

## SMHAF 2019 - Creative Forum

As part of the MHAF [Gwen is](#) currently planning an exciting project around our Music, Writing and Performance project, Fundamental Conduit. [They are](#) offering free confidence building, creative writing, music and performance workshops for absolute beginners and the chance to perform your own writing in front of an audience for those who wish to.

Here is some further information about the project:-

Our project is named Fundamental Conduit and involves participants having their writing set to music by musicians, working on performance techniques using their writing and music and finally getting the chance to perform it with a full band. Last May we performed at a number of venues in Paisley as part of the Renfrewshire Mental Health Arts Festival.

This project has greatly improved the participants' self-confidence, remains popular and has benefitted participants' self esteem and creativity. Participants have found that having their writing set to music gives it a new and powerful dimension. Participants do not need to have any previous experience of writing or music to get involved.

Our project attracts a wide age range of participants, the youngest being 23 and the oldest, aged 67. This has proved beneficial as we have all learned from one another's varied experiences and encouraged inter-generational understanding.

I have identified the benefits of the project as follows:-

- Offering the community the chance to access arts and cultural activities that they may not have had to confidence or ability to do previously.
- Increased self confidence, self-esteem and skills within vulnerable groups.
- Assisting participants towards better mental health.
- Increasing self-confidence and self-esteem by offering performance opportunities.
- Involving mental health and other community groups by promoting our project to them to increase awareness of our services and increase participant levels in order to promote increased levels of wellbeing within the community.
- Offering a safe space to allow participants to try something they may not have felt confident to engage with previously.
- The chance to learn new skills and find undiscovered talents.
- Reducing loneliness and isolation by getting the chance to get out and meet new people and make new friends (some of our participants reported that being involved in the project felt like 'being in a family')
- Encouraging Inter-generational working and understanding. Sharing experience and advice.
- To feel more resilient – to be better able to face life challenges

We currently meet every second Wednesday from 7pm to 9pm at St Matthews Church, Paisley and from January 2019 we will be meeting every second Monday, same time, same place.

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