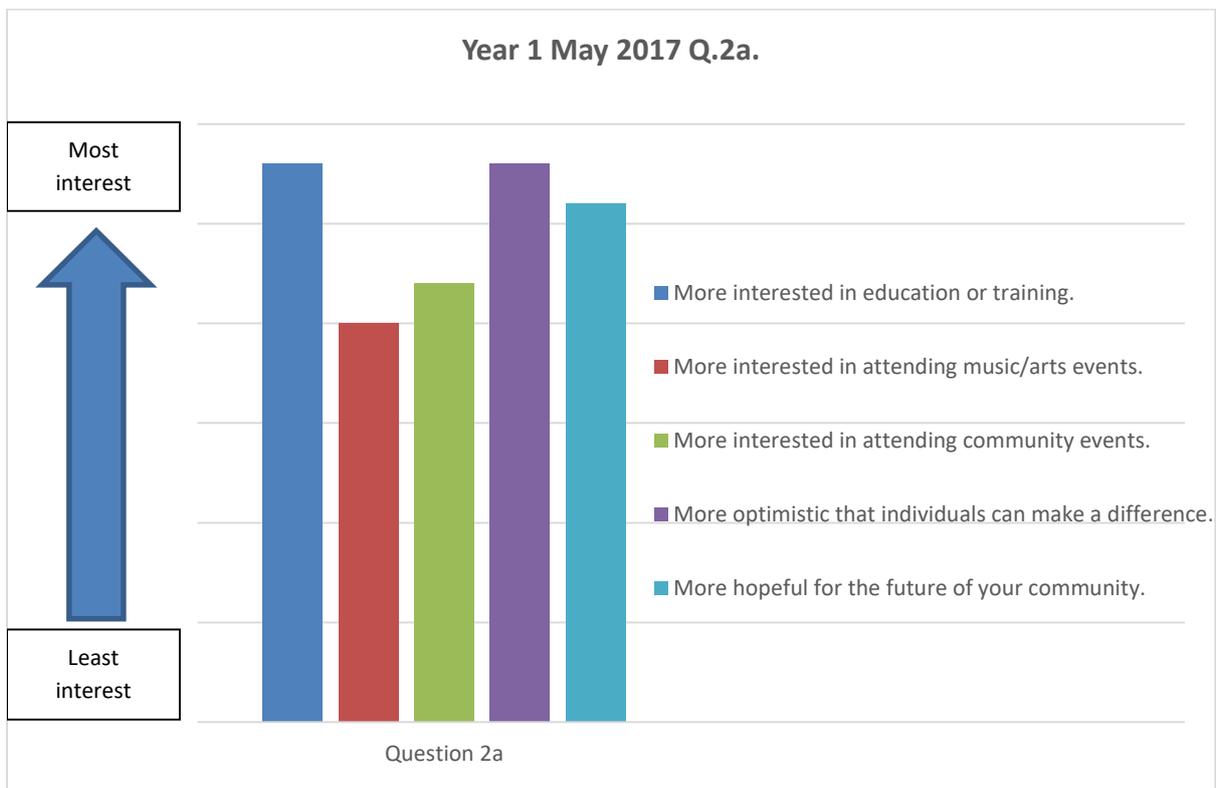


Fig 2.4 Attendance at external activities (cumulative), Year 1 May, Survey B

Finding 2: An incremental recognition of skills development across the board demonstrates a paradigm shift in learning and levels of comfort in nonverbal abilities between the third and fourth training sessions. It further confirms how MwB's holistic approach, beginning with an emphasis on creativity, is developed through group facilitation and peer practice (including school facilitation), increasing participants' engagement relatively evenly across each skillset.

3. Transformations between Year 1 and Year 2 in Skillsets

It is important to consider not only how training impacts upon trainees between sessions for the same cohort, but also between Year groups. To this end, we conducted surveys in April with four Year 2 participants – two men aged between 35 and 54 and two women aged between 45 and 64.³ In their responses below, it is noticeable that there is a clear difference between these year groups, with a demonstrable shift in the kinds of skills that are being emphasised by Year 2.

³ While the results illustrate differences between Year 1 and 2 in April 2017, the Year 2 were not surveyed during the May training, so it was not possible to conduct a follow up between the third and fourth training workshops with them. The comparisons between Year 1 and 2 are based only on the April programme.

Year 2 Derry/Londonderry Training Programme 1-2 April 2017, Survey A

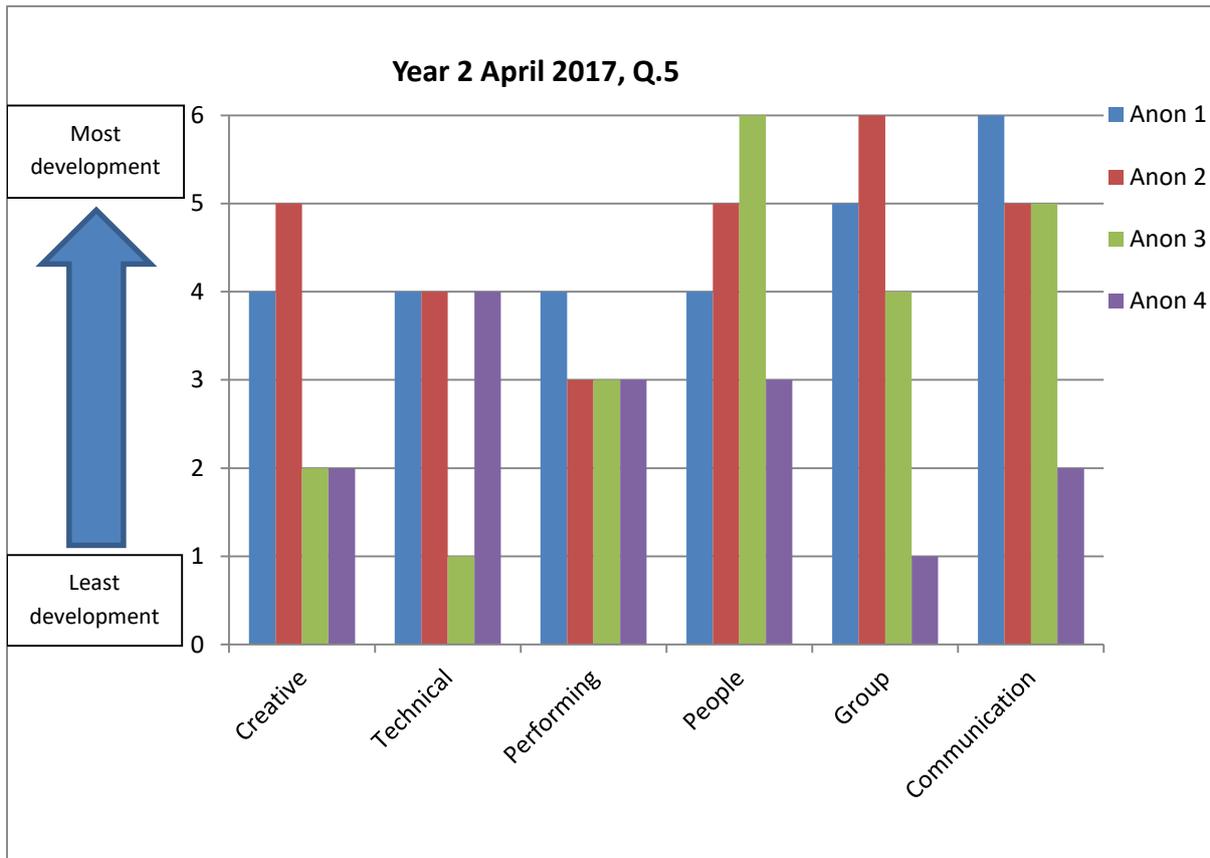


Fig. 3.1 Skills development, Year 2 April, Survey A

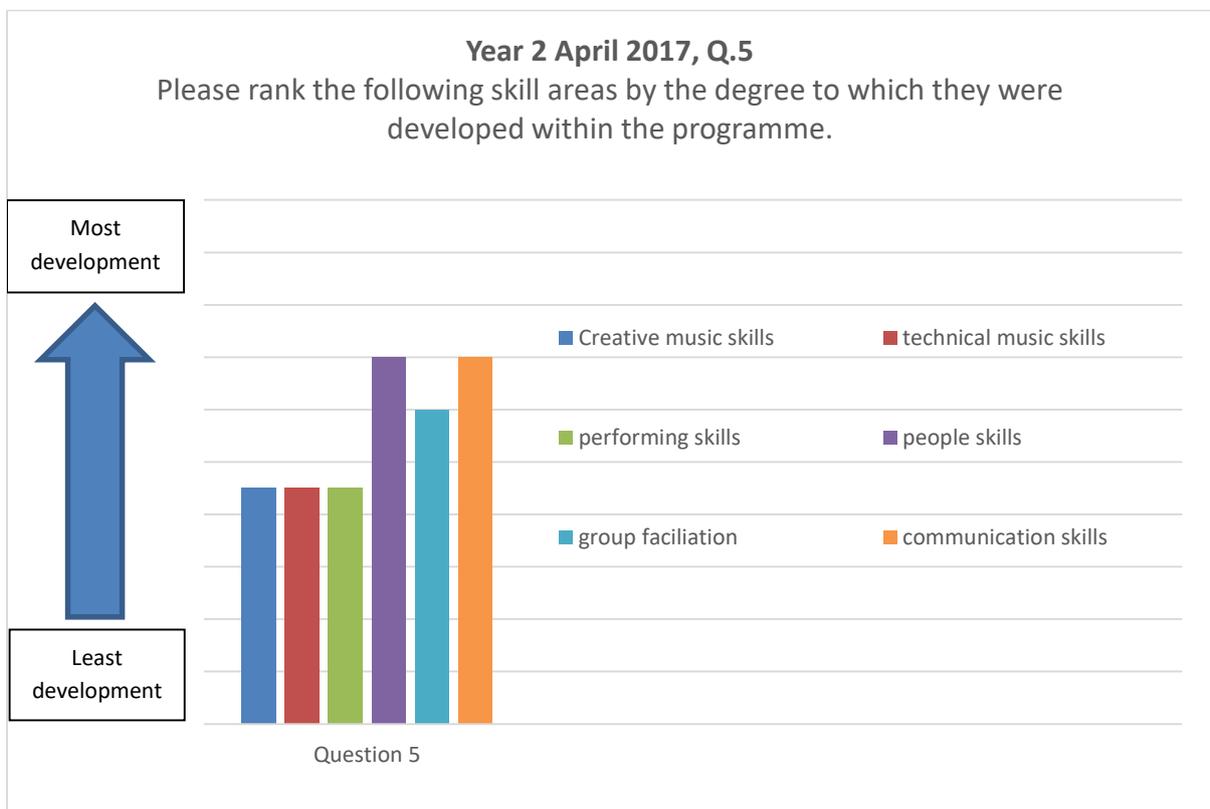


Fig. 3.2 Skills development (cumulative), Year 2 April, Survey A

People and communication skills were most important, with **group facilitation skills** strongly highlighted. For Year 2, technical skills are emphasised equally with performing and creative skills albeit at a lower level.

The programme challenged all of the Year 2s' senses of creativity. It helped one trainee to “**embrace the chaos** [which] is hard and challenging although necessary”. Another reported that the programme had “given me confidence to try new things with **less fear of failure**”. For another, “It has greatly enhanced my sense of creativity and motivation in new ways”. For the Year 2 cohort, they saw the benefits as impacting upon young people in NI and their own communities by “**growing and learning and stepping out of my comfort zone**” and by helping others to experience that growth in the same way.

Finding 3: A step change from a singular emphasis on creativity by the Year 1 cohort in the third training session to people skills for Year 2 trainees suggests significant development of particular skillsets over a twelve month period, as the course transitions from immersion and imaginative play in body movements, use of voice and familiarising participants with these learning techniques of facilitation, to an intuited and independent sense of facilitation that seeks to be outward-looking and captive of the reactions and interactions of those they are leading. The relative downplaying of creative elements in Year 2 is noteworthy as trainees consolidate other elements of interpersonal communication and establish their personal styles of nonverbal communication.

4. Impacts of the Music Bridge Training Programme on Peace in the Community

The survey continued to explore issues of peacebuilding in the community in Q. 28, What do you see as the most important aspect in maintaining peace in your community? The findings below are compared between the first and second year cohorts in the April training.

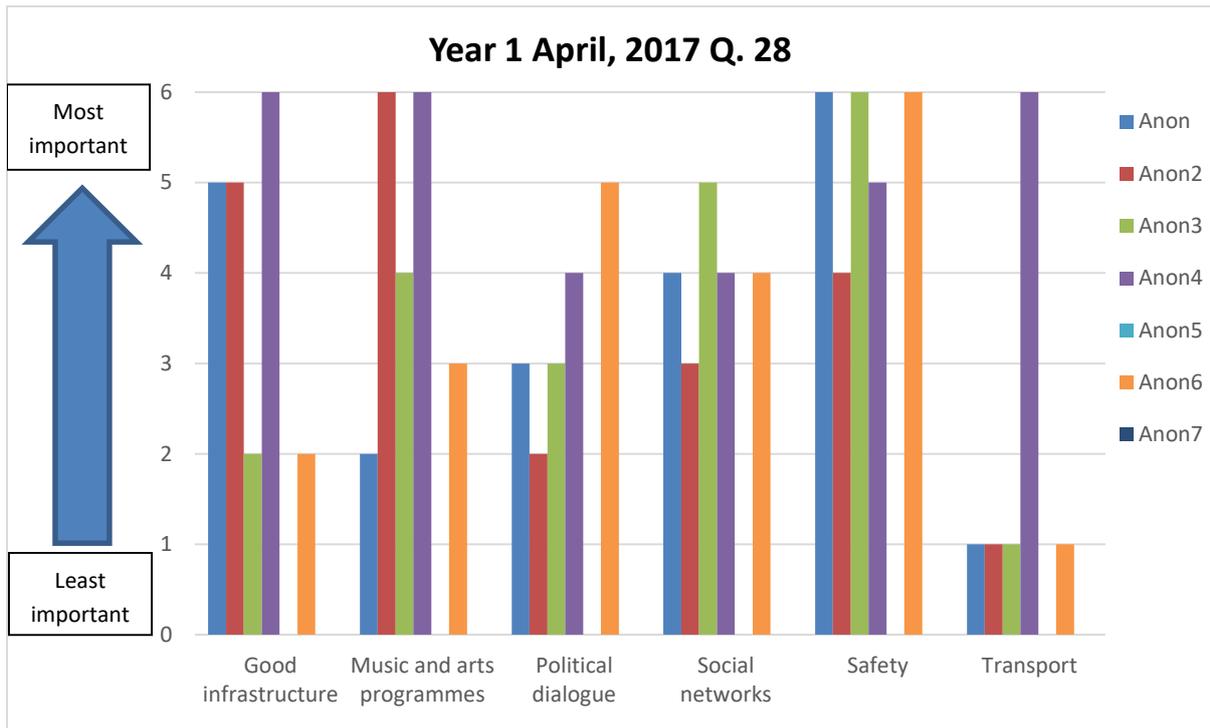


Fig. 4.1. Maintaining peace, Year 1 April, Survey A⁴

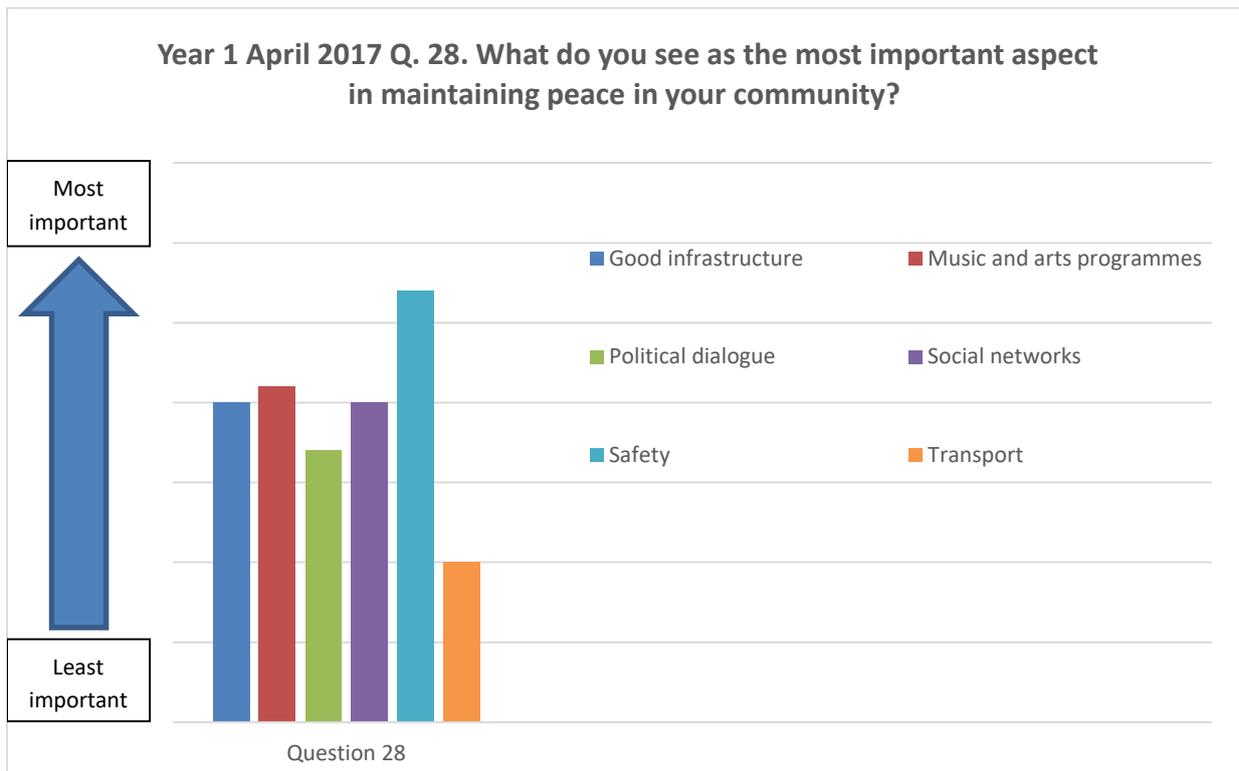


Fig. 4.2 Maintaining peace (cumulative), Year 1 April, Survey A

⁴ Notes on Question 28: One person did not answer; one person answered the question as a tick box exercise. These two responses were not included in fig. 4.1 or 4.2.

The Year 1 cohort identified **safety** as being the **most important** aspect of maintaining peace in the community followed by **music and arts programmes**, then **good infrastructure and social networks** closely behind. Political dialogue was ranked lower and transport least. When asked about the role of music in peacebuilding, one participant responded: "It's part of the mortar; everything, like John Lennon's 'give peace a chance'", while another noted that, "it brings people together ... makes [you] think about building together" and that it has "a big role especially among youth".

They all identified the role of the programme as enabling inclusion through diversity, with people of different backgrounds participating in musical activities for enjoyment, socialising and connecting with the local community. The benefits were seen to extend beyond local networks more widely to schools, community arts and asylum seekers.

The same question, 'What do you see as the most important aspect in maintaining peace in your community?', was asked of this Year 1 cohort at the end of May, below. What is noticeable in this timeframe is the change in perceptions of transport as being particularly important alongside safety and social networks, as previously. By May, social networks are ranked equal first rather than equal third as in April which represents a marked shift, though not as significant as that of the change in perceptions of transport.

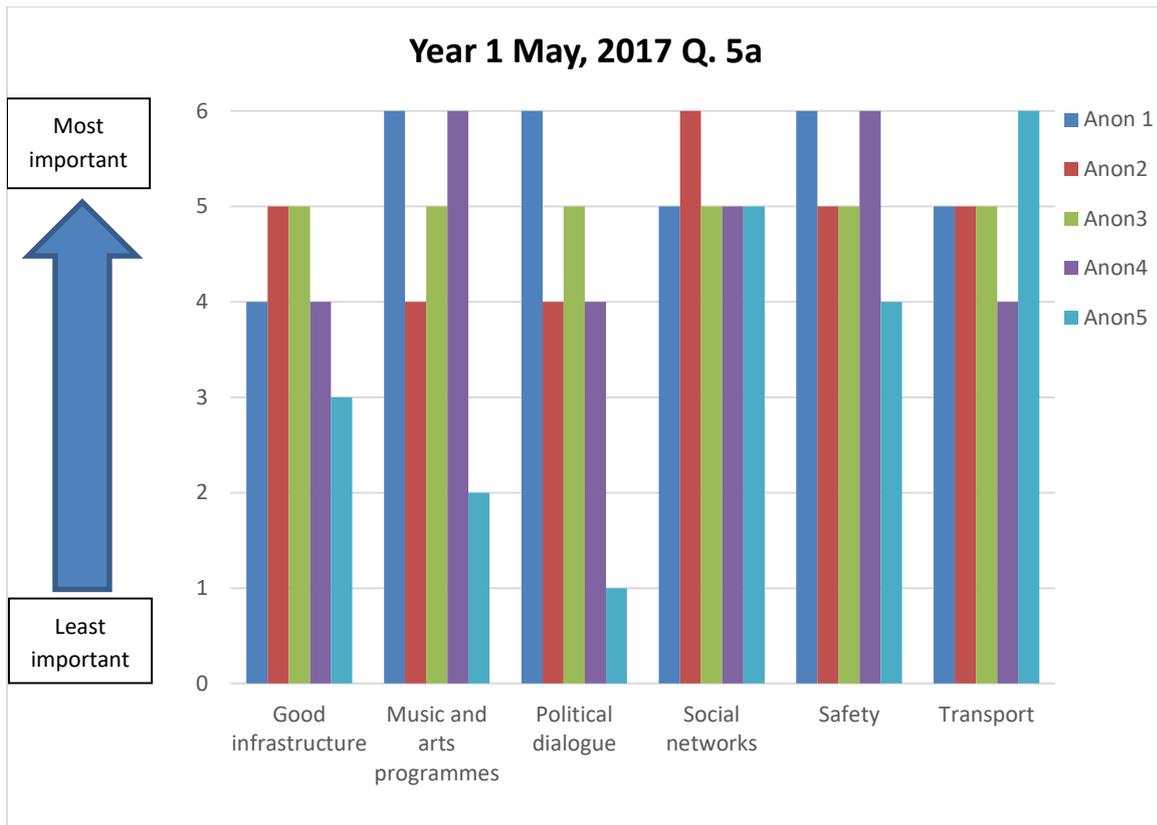


Fig. 4.3 Maintaining peace, Year 1 May, Survey B

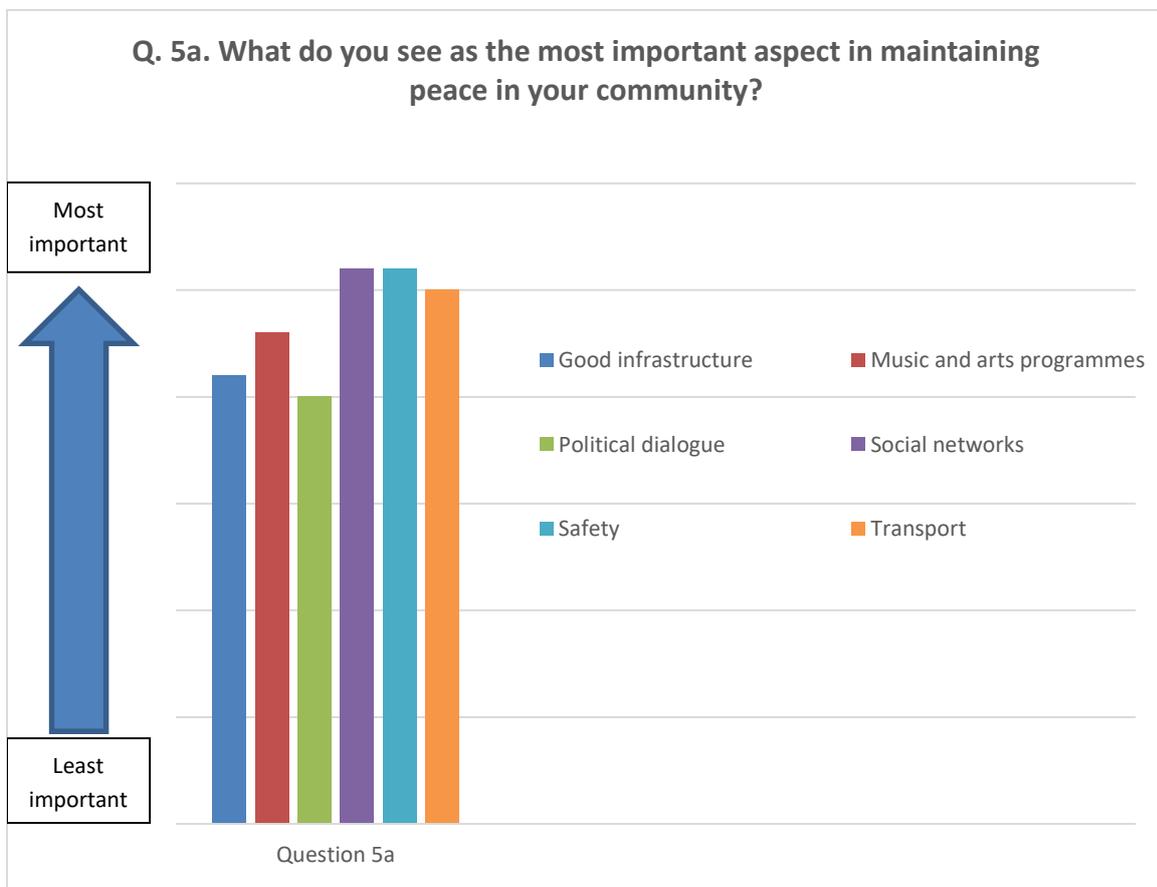


Fig. 4.4 Maintaining peace (cumulative), Year 1 May, Survey B

4.2 A Comparison of the Impacts of Year 1 Training with Impacts in Year 2

By Year 2, trainees' views differ as to how to maintain peace in the community with an emphasis being placed **equally at the top on good infrastructure and music and arts programmes, followed by social networks**, as follows:

April 2017 – Derry/Londonderry MwB, Survey A, Year 2 – four respondents

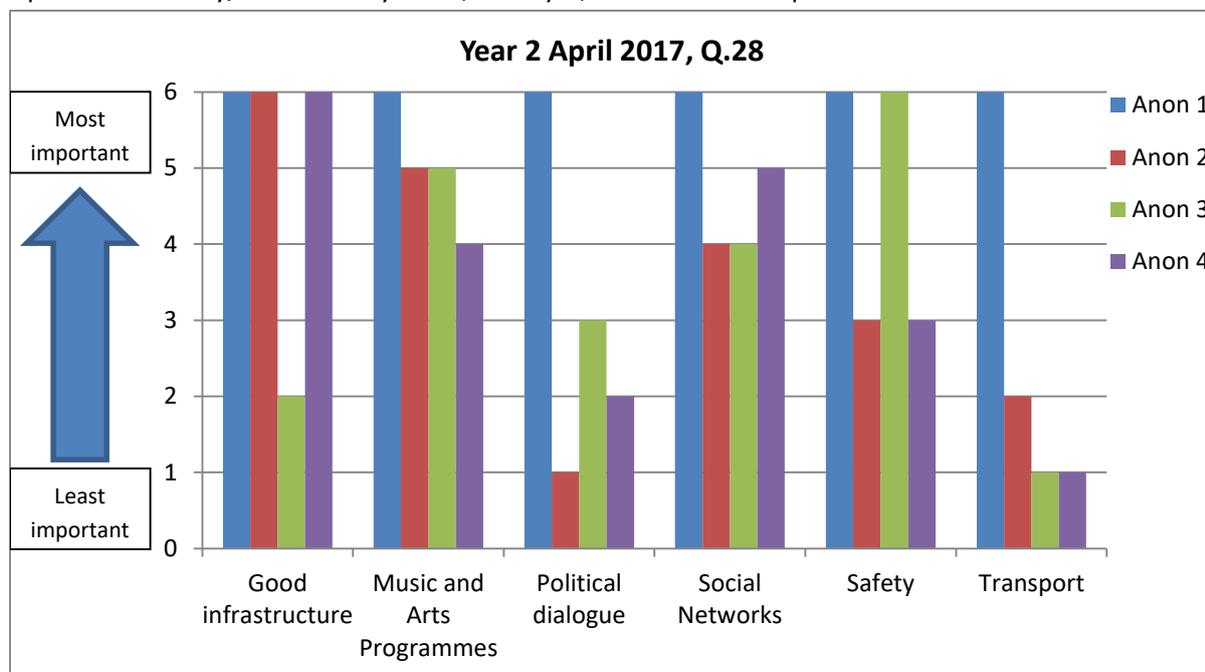


Fig. 4.5 Maintaining Peace, Year 2 April, Survey A⁵

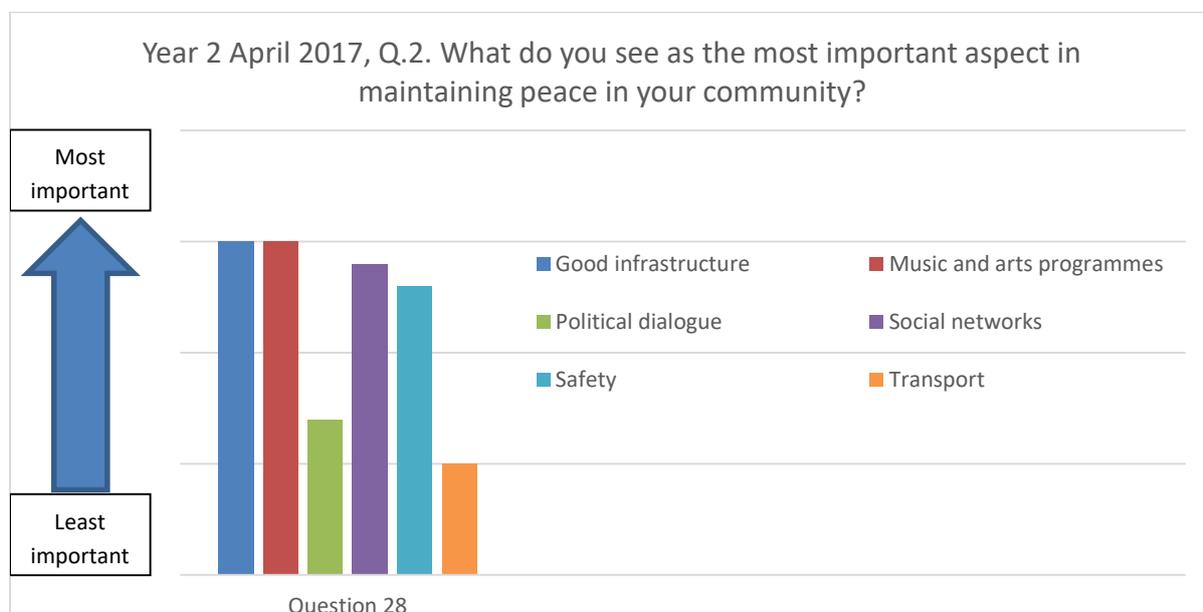


Fig. 4.6 Maintaining Peace (cumulative), Year 2 April, Survey A

⁵One respondent with a tick ranking is included with a rank of 6 for each tick in fig. 4.5 but they have been omitted from the cumulative totals in fig. 4.6.

Safety is a significantly lower concern for this year group, ranked only fourth by Year 2 compared with being ranked first for Year 1s, while political dialogue and transport come fifth and sixth respectively. This shift may also align with a set of responses from Year 2 that highlights their individual and collective senses of “increased self-confidence”, “adventure” and “creativity” outlined earlier in response to Question 5.

Finding 4: These results illustrate how Year 2 perceptions of their surroundings, and their abilities to **engage positively with the need for the infrastructure to deliver music and arts programmes has increased**, rather than being concerned primarily with safety, as identified by the majority of the Year 1 students. On the one hand, this may be a result of the Year 2s already having had a year’s training and the Year 2 participants therefore feeling more comfortable with, and able to respond and react to, the challenges that their practice presents. On the other hand, it may be a reflection of quite different contexts in which participants conduct their facilitation. In either case, however, these are real concerns and they demonstrate the need to attend to each element and its impacts upon participants. It also raises a question about **how trainees strategically promote the arts for peacebuilding within their own pedagogy and facilitation context and what might assist them further in this goal?** It also draws attention to **how the concept of peace is imagined in their creative practice**. Further analysis of each of these elements would bring out additional insights to the complexities and challenges of trainees’ aims in relation to community circumstances.

5. Music’s role in Peacebuilding

5.1 Resilience among the Year 2 Cohort

By building up resilience emotionally, empathetically and with an expanded creative toolkit, all Year 2s reflected upon how music has a central role in peacebuilding. Some commented that it has a great impact because, “As we do this together, we become more empathetic and creative together and tolerant of others’ different abilities”. Another spoke about the potential particularly in Northern Ireland for implementing this training, commenting, “The possibilities here are vast – music has been used in NI as a tool for division and aggression – it’s trying to change this that’s the big challenge”. However, they also recognised the fact that there is still a long way to go and that music does not play a role in peacebuilding in all contexts or areas. A broader point that was stressed was that “it brings people from a wide variety of backgrounds together, people who would otherwise never meet. They then share in singing together in harmony – [it’s] a great metaphor”. In this reflection, it might be argued that through the MwB Derry/Londonderry Music Bridge training programme, **“harmonious music-making” not only can become a synecdoche for harmonious living but it is a model for a harmonious society.**

5.2 Changes in Maintaining Peace in the Last Thirty years

Continuing with the findings from participants of how listening is critical to peacebuilding as they attune to one another in creative practice, we then asked participants to reflect upon the degree of change in each of the areas of infrastructure, arts programmes, political dialogue, social networks, safety and transport that either promoted or disrupted peace in their communities over the last thirty years. The Year 1 session three survey shows that four people experienced a change in social networks, better infrastructure and music and arts programmes which made a difference in their participation and sense of inclusion. Political dialogue, safety and transport were not considered to have changed to a significant degree.

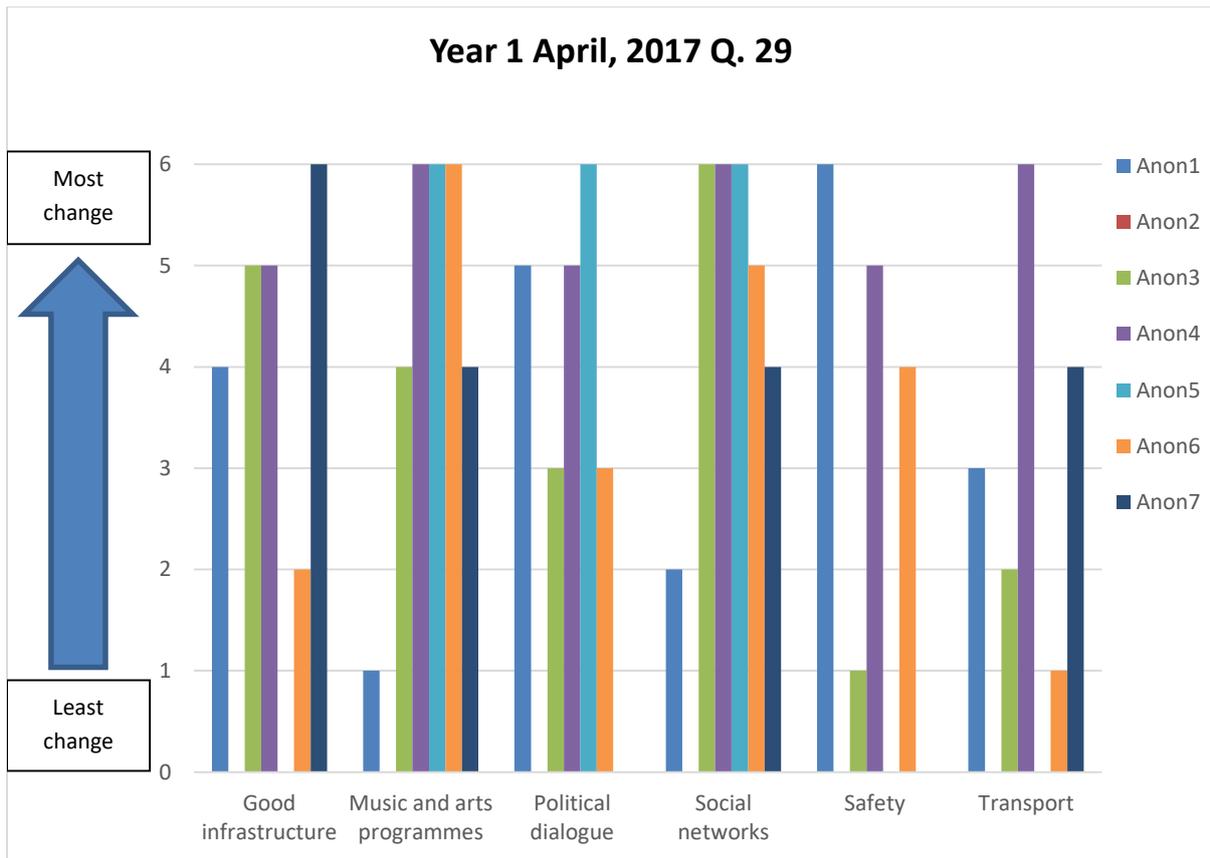


Fig. 5.1 Changes over the last thirty years, Year 1 April, Survey A⁶

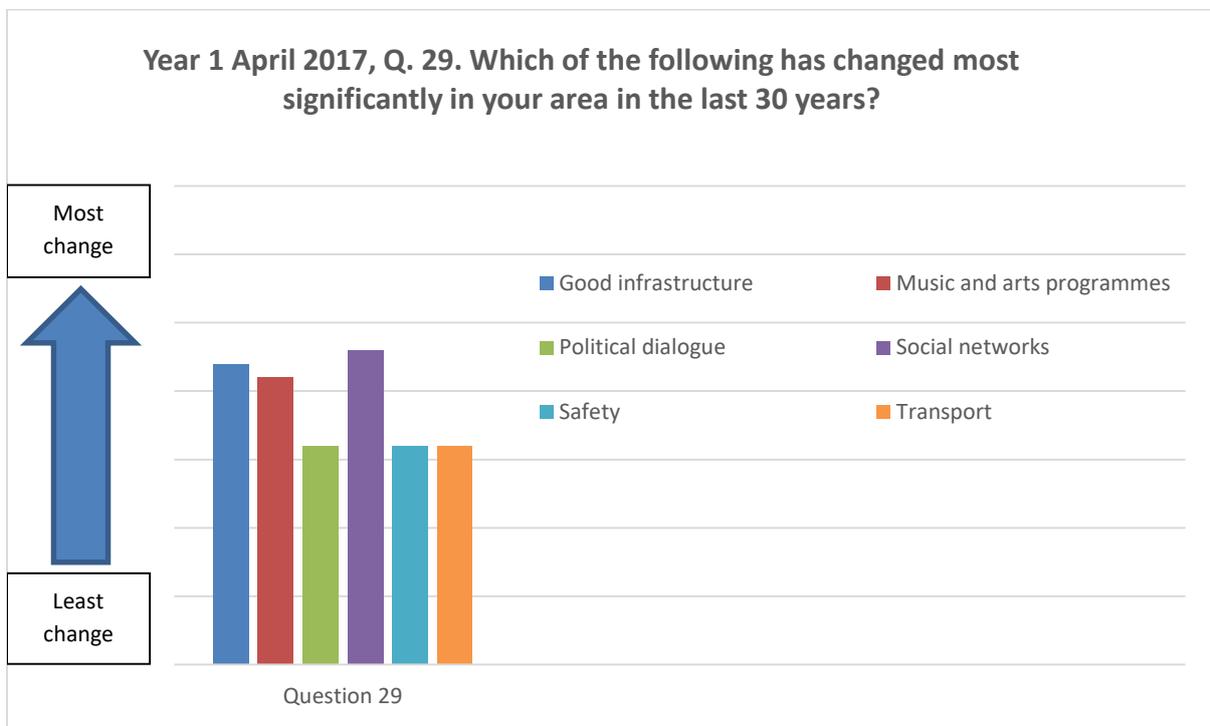


Fig. 5.2 Changes over the last thirty years (cumulative), Year 1 April, Survey A⁷

⁶ 'Anon 2' did not answer. 'Anon 5' answered ticked three boxes rather than ranking, each tick is valued as 6 in fig. 5.1.

⁷ 'Anon 5' is not included in the cumulative totals in fig. 5.2.

In the May training we asked this question again, but this time in relation to how participants experienced change in their immediate social and political climate. Though there are only three respondents to this question, there is a dramatic shift in political dialogue and social networks. We also invited respondents to provide some comments on these changes over the last thirty years. Participants noted that these related to:

“a community sense of togetherness”

“music and arts - everyone gets involved and there is no trouble”

“[there are] more grass roots groups and political activists”

The last response also explains how politics is understood as emerging from the bottom-up rather than being dialogue among institutional-level political parties and is reflected in the increased ranking of ‘political dialogue’ as illustrated in the graphs below.

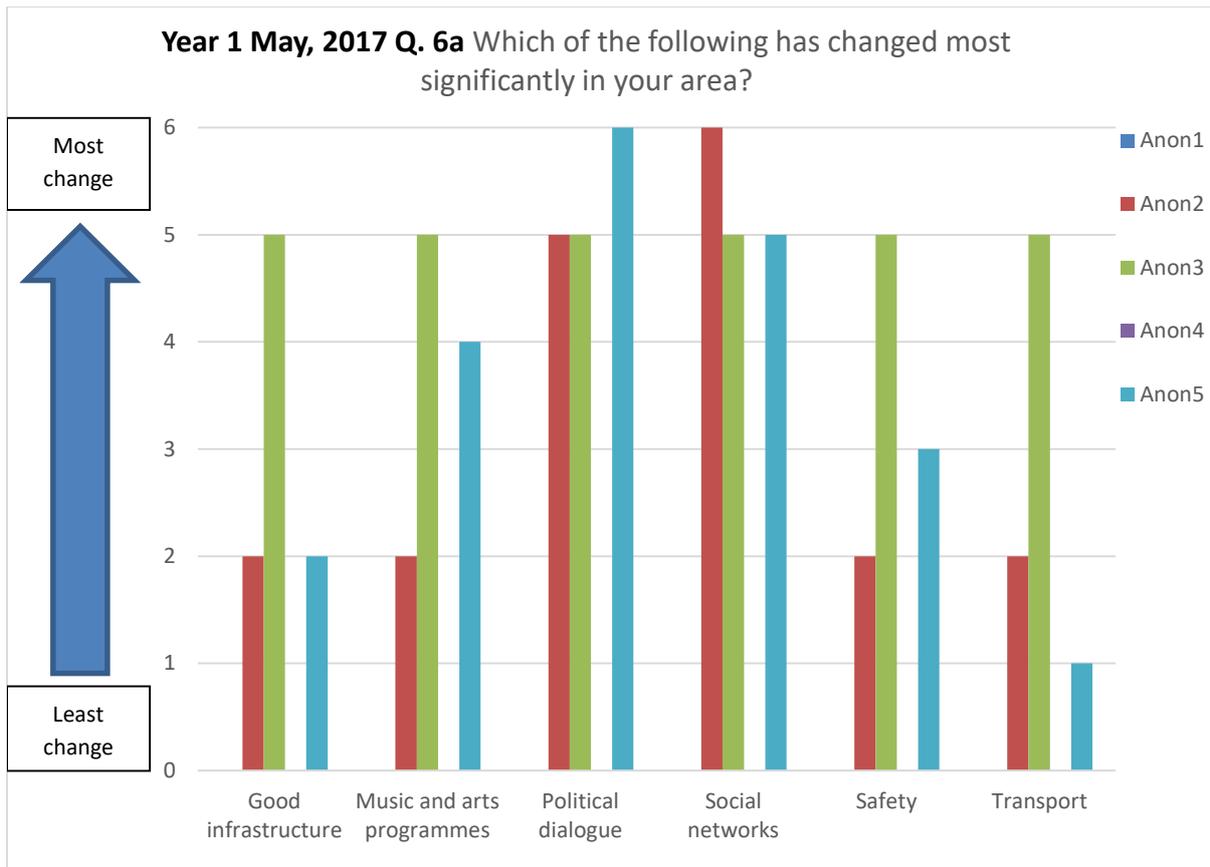


Fig 5.3 Current changes, Year 1 May, Survey B

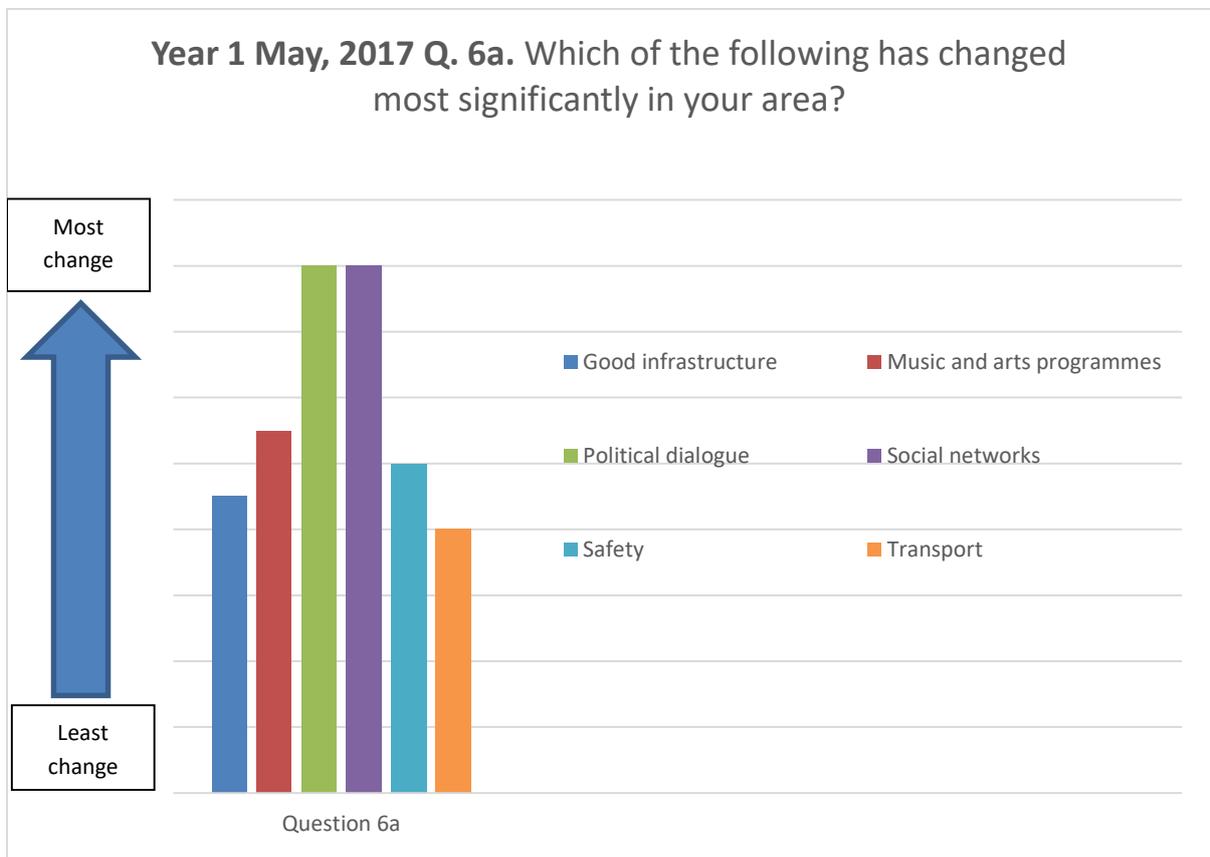


Fig 5.4 Current changes (cumulative), Year 1 May, Survey B

5.3 Sound and Safety

The last part of the survey addressed changes in sound in relation to location and feeling safe in participants' areas. Only one participant in this group reported feeling safe, though importantly, five participants noted that **greater attention to sound would improve safety** in the community significantly. Five participants also felt that music was important in relating to place before commencing the Mwb training programme and three considered that their views of the significance of music in relation to place had changed markedly as a result of the training they had received. When asked what had changed in this process, some of the participants responded that:

"I knew music was important according to where you are but now I am sure of it"

"I realise that it is not only the type of music that is important but also how it is communicated and transmitted"

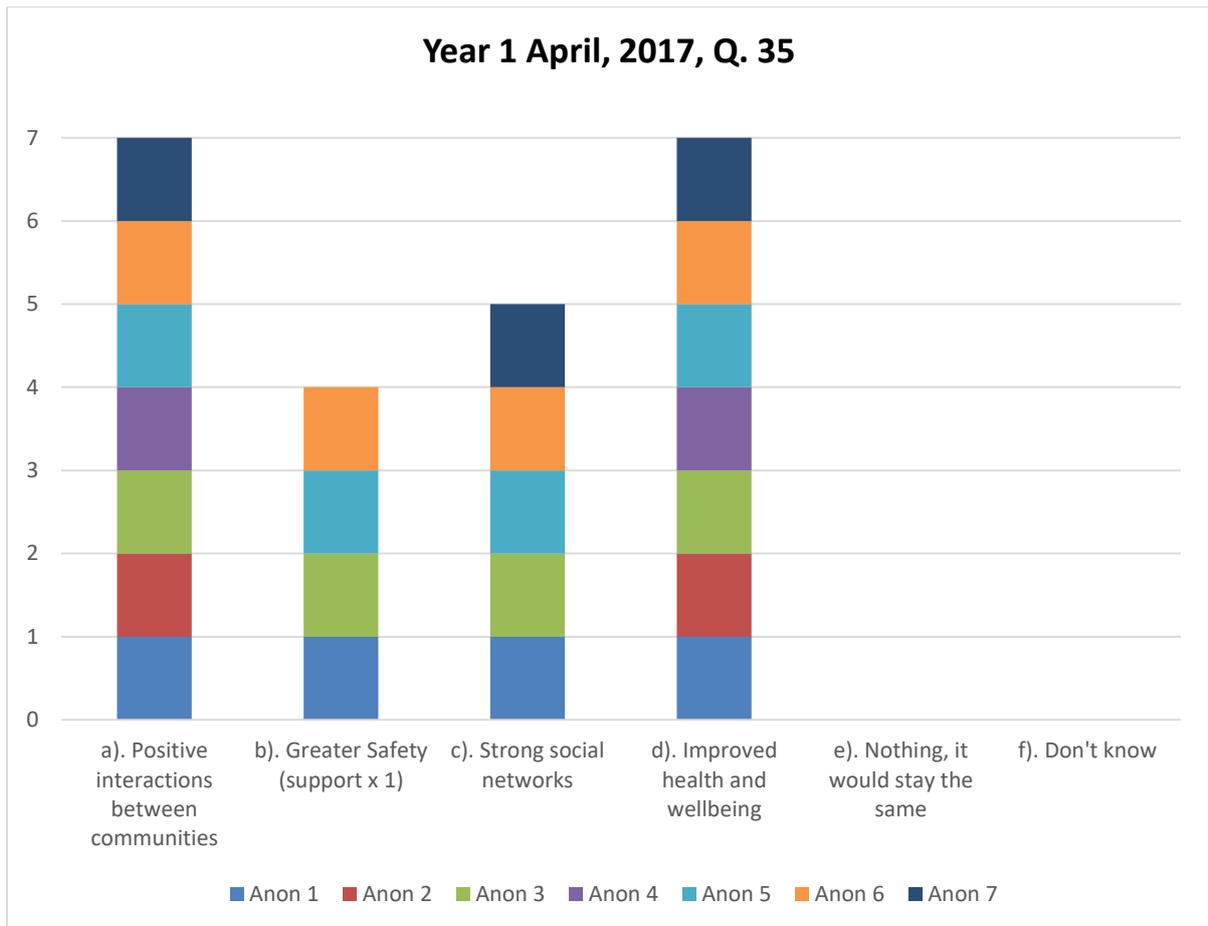
"Context matters in addition to content"

"Just everything I hear"

These comments demonstrate an increased sensitivity and attunement not only to the physical dimensions of the environment but to what Lisbeth Lipari (2014: 2-3) calls the 'ethics of attunement', that is, 'an awareness of and attention to the harmonic interconnectivity of all beings and objects'. As participants highlighted their increased awareness of sound and music in the environment, so they became more critically reflexive about modes of communication. Although the programme emphasises a 'musically neutral' approach to nonverbal creative practice, the micro-political dynamics of communication are also inherent in how the speaker or community music leader is perceived and how these perceptions impact upon the listening process. The comment, "context matters in addition to content" and "I knew music was important according to where you are but now I am sure of it" suggests that these trainees are tuning their ears and their senses more keenly to how we understand the experience of being human 'as an ethical relation that is enacted by means of listening' (Lipari 2014: 7).

6. Implementing Music Bridge Training Programmes across Northern Ireland

In addressing the political dimensions of sound and listening, we sought to understand the impact of the Music Bridge programme beyond its training remit and beyond the Derry/Londonderry location. The Year 1 session three participants were asked in Question 35 what changes might be achieved if more programmes like Music Bridge were introduced. All responded positively that there would be improved health and wellbeing and positive interactions between communities. Strong social networks were also relatively important possibilities, though greater safety was considered to be less so, and one person noted this would lead to more support rather than safety per se.



6.1 More music and arts in NI, Year 1 April, Survey A⁸

Among the Year 1 cohort, between the April and May training periods, there is a shift in the perception of the importance of social networks being created through the introduction of the Music Bridge Programme. Over these months, the strength of social networks is seen to reduce significantly by more than half. The emphasis remains solidly, however, on positive interactions between communities and improved health and wellbeing. The polarisation of rhetoric at election time in Northern Ireland may have contributed to a lower ranking of strong social networks and may possibly have been influenced by heated and uncertain Brexit debates in the media at that time and its potential impacts, particularly in the North.

⁸ One person added the answer 'b.) Support' and circled it instead of safety.

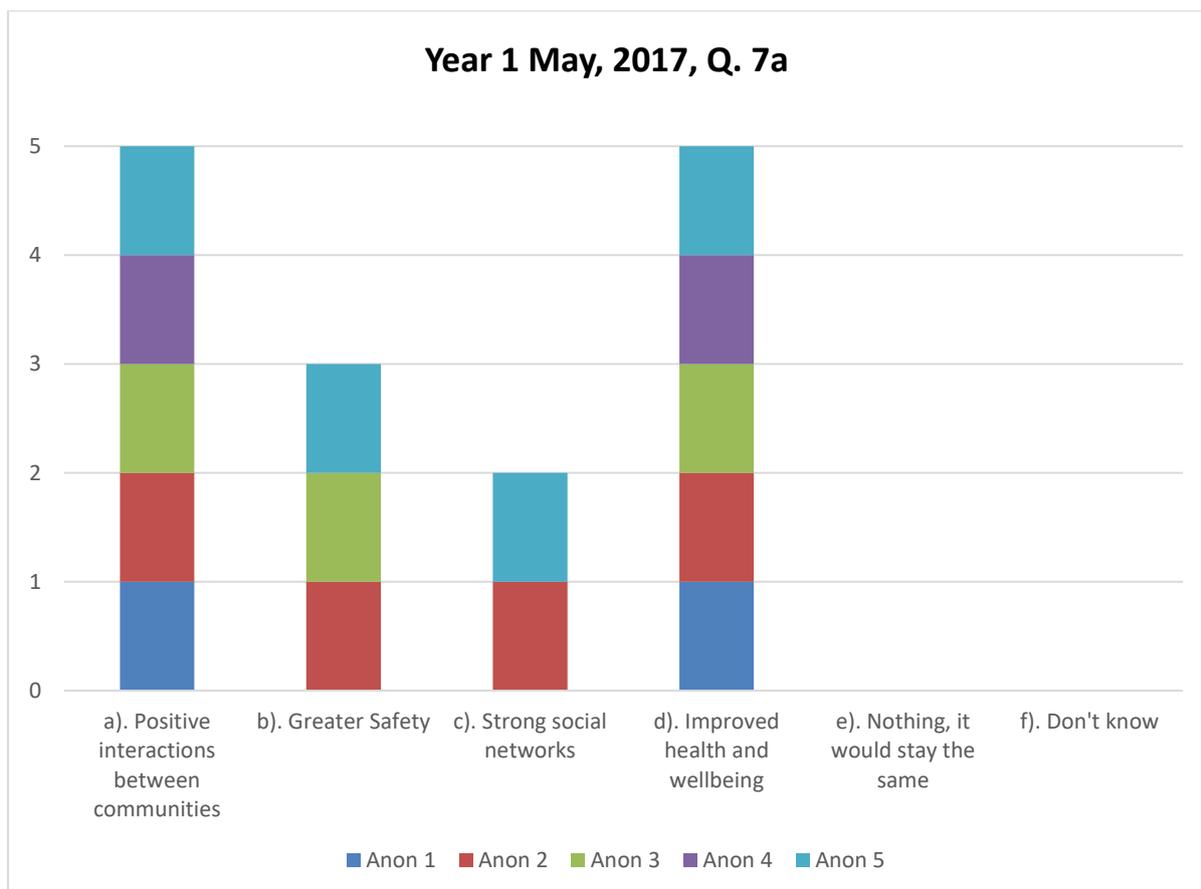


Fig. 6.2 More music and arts in NI, Year 1 May, Survey B

Among Year 2s we see a marked difference from Year 1 responses in their perceptions of the impact of the Music Bridge programme. In this case, strong social networks are an equally important outcome to those of positive interactions between communities and improved health and wellbeing. Among Year 1 respondents to the question of safety, less than half think that Music Bridge programmes can impact upon safety, while three quarters of the Year 2 cohort consider that safety, can be increased with the implementation of Music Bridge training. In addition, it is important to note that three of the four respondents thought that community music making initiatives could impact on *all* these areas. The commonality of their responses may also reflect **increased levels of commitment to facilitation** as they have witnessed how it can be **a force for change** in their own practice.

Year 2 responses

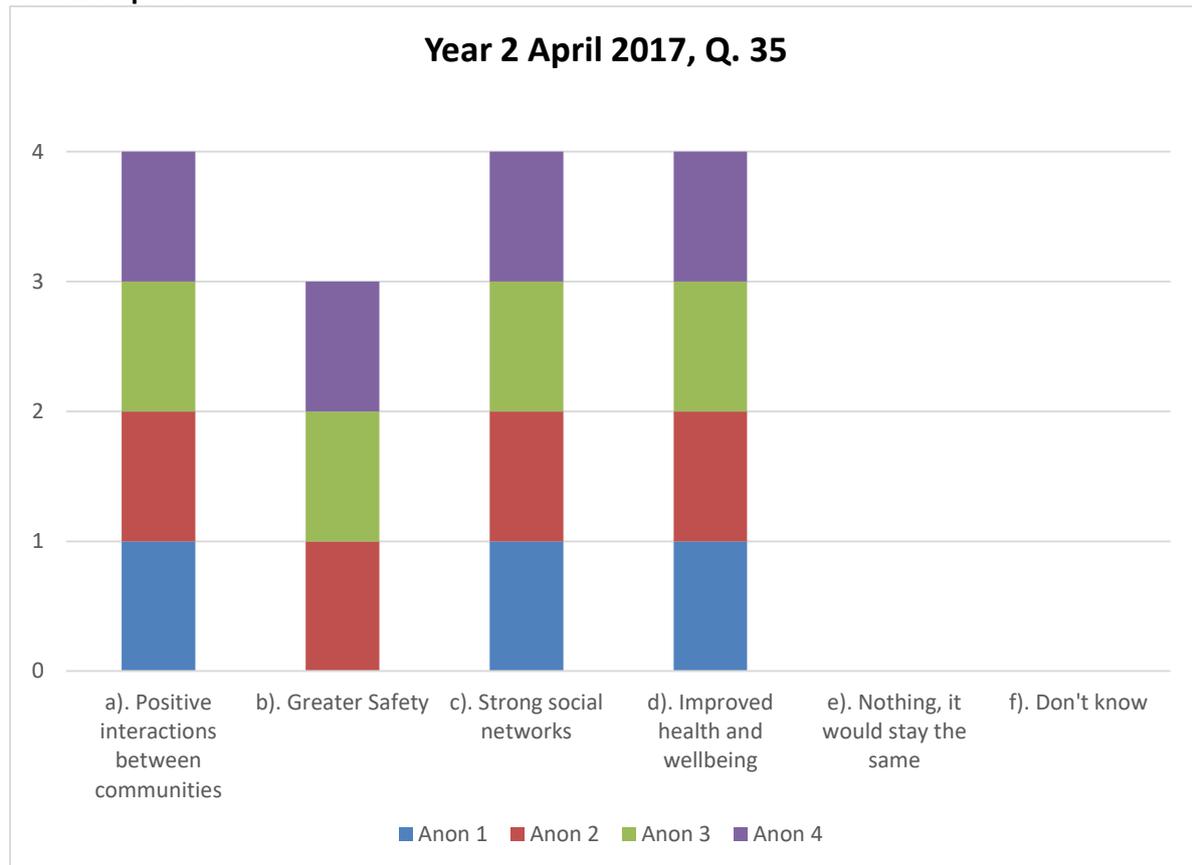


Fig. 6.3 More music and arts in NI, Year 2 April, Survey A

7. Conclusions

The survey findings demonstrate that creative empowerment and expression is most important in the early phases of training, moving to a distinct emphasis upon group facilitation at Year 2, as the next most important skill. The perception of skill development also changes within a year group. Between the two Year 1 sessions the survey demonstrates increasing awareness of the importance of other elements of facilitation, including people and communication skills and performing skills. As noted above in the report there are a number of key findings relating to these comparisons which are reiterated and elaborated upon here:

Finding 1: The distinctions that participants make between emotional and applied outcomes raise important questions about differences between their perceptions of creative (creativity, performing) over practical skills.

Finding 2: An incremental recognition of skills development across the board demonstrates a paradigm shift in learning and levels of comfort in nonverbal abilities between the third and fourth training sessions. It further confirms how MwB's holistic approach, beginning with an emphasis on creativity, is developed through group facilitation and peer practice (including school facilitation), increasing participants' engagement relatively evenly across each skillset. In the Music Bridge programme, participants at **Year 1** commented on how they were particularly engaged by the creative elements of "drum circles"; "improvisation with the team ... or group instruments"; "circle work in singing rhythms and the creation of high quality music [as well as] understanding how to share musical concepts within a circle"; and "learning new songs". In contrast, **by Year 2**, one trainee reported feeling "more confidence in my ability as a musician" and another had "gained confidence both in their musical abilities and leadership. Other Year 2s also stressed the importance of "Musicianship skills and meeting with other [people], working with musicians and inspiring leaders"; "general self-confidence, greater empathy, sense of adventure and creativity" and "the importance of an empathic and all-inclusive approach when facilitating a group workshop".

Finding 3: After **Year 1**, creativity can be observed to lessen in importance. The relative downplaying of creative elements in **Year 2** is noteworthy as trainees consolidate other elements of interpersonal communication and establish their personal styles of nonverbal communication.

Finding 4: An increased awareness of the importance of the surroundings and infrastructure raises the question, **how do trainees strategically promote the arts for peacebuilding within their own pedagogy and facilitation context and what might assist them further in this goal?** It also draws attention to **how the concept of peace is imagined in their creative practice.**

Finding 5: We suggest that a transition in skills development occurs between Years 1 and 2 **from internalising skills to the externalisation of capacity-building.**

The internalising of music practice in Year 1 is clearly externalised in Year 2 as a process of intergroup sharing, leadership abilities through confidence and inclusive development by Year 2.

Finding 6: It is clear that participatory music-making changed participants' relationships to place as a result of the training. All Year 2 participants felt they had been greatly impacted and that **by paying attention to sound, this would also improve the community.**

Finding 7: The survey shows that safety is a complex and multifaceted concept. While Question 28 intended to elicit insights to physical safety in the trainee's own environment, it could also have been interpreted as shaping their musical and creative practices. The concept of safety has multiple dimensions in terms of how participants viewed the conduct of their facilitation and its effects upon groups in different areas. This distinction was recognised by Year 2 trainees who identified

- **empathy as being a moment of transition that moved from seeing people being "uncomfortable" or "insecure" to "overcoming fears" and "expressing vulnerability".**

Empathy was noted as being an element of working alongside others, as one wrote, empathy is being "with other leaders – you know what they're going through and with participants who are looking excluded – trying to re-engage them".

- **Empathy in particular was viewed as the key to tolerance in Northern Ireland, especially with regard to the use of musical genres.**

These Year 2 participants also recognised the challenges that they face in this endeavour.

PART II

Musicians without Borders, Training of Trainers (October 2017) Research Report

1. Summary

This report is based on a survey administered by Dr Jim Donaghey at the Musicians without Borders (MwB) Training of Trainers (ToT) programme in Ede, the Netherlands (23-28 October 2017), as part of the PaCCS funded project, 'Sounding Conflict: From Resistance to Reconciliation' held by Queen's University Belfast (QUB). It analyses the results with reference to MwB's core values, principles, and Theory of Change (included in appendices).

The results of the survey show that the training programme has been impactful on the participants' community music-making practices. Several aspects of MwB's core values, principles and Theory of Change are prominent among the survey responses, but a personalistic emphasis couched in the language of trauma and self-care is also evident, and it is suggested that a stronger connection between individual transformation and community transformation could be made to help ensure that this personalistic focus does not obscure the core community-centred goals of MwB's work.

2. Introduction

The report considers the pedagogical impact of the training programme, and the participants' understanding of (or deviation from) MwB's core values, principles, and Theory of Change in the broader context of community music-making towards 'peacebuilding' in conflict and post-conflict situations.

3. Methods

A survey consisting of eight questions (grouped into four sections) was administered on the final day of the training programme (28 October 2017), concurrently with (but separately to) Musicians without Borders' own evaluative survey. Questions 1a and 3a asked respondents to rank given answers from one to six according to their importance in relation to the stated question, and each of these was followed by an open ended question (1b and 3b) asking respondents to expand further on their ranking choices. Question 4a asked respondents to circle given answers to the stated question, without ranking, and without limitation to the number of options that could be selected, followed by an open-ended question allowing respondents to give more detail on their choice(s) or to give other responses. These questions were drawn from Survey B, which had been administered at the Music Bridge training programme in Derry/Londonderry (as discussed in Part I).

The survey also asked for sociological information, including gender, age (ranged), dependents/caring responsibilities, employment circumstances, country of birth, nationality, and ethnic group.

As part of the wider research project, in-depth semi-structured interviews also took place, but information from those is not included in this report.

Participation in the research project was entirely voluntary, and the surveys were completed anonymously.

4. Results

Sixteen out of forty-nine participants completed the survey (one of which was partially completed). The survey sample was broadly reflective of the diversity of nationalities among attendees at the ToT programme, including: Dutch, Belgian, USA (x 2), Canadian, El Salvadorian, Indonesian, Irish, British (x 2), Scottish (x 2), HKSAR & British, Australian, Rwandese, Cypriot. Men are slightly overrepresented in the survey sample with five out the sixteen respondents (31%) to eleven women (69%), which is a higher proportion than among the attendees at the ToT programme (twelve men (24.5%) to thirty-seven women (75.5%)).

Creativity is fundamental to MwB's Theory of Change, and question 2a of the survey addressed the theme of creativity specifically, asking: 'In what ways has the programme challenged your sense of creativity?' Respondents reported that their sense of creativity felt "enhanced" and that being pushed out of their "comfort zone" was useful in opening new "creative choices". Another repeated phrase was "less is more", and the use of "simplicity" and "basic building blocks" opened "an endless scope of options" for the respondents. The training was also considered by the participants to have been directly impactful on their own practice. One respondent wrote:

"It took my creativity knowledge to another level. Now I can be creative with any object in front of me and use it as a theme and develop from that".

And another wrote that the training:

"has positively impacted how I approach my own creative endeavours, as well as how I will facilitate them in the future".

Seeking to build on the theme of creativity, question 2b of the survey asked: 'Which exercises did you find to be most beneficial, and why?' The learning of practical community music-making techniques was identified as being beneficial, and "the assignments certainly helped" in this regard, "challenging" the respondents, but also making them "feel empowered". One respondent wrote about a:

"Real connection of what we've seen and what we'll try to do, and eventually do at home".

(underlining in original)

Question 1a of the survey asked respondents to rank particular 'skill areas' by the degree to which they were developed within the ToT programme. Cumulatively, 'creative music skills' was ranked fourth out of the six 'skill areas' identified in the survey, with the practical techniques of 'group facilitation' and 'communication skills' being ranked equal first. 'People skills' was ranked third, and 'performing skills' and 'technical music skills' were ranked fifth and sixth respectively.

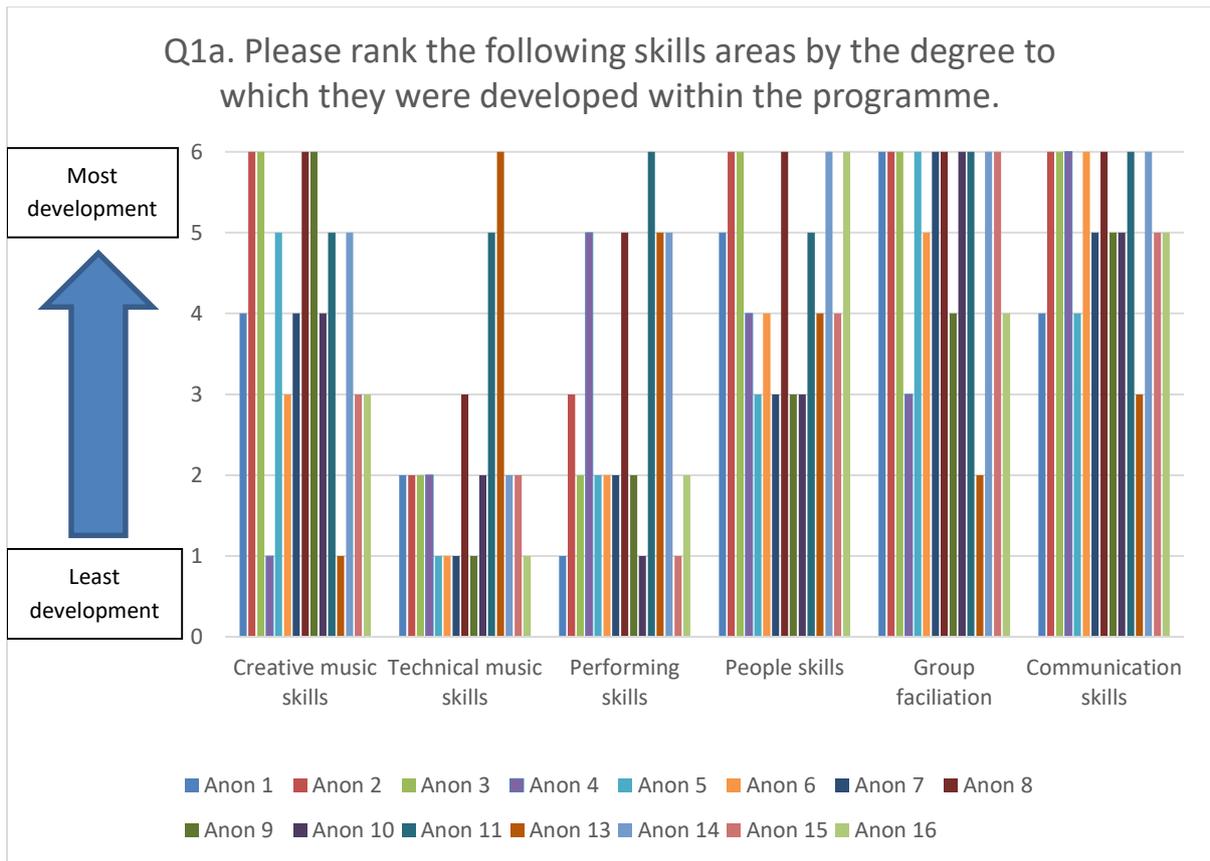


Fig. 7.1 Skills development, ToT October

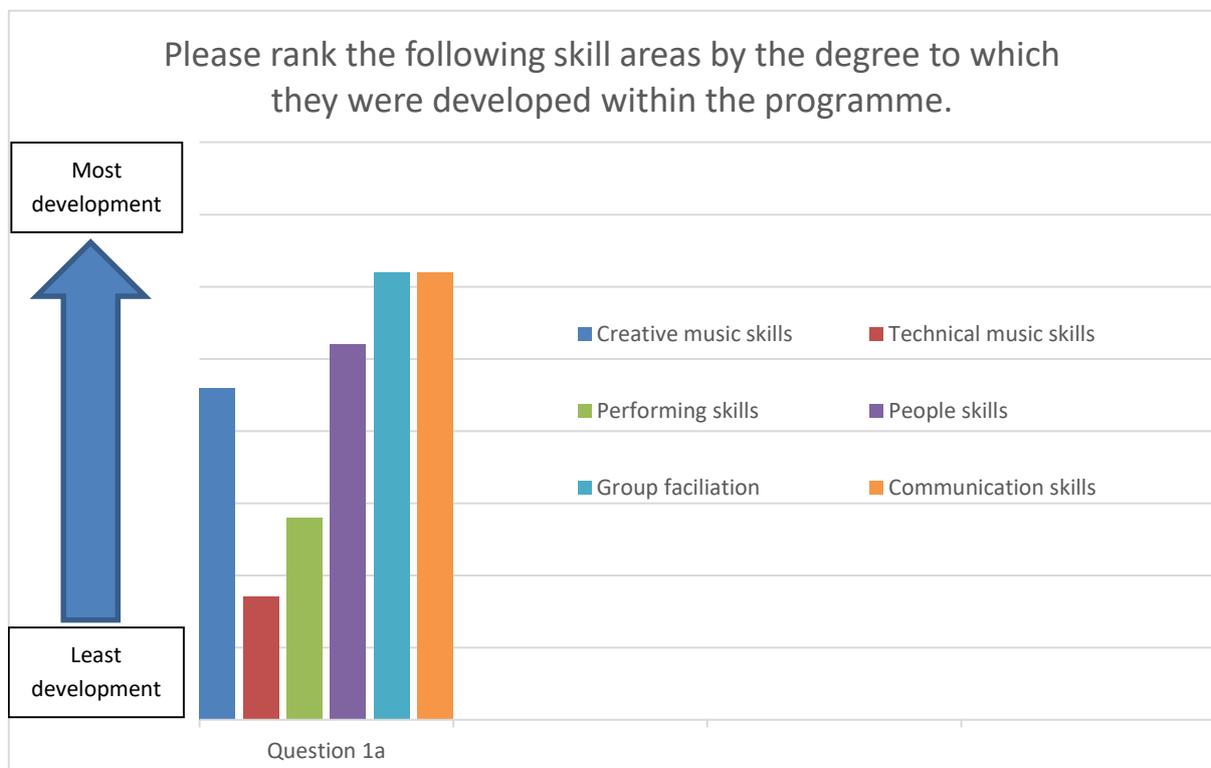


Fig. 7.2 Skills development (cumulative), ToT October⁹

⁹ 'Anon 12' did not answer.

Following from this ranking exercise, question 1b of the survey asked respondents to: 'Please identify one or more skill areas that have been developed within the programme and provide more detail on how they have been developed'. Group facilitation and communication skills were prominent among the responses, especially "giving instruction without speaking", "non-verbal communication", "working in groups, making group decision, allocating roles", "feedback giving skills", "constructive criticism and positive feedback", and communicating "non-violently". Despite being ranked fourth out of six, creative music skills were discussed in more detail by a few of the respondents, especially in terms of "a great variety" of creative methods and "different means of generating creativity" being shared with them through the training. Respondents described an increased "confidence being creative and ability to think outside the box".

One response to question 1b moved beyond the six given 'skill areas', stating:

"A very important aspect of the workshop was to understand our own needs as workshop leaders in order to self-care".

The trauma and self-care aspect of the ToT programme was also very strongly emphasised in the responses to question 2b ('Which exercises did you find to be most beneficial, and why?'). One respondent wrote that because the training on trauma and self-care was "given early in the program [it] allowed us to feel safe and develop strategies to cope when we were challenged". Respondents also garnered "a sense of how to help ... participants" and one wrote that:

"The trauma and self-care and music therapy presentations definitely made an impact on my approach".

Question 3a sought to move from the particular context of the training programme to the wider context of peacebuilding in the community. This was another ranking exercise, asking respondents to rank six 'aspects in maintaining peace' according to their importance in their communities. 'Safety' was the aspect cumulatively ranked as most important, and by a significant margin, with 'Music and arts programmes' ranked as the second most important aspect, and 'Social networks' ranked third. 'Good infrastructure', 'Political dialogue' and 'Transport' were ranked fourth, fifth and sixth respectively.

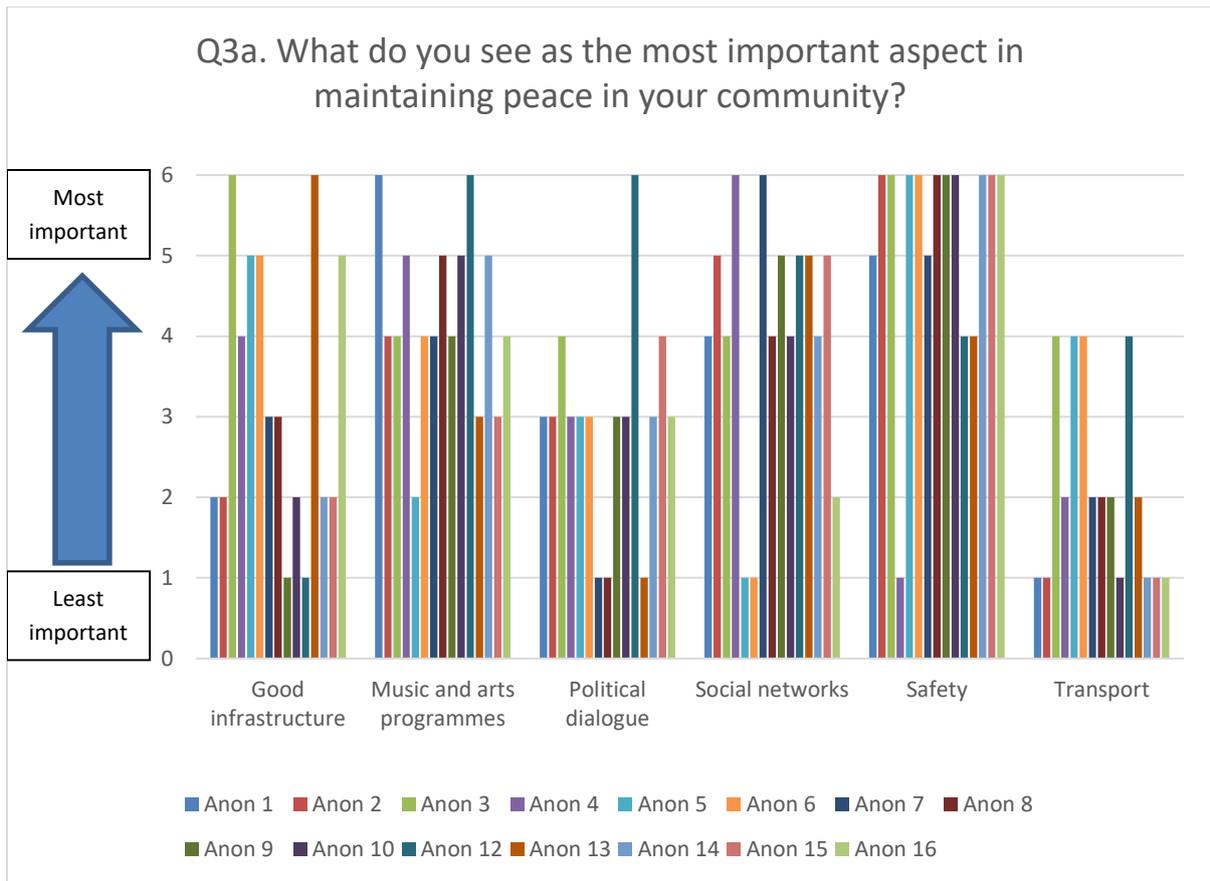


Fig. 8.1 Maintaining peace, ToT October

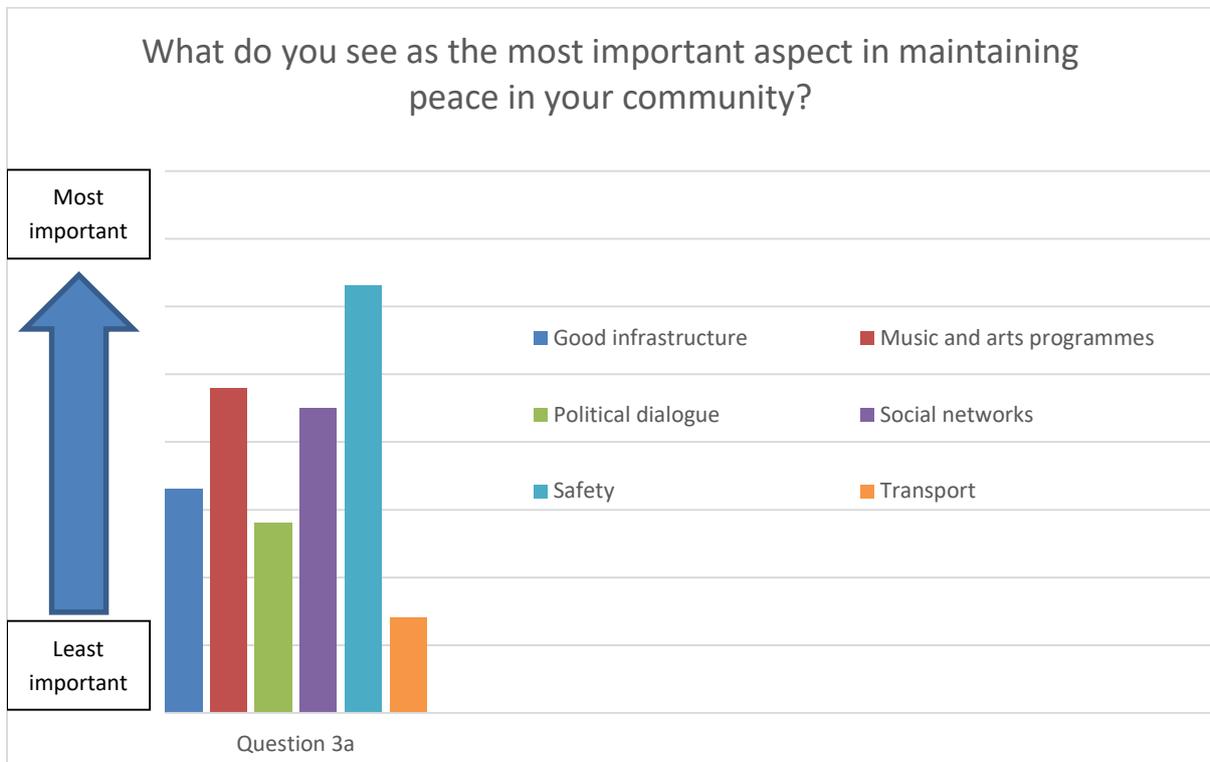


Fig. 8.2 Maintaining peace (cumulative), ToT October¹⁰

¹⁰ 'Anon 11' did not answer.

Following from this ranking exercise, question 3b asked respondents to: 'Please identify one or more of the aspects above and provide more detail on why you view them as being particularly important (or unimportant) in maintaining peace in your community'. 'Safety' was highly prominent in the responses, and was understood to be a prerequisite for other aspects of peacebuilding – "without safety and trust, there can be no peace". One respondent wrote:

"Safety is perhaps an aspect that requires many other aspects to be established first. I strongly consider it as the foundation for maintaining peace in order for anything else to occur. To feel safe with themselves (at first) and then as a community".

Music and arts programmes were identified by some respondents as being "able to transcend barriers" and as "essential for promoting togetherness, inclusion, creativity, equality, quality and safety".

Several respondents identified political dialogue as doing "more harm/dividing than good". One wrote that:

"Politicians have been very successful in damaging local/international communities. Typical political practices should be transformed".

And another wrote that:

"movements build up from the bottom and override politics. Art and people say the most interesting things, a bit of political dialogue is just playing sophisticated games".

Other respondents identified safety or social networks as most important but stressed the interrelatedness of the various aspects of maintaining peace:

"Within social networks comes safety, security and from this stems a space for dialogue, to discuss all aspects of maintaining a good community".

And:

"People's sense of safety allows them to behave freely and communicate well. This is the root of musical dialogue, political dialogue and social change".

Question 4a asked respondents to circle 'kinds of changes' that they 'think could be achieved through the sort of community work [they] do (or intend to do as a result of the MwB training)'. 'Improved health and wellbeing' was circled by all but one of the respondents (one did not answer), with 'Positive interactions between communities' circled second most often, 'Strong social networks' third, and 'Greater safety' circled by the fewest respondents.

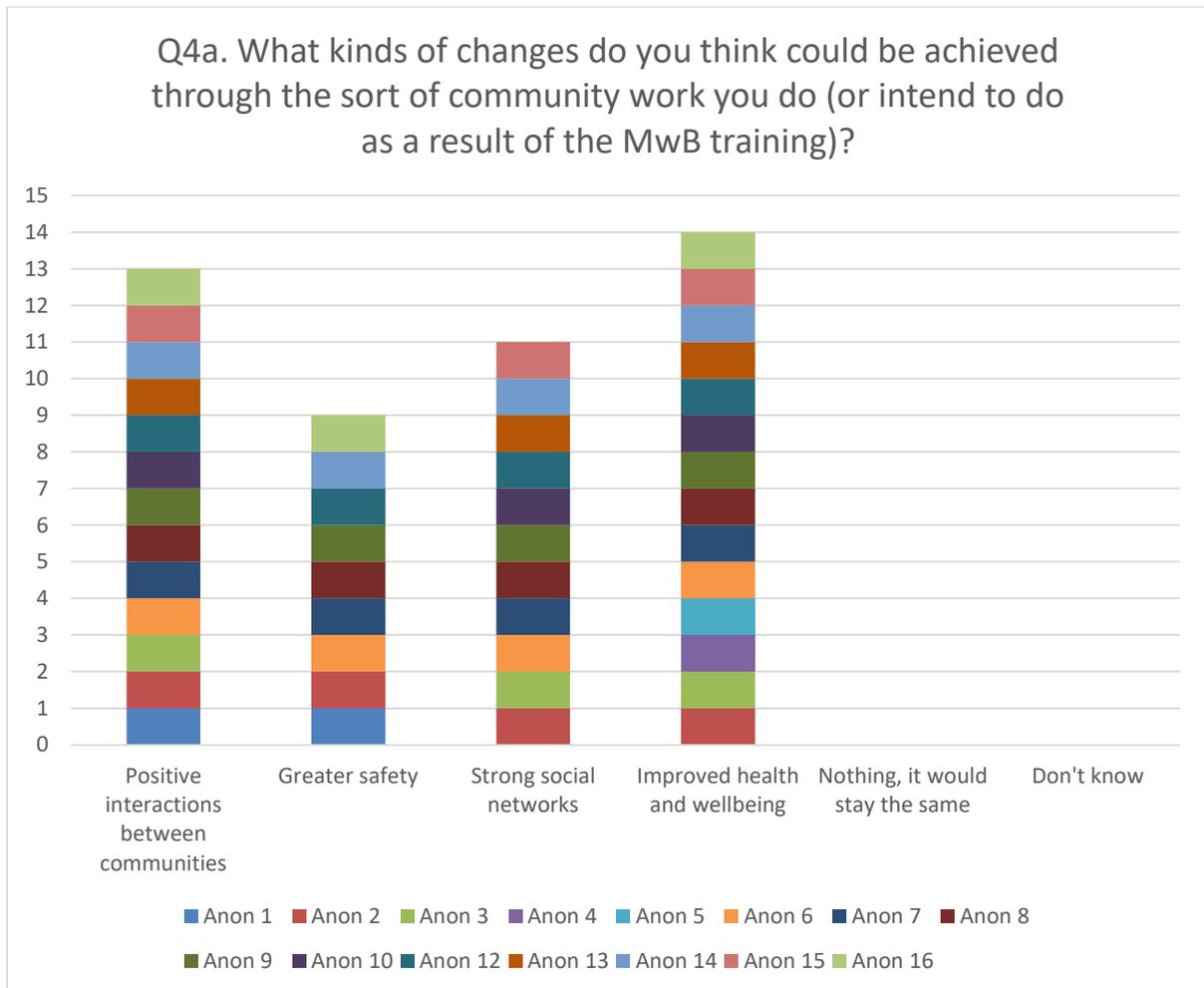


Fig. 9 Changes, ToT October¹¹

Following from this, question 4b asked respondents to: ‘Please identify one or more of the changes above and give more detail on, or provide examples of, how your community work can achieve these changes. Or, you may wish to identify other changes that your community work can achieve or has achieved’. ‘Improved health and wellbeing’ was prominent among the responses, and the respondents understood this in a psychosomatic sense, reflective of the trauma and self-care emphasis evident in question 2b (‘Which exercises did you find to be most beneficial, and why?’). For example, one respondent equated improved health and wellbeing with “psychological elevation from traumatic circumstances, mindfulness, joy, laughter”, another wrote that “music, like many well-being practices, offers an outlet for negative energy and stimulates positive energy generation”, and another respondent wrote that “group music-making” can “improve physical health (heartbeat regulation, calmed breathing etc.) as well as emotional wellbeing”. ‘Improved health and wellbeing’ was generally understood in an individual sense, but one respondent did write that “the *community* can feel more connected, alive, invigorated” (emphasis added).

‘Positive interactions between communities’ was also frequently mentioned by respondents. One respondent wrote that “people learn to understand each other in this kind of work” and another

¹¹ ‘Anon 11’ did not answer.

wrote that community music-making “can model the positive interactions that are possible” and that exposure to these “example[s] of a positive interaction” will “hopefully” mean people are “more willing/able to engage with other interactions”. As one respondent put it:

“I can see a way in, or better, a way up the mountain”.

Another respondent recognised the potential for positive interactions between communities, but qualified this, writing:

“It’s easy to provide a positive, shared experience, but hard to maintain newfound good feelings without system change”.

One respondent discussed ‘Greater safety’ in more detail, writing that it is important to engage target groups in workshops “in order to allow them develop their self-confidence” and considered that interactions between communities in the absence of safety can be harmful to peacebuilding:

“It is extremely important to first establish that a community feels safe and believe in their power AS a community before any interactions. In fact, a forced interaction can have negative results”.

(underlining in original)

5. Discussion/interpretation

The results of the survey show some clear impacts on participants’ practices as a result of the training – this was especially the case for the trauma and self-care aspects of the programme.

Finding 1: Pedagogically, the participants valued the opportunities to apply their newly learned skills through the assignments, and practical skills were considered to have been those most developed through the training.

The MwB Theory of Change emphasises creativity as a key part of the change process mechanism. However, creative music skills were not considered by participants to have been significantly developed during the training (at least as compared with the ‘practical skills’ of group facilitation and communication skills). This may be a result of the participants’ (generally) very high level of musical ability and experience – the cohort was already endowed with significant creative ability, and thus the practical elements of the training were considered to be most beneficial. This is borne-out in the respondents’ reflections on creativity in the programme, with participants reporting being taken out of their musical “comfort zones”, and especially in the repeated phrase: “less is more” – the challenge is to keep it simple, despite their considerable technical abilities.

The survey results also reflect other elements of MwB’s Theory of Change, core values, and principles.

Finding 2: 'Safety' emerged as a prominent theme and was considered by many of the survey respondents to be preeminent in establishing or maintaining 'peace' in a community. However, when asked to consider the potential impacts of community music-making (or similar) initiatives, safety was not as prominent, while 'improved health and well-being' was almost unanimously identified and this was framed very much in terms of trauma and self-care at the individual level.

Music and arts programmes were ranked second behind safety in terms of their perceived importance for 'peacebuilding', but *these initiatives were not perceived as being effective in transforming the level of safety in a community*. This apparent tension may stem from differing interpretations of 'safety' according to the context – in question 3 it is understood in an individual sense, in question four it is applied at the community level. This points to something of a disconnect between the individual and the community in the participants' conception of the changes and impacts that community music-making initiatives can achieve – individual change is achievable, but changes at the community level are not as clearly recognised as being achievable. An individual emphasis is also reflected in the prominence of trauma and self-care in question 2b.

This personalistic focus is tempered with the frequent identification of 'positive interactions between communities' as a change achieved by community music-making initiatives – and this reflects the MwB principle of inclusion as well as aspects of the Theory of Change such as 'breaking the cycle of fear, prejudice and mutual distrust' (MwB Theory of Change, part 3 [Appendix A version]).

MwB's goal is to connect people through music, but the participants' individual emphasis is not necessarily a shortcoming in this regard, and can be viewed as reflecting MwB's 'bottom-up' conception of social change, which begins at the individual level 'by promoting empathy [and] agency' while concurrently (or subsequently) promoting 'community' and the bringing together of 'people from different backgrounds'.

Finding 3: The understanding of a progressive, bottom-up (or rippling out from the personal out to the communal) process of transformation was explicitly expressed by some of the respondents, and was also evident in the respondents' distrust of 'Political dialogue' (understood as top-down, state-centred Politicking).

6. Conclusion (and recommendation)

From the survey results, the participants in the MwB ToT programme have clearly reported a positive impact on their practice, and as such the training will be likely to have a subsequent impact on the people who are trained by these trainers, and ultimately this impact will be felt by the people who participate in community music-making initiatives. (The QUB 'Sounding Conflict: From Resistance to Reconciliation' project seeks to assess these impacts across their various levels and incarnations.)

MwB's core values, principles and Theory of Change are reflected in the survey responses, but there is an identifiable skew towards a personalistic focus, which is couched in a trauma and self-care sensibility. Individual transformation and trauma and self-care techniques are, as discussed, essential to MwB's principles and Theory of Change, but it might be suggested that **more emphasis could be given to the connection between the individual and the community, especially in terms of the transformational impacts of community music-making, to ensure that the core goals of MwB's work are not obscured or misconceived.**

7. Comparative Findings: Music Bridge and Training of Trainers Programmes

By comparing responses to the findings from Parts I and II of the research report the results have been further refined, supported or complicated:

- The data from the ToT survey supports the **emphasis on practical skills development**, which correlates with MwB's curriculum content. The ranking of **skills development was quite consistent** across the surveys. 'Technical music skills' was ranked as least developed on all four occasions that the question was asked, which is reflective of the musical pedagogy of the MwB training programmes, which focuses on using simple, easily shared techniques. The skills associated with community work and engagement, such as 'People skills', 'Group facilitation' and 'Communication skills' were ranked highly – they were ranked first, second and third (not respectively) by both the Year 2 group and the ToT group. For the Year 1 group, these skills were outranked by 'Creative music skills' in the April survey, but this had declined by the time of the May survey, as discussed in Part I of this report.
- The **low ranking of 'Political dialogue'** as an aspect in maintaining peace in a community is repeated across the surveys, and because the ToT survey includes respondents from across the world, this points to a fundamental difference in approach to (and even explicit aversion to) top-down 'Politicking', rather than the potentially disheartening influence of local Political turmoil in Derry/Londonderry (such as Brexit or the ongoing Stormont impasse).
- As highlighted in both Part I and Part II of the research report, across the survey groups there is **a clear emphasis on 'Safety'** as an aspect of maintaining peace in a community, but 'Greater Safety' is not considered to be a prominent change that can be achieved through community music-making. It was suggested in both reports that this was to do with differing

interpretations of safety, i.e. as staying within a safe “comfort zone” musically, or being challenged to step outside of that; as individual safety in terms of self-care; as group safety and practical facilitation of that; and as ‘safety’ in a broader sense associated with peace at the community level, especially in post-conflict contexts. This varied interpretation is especially important since Safety is a core principle of MwB’s work. As is highlighted in Part I, Finding 4, this “draws attention to how the concept of peace is imagined in [the respondents’] creative practice” and there may be a shifting understanding of safety throughout the MwB training, and participants’ subsequent community work, that would be interesting to analyse in greater detail. One response in Part II points especially to this shifting terrain of safety, with certain levels of safety being required before establishing new wider dimensions of safety (and the potential risks involved in this process):

“It is extremely important to first establish that a community feels safe and believe in their power AS a community before any interactions. In fact, a forced interaction can have negative results”.

(underlining in original)

Again, this sense of progression and development (from the individual to the community, from one community to more communities and wider society) reflects the ‘rippling out’ or bottom-up understanding of MwB’s work and Theory of Change.

- Furthermore, the discussion of Safety complicates the interpretation of ‘safety’ in different contexts, and suggests that **the personalistic emphasis** identified in the ToT survey could be largely **attributed to the curricular emphasis on ‘Trauma and Self-care’** in that training programme, which was a less significant aspect of the Derry/Londonderry training.
- **‘Political dialogue’** was given a consistently low ranking by the respondents in each of the four surveys (‘Transport was ranked as lowest in three of the surveys, but it jumps up to third place ranking for the Year 1 May survey). An explanation for this change may perhaps be participants’ identification with “grassroots’ activism”. This was augmented with responses, as especially highlighted in Part II of this report, that described mainstream political dialogue as “doing more harm than good”. This suggests that participants viewed ‘Politics’ negatively, which was supported by responses in the ToT survey, for example:

“movements build up from the bottom and override politics”.

“Typical political practices should be transformed”.

The interpretation of ‘Political’ here is that of top-down institutional and state-based ‘Politicking’. Of course, many of the interpersonal skills that the respondents reported as being highly developed through the MwB training can also be understood as ‘political’ (People skills, Communication skills, Group facilitation – see Part I of this report) but the key difference is that these are understood in a bottom-up sense, in opposition to the top-down ‘Politics’ of state institutions, in other words providing a ‘micro-political’ perspective. This bottom-up approach is core to MwB’s Theory of Change, Core Values and Principles, and is

also reflected in the relationship between personal transformation and community transformation, discussed further, below.

- In the ToT survey in Part II, discussion focussed on trainees' perceptions of change achievable through community music-making. 'Improvement in health and wellbeing' was ranked higher than 'Positive interactions between communities'. By contrast, Derry/Londonderry participants ranked their responses to both issues as equal first. With Derry/Londonderry's long history of conflict and subsequent 'peacebuilding', it might be expected that considerations of 'Positive interactions between communities' would be foremost. Nevertheless, those in the ToT cohort were very diverse, many coming from contexts of conflict and post-conflict, so this contextual explanation for difference in emphasis is not readily substantiated. Rather, differences in curriculum content between the ToT and Music Bridge programmes relating to Trauma and Self-Care seems to be the main influence again here. As discussed in Part II, the language of Trauma and Self-Care was prevalent in the survey responses, and this was associated with a personalistic focus. It was also the case that this specific focus on Self-Care was novel for many of the ToT participants, which might further explain the strong emphasis on 'health and wellbeing'.
- Nonetheless, in the ToT survey, 'Positive interactions between communities' was still the second most highly ranked option for this question and there was strong resonance among participants' responses across the Derry/Londonderry and ToT training programmes, as they commented on how sharing takes place by:

"singing together in harmony – [it's] a great metaphor".

And that exposure to examples:

"of positive interaction" will "hopefully" mean people are "more willing/able to engage with other interactions".

We therefore, conclude that music making can be a 'model for a harmonious society'.

8. Overall Observations/Recommendations

Finally, we pose some observations and recommendations for further reflection and discussion. It is clear that the Music Bridge training has had significant impacts upon personal development, intergroup and interpersonal senses of confidence, relationship, security and wellbeing, both within a single Year cohort at level 1 and between training from Year 1 to Year 2 and between the Music Bridge and ToT programmes.

Recommendation 1: Given the recognition of the role of empathy in achieving the goals that MwB sets out and their articulation by the participants themselves, it would be useful to delineate the significance of **different forms of empathic connections** in the training provided and their outworking at local levels in relation to wellbeing among practitioners' clients in Northern Ireland and being explicit about this in the profiling of the programmes.

Recommendation 2: MwB community music leaders could consider ways of **incorporating architectural, geographical, relational and conceptual spaces and sounds with reflection and analysis** of their impacts through creative practice, in order to explore how this can enhance sense, emotion, action and the 'ethics of attunement' among trainees and the clients with whom they work.

Recommendation 3: Taking sound, listening and **the 'ethics of attunement' as a key foundation** that underpins senses of empathy in the programme could provide additional insights into MwB's Theory of Change. While empathy may be seen as extending from moral virtues of 'generosity, humility, patience and courage' (Rood and Manthey 2016), structural relations of power, hierarchy and historical dialogue and practice also inform how the complexities and dilemmas of listening are received.

Recommendation 4: In training future community music leaders in the art of empathy, it also seems important to **engage with the impediments and obstructions to empathetic development**, not just at individual levels but more broadly as a means of strengthening community and social networks to address perceived points of resistance externally that may emerge and impact on their practice.

Appendix A

Musicians without Borders Theory of Change:

1. Summary statement

If people have access to active music making and creating, it will help them to connect to people and to break the cycle of fear, prejudice and mutual distrust.

2. Problem statement

- a. Vicious cycle of fear, prejudice and mutual distrust feeding self-perpetuating conflict.
- b. Effects of war and conflict on people and communities: isolation, fear, marginalization, division and trauma.

3. Overall goal

Breaking the cycle of fear, prejudice and mutual distrust by promoting empathy, agency and community using the power of music.

4. Change process

In cooperation with local partners and at local requests, music is used to offer training and capacity building. The mechanism at the heart of the change is music's unique ability to create empathy and to connect people. Spiral: ownership + creativity + creation → empowerment

Musicians without Borders 'Core Values' (from Community Music Leadership Training Curriculum, March 2017):

- We use music as a tool for bridging divides and promoting social change.
- We strive to increase empathy among all participants.
- We strive to cultivate a culture of nonviolence.

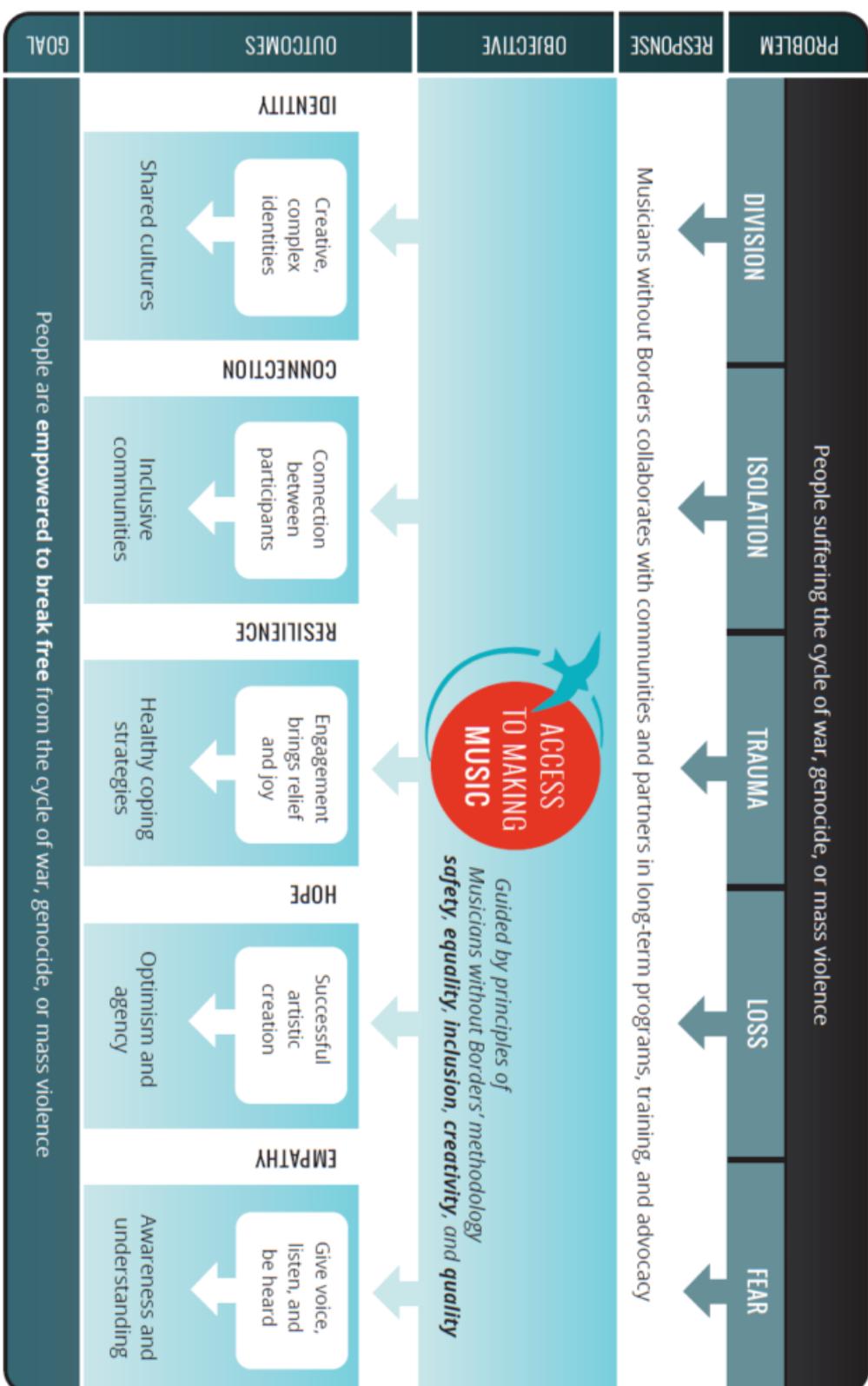
Musicians without Borders 'Principles of Our Work' (from Community Music Leadership Training Curriculum, March 2017):

- **EQUALITY:** Everyone is welcome, everyone is honoured, everyone can make music.
- **SAFETY:** The group is a safe place for everyone.
- **CREATIVITY:** Using the creativity of individuals and as a group we can experience the connecting power of (shared) ownership in music.
- **INCLUSION:** Music provides a neutral space, where people from different backgrounds can meet through their common love of and engagement in music-making and are not defined by their differences.
- **QUALITY:** We strive for a high quality of music-making, as this leads to a higher sense of connection and empathy.

Appendix B

Updated version of Mwb's Theory of Change (the discussion and analysis refers to the previous Theory of Change in Appendix A – this version is supplied for reference purposes).

Musicians without Borders uses the power of music to bridge divides, connect communities, and heal the wounds of war.



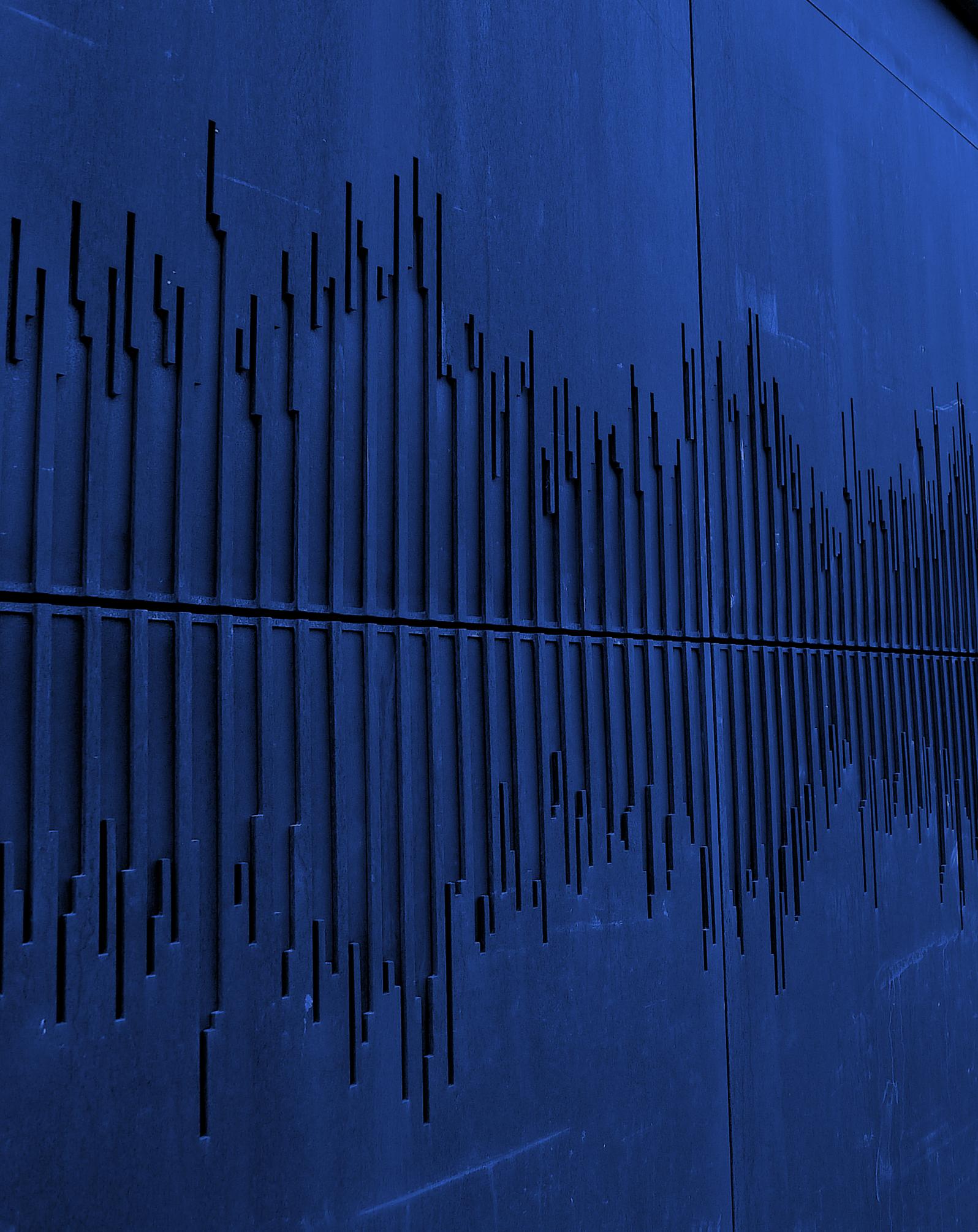
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