
BROADENING PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY RADIO

INVESTIGATING METHODS FOR INCLUSION AND WELLBEING

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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes a Practice Research study that explores how better to include people currently under-represented in Community Radio. It uses a mixed methodology incorporating four separate approaches to explore how those who feel unable to participate in Community Radio may be able to overcome some of the barriers to participation, finds approaches that can improve participants' mental wellbeing and recommends methods for Community Radio to include under-represented voices. Its original contribution to knowledge is the identification and definition of a problem in Community Radio, development of methods for inclusion to address this problem, and the insights about the efficacy of those methods deriving from their practical application.

Community Radio has established itself as an integral part of the mediascape of communities up and down the UK and has proven health benefits both for listeners and practitioners in terms of mental health, social and community wellbeing. However, large sections of our communities are not being adequately represented amongst the presenters at Community Radio stations, including women, people with disabilities, young people, the over-60s and rural communities, and so are missing out on these potential benefits as illustrated in the AMARC report of 2007. The way in which Community Radio in the UK conducts outreach to these communities requires improvement and innovation. This study uses a variety of methods to seek to engage individuals from these groups, in order to gain an understanding of which methods are most effective in which contexts and why.

A web browser-based application was developed using WebRTC, allowing users to broadcast live from their own homes and communities, and this application was distributed to Community Radio practitioners. A collaborative practice-research study was carried out in two Community Radio stations in Cornwall: *Source FM* in Falmouth and *CHBN* in Truro using the developed application. A podcast and radio show, *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, was developed in collaboration with mental health charity, Cornwall Mind, using a self-help group structure. Each of these approaches was used to create new broadcast content by individuals and communities which Community Radio currently fails to adequately represent. The data and practice from each were then analysed to understand how diversifying approaches to engagement can improve the diversity of Community Radio in the UK. A podcast

PhDCasting was used as a reflexive tool as part of the Practice Research method, bringing audio practice into the centre of the research method and reflective process.

Keywords: Community Radio, WebRTC, Community Media

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PRACTICE ELEMENT

In addition to this written document, the thesis consists of an audio documentary, detailing the work and presenting its findings. The audio file is presented in an attached USB stick in MP3 and WAV format, as well as being archived on the internet at the relevant URL.

Audio Documentary https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhBod4mvIVTh_BgLp?e=wlQ7fd
(Duration: 57:15)

More audio of the various podcasts and radio shows created as a part of this PhD are included in Appendix B.

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

AMARC	Association Mondiale Des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires (World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters)
API	Application Programming Interface
ASTSYM	A Space to Speak Your Mind
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CHBN	Cornwall Health Broadcasting Network
CR	Community Radio
CSS	Cascading Style Sheet
ECMA	European Computer Manufacturers Association
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
ILR	Independent Local Radio
JS	JavaScript
Ofcom	Office for Communications
OS	Open Source, or open-source depending on context
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PR	Practice Research
RAJAR	Radio Joint Audience Research
RSAB	Radio Saint Austell Bay
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
URL	Universal Resource Locator
WebRTC	Web Real-Time Communication
WEMWBS	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale(s)

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Appendix C: Remote Radio	Link to GitHub repository of source code for Remote Radio
Appendix D: Interview Transcripts	Transcriptions of interviews carried out
Appendix E: Interview Schedule	Schedule for interviews carried out with participants post participation
Appendix F: Ethical Protocol	Ethical protocol for A Space to Speak Your Mind, devised in partnership with Cornwall Mind
Appendix G: Informed Consent Form	
Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet	
Appendix I: Guidelines	Guidelines for participation for people involved in A Space to Speak Your Mind
Appendix J: Constitution	Constitution of A Space to Speak Your Mind, adopted by the group
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FOREWORD

The beginning of my research journey stems from my time as a studio manager at a Community Radio (CR) station in Falmouth, Cornwall (*Source FM*). My responsibilities included training recruits to use broadcasting and audio equipment and how to develop and perform shows. During this process, I noticed the beneficial effects on the trainees, in terms of mental wellbeing¹. I also noticed the demographic divide present in CR, and the idea to try and address this imbalance and any obstacles which were causing the lack of equal representation was born.

My practice is anchored in the experimental side of the stylistic divide within CR. For me, what is interesting, are the amateur moments of unpredictable beautiful chaos, not imitating a form of radio that already exists and whose listenership is dwindling as audiences for audio content prefer newer digital forms such as podcasting (Ofcom 2021a). The decline of local commercial radio does not mean that this format needs to be imitated by CR in a bid to replace it, but rather a new form of diverse formats replicating the diversity of the communities they serve should be the way forward (a rhizomatic approach). In my opinion, this represents not only the most interesting content but the best strategy for the long-term survival of CR as a medium. For me, CR is a kind of “punk radio” (Bedford 2019) or represents a form of Alternative Media (Atton 2002) as well as Community Media. Access is given to all, regardless of technical skill. All that matters is a desire to express oneself. This is also why the CR stations that follow a more traditional format are of less interest to me. The magic of CR comes when people approach radio broadcasting with limited preconceptions of what radio “should sound like” and create something the likes of which has never been heard before.

An important aspect of the project is the idea of media convergence and in particular, Henry Jenkin's idea of Convergence Culture (Jenkins 2014), which is the default at most radio stations, built as they are on a shoestring budget. CR stations in the UK, with some exceptions, are the living embodiment of Media Convergence. Usually, equipment is a hotchpotch of donations, eBay bargains, and repaired equipment that has been discarded by others. According to the 2021 Ofcom report

¹ The spellings “wellbeing” and “well-being” are both acceptable in British English. The unhyphenated version is used in this document unless referring directly to a text using the other spelling.

into media use (Ofcom 2021b), 85% of people in the UK now own a smartphone, with more than 90% of people under 55 now using such a device. A smartphone is capable of recording reasonably high-quality audio and streaming audio over the Internet, effectively giving 85% of the population of the UK access to a mobile recording studio which can broadcast live. Computers now considered old, thanks to the relatively low demands placed on devices by digital audio technology, are totally capable of running the software needed to record, edit and broadcast digital audio. All this means that digital audio and audio streaming technology (and capabilities) are ubiquitous. I use the term “ubiquitous devices” throughout this PhD to refer to this prevalence of technology in the form of smartphones, tablets and personal computers which are able to record and edit audio and connect to the internet. The emergence of a cross-platform, rapidly developable and highly adaptable technology which allows complex, high-quality audio-over-internet in WebRTC (2018) opens exciting possibilities for the democratisation of live audio broadcasting.

What excites me about CR's current output are the moments of access given to amateurs with little preconception of what radio should sound like. The abundance of less than perfect acoustic spaces and inexpensive technology which makes up the majority of CR stations adds to this sense of amateurishness. While the amateur or unprofessional sound quality or style of presentation on CR is often criticised, Meadows et al (2007) report that people who listen to CR find this personable and relatable style to be one aspect of CR that is warmly appreciated. The word “amateur” derives ultimately from the Latin “amare”, to love, and the presenters on CR, by and large, exhibit a love for their craft and the communities to which they belong. In terms of this PhD, the style of audio content which is produced will always be a consideration: the idea is not to create “slick” radio, but radio that is of a standard currently being broadcast on CR. That is possible using mobile phones & laptop microphones and open-source (OS) software. Ultimately a polished or professional aesthetic is not something which this study aspired to. To reiterate, what excites me has always been the different, diverse, and new forms that come from allowing people without preconceptions of form or genre to express themselves.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will introduce the research question that the study sought to answer: How can the use of practice research, OS software, digital audio, and peer-to-peer technology overcome barriers such as isolation and accessibility to increase participation in CR and what are the potential effects on wellbeing²?

First, I will establish the context for CR in the UK, its importance in the mediascape of the UK, the benefits of participation in CR and the demographic divide which exists and drives this research. Then, I will provide an overview of the structure of the thesis, the chapters which follow and the layout and structure of this document and the accompanying audio content. I will also point to the knowledge gap which I have identified and the new knowledge which this research creates.

1.1. THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question which this PhD addresses is:

How can the use of practice research, OS software, digital audio, and peer-to-peer technology overcome barriers such as isolation and accessibility to increase participation in Community Radio and how does this affect the wellbeing of those participants?

This can also be broken down into aims and objectives.

1.1.1. AIM

To use practice research, OS software, digital audio, and peer-to-peer technology to broaden participation in Community Radio and improve wellbeing.

1.1.2. OBJECTIVES

1. Research and develop a robust survey of CR in the UK, contextualising historical and contemporary practice in CR.

Establish the audience and impact of CR in the study area (Cornwall) and assess its rhizomatic potential.

² When referring to “wellbeing” throughout the course of this PhD, this is shorthand for “mental wellbeing” (as opposed to “physical wellbeing”).

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2. Develop a piece of OS audio streaming software, *Remote Radio*, using WebRTC to allow remote broadcasting from people's communities rather than a centralised studio.
3. Using this software, devise and test methods to increase participation in CR amongst currently under-represented groups:
 - a. Releasing the WebRTC application to CR stations and others with minimal intervention.
 - b. Collaborative practice informed by Participatory Action Research, using the developed WebRTC software, other OS software and digital audio. Work with individuals using Remote Radio to allow them to broadcast from their own homes/communities.
 - c. Developing a collaborative group style show, *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, with people with lived experience of poor mental health. Using a group context and pragmatic approach to recording.
 - d. Create a reflective podcast to inform the practice and reflect on the direction of the research.
4. Measure the transformative impact that improved CR representation can have on participants and their communities in terms of improved mental wellbeing.

1.2. CONTEXT

This study provides a novel approach to practice research in CR, specifically providing insights into methods that have the potential to broaden participation amongst groups that are currently not well-represented on CR using digital technology to improve mental wellbeing. The project also addresses the demographic divide which exists in CR and provide a way to engage and enable under-represented groups. This is likely to have associated benefits of improved mental health, social cohesion, and improved gender equality.

After much campaigning and many trials, CR in the UK started in earnest in 2004 (Scifo 2011; Community Radio Toolkit 2017) growing quickly to over 300 stations across the country (Ofcom 2022a). Participation in CR improves health and wellbeing and plays a vital role in proper governance, gender equality and reducing poverty (Fraser and

Estrada 2005; AMARC 2007; Nirmala 2015; Wilkinson 2015, 2017; Rennie et al. 2017). AMARC's 2007 report also found that "the main social impact of Community Radio is Voice for the poor and marginalized. The sole existence of Community Radio has a positive impact in the communities." There are few or no community newspapers, recording studios or TV channels funded by government bodies. Many factors, including the relative inexpensiveness of radio production, have led to CR being established around the world as the most widespread government-supported community medium.

My practice seeks to address the current demographic divide in CR, particularly in rural areas such as Cornwall which has five CR stations of varying format and maturity (Grierson 2016). Women, people with disabilities, rural communities and people over 60 are under-represented and therefore not receiving the social and health benefits of participation (Mitchell 2000; van Vuuren 2002; UNESCO 2015). A 2015 report from UNESCO shows 65% male involvement in both management and volunteers. AMARC (2007) reported that women make up only 28% of leadership and technical positions. Van Vuuren's study of three Australian stations, found 69% of volunteers were over 40 years old. This project investigates through practice research methods to increase inclusion in key groups: women, people with disabilities, rural communities and people over 60 and whether increased participation improves wellbeing amongst the participants. Cornwall has a large rural population, 24% of people over the age of 65 and one in ten of the entire population report a long-term health problem or disability, making it an ideal location for a case study (Cornwall Council 2015; Public Health England 2019). Though practice-led research in CR is relatively scarce, recent work by Preston (2016), Anderson & Bedford (2017) and Hall (2015) provide strong foundations for development in this area. Preston's work in particular offers a model for a successful practice-led research project within CR, working together with members of the community to create radio content and finding it offered tools for empowerment.

CR was borne out of radical movements globally (such as union and socialist movements in South America) and in the UK (such as feminist and pirate radio) (Augatis and Lander 1994; Mitchell 2000), but has mainly adopted a format familiar to British listeners from the BBC or ILR in terms of programming. My practice also considers CR within the framework of Alternative Media, which gives a voice to those outside the mainstream (Atton 2002, 2004), the defining aim of CR in the UK. CR shares

contexts with podcasting but differs in the aspects of liveness and an immediate, usually geographically specific, shared community of listeners.

My practice uses OS software (Berry 2011) as the OS ethic is an ideal fit for CR, which typically operates on a shoestring budget and often requires software adapted for its specific needs (Correia et al. 2019). One of the key theoretical drivers is Henry Jenkins' idea of "Convergence Culture" (Jenkins 2006, 2014) – media convergence enabling greater access to the means of media production, and in turn an increase in media. I embrace media convergence as a pragmatic approach and the everyday reality of modern life. My practice challenges the idea of the information divide (Jenkins et al. 2015) - the current state of technology is such that "lo-fi" and ubiquitous, inexpensive technology such as older computers and smartphones are suitably advanced to provide the means to overcome barriers to participation. For example, the fact that 85% of UK adults now own a smartphone (Ofcom 2021b) means that most people now own a device capable of producing radio content.

The start of the project was a survey of the listenership of CR in Cornwall and a rhizomatic analysis of the impact which CR in Cornwall has, in order to establish the impact that CR can have on a community in which it operates. From there I developed a piece of OS software, Remote Radio which I used to allow people from under-represented groups to broadcast live from their homes on CR. Alongside this approach I also developed a group mental health radio show *A Space to Speak Your Mind* (ASTSYM). The thesis tests whether the working from home approach enables people to take part, or whether the traditional centralised studio with a more supportive atmosphere is better suited to encouraging participation from under-represented groups. Existing audio over internet software could be used, but I also wanted to test if there is a need for an OS solution, which might be embraced by CR stations across the UK.

1.2.1. COMMUNITY RADIO

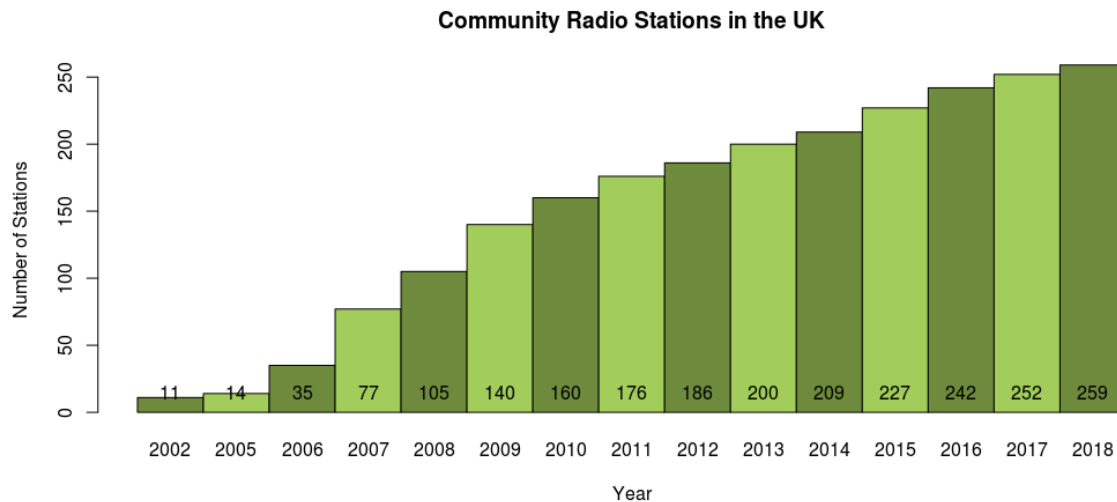


Figure 1 Number of Community Radio Stations in UK 2002-2018³

1.3. THE STRUCTURE OF THIS THESIS

As a practice research PhD, this thesis consists not only of the written text you are reading now. I also submit as part of the thesis selected audio files which are comprised of excerpts of the project's audio practice, together with an audio narration that sets them in context and explains their contribution to the thesis. The written text will refer to some of these audio submissions. It is hoped that the combination of audio and written text will provide more insight into the nature of the practice than a purely written work, and as audio is the medium for the research, listening to the audio is a more direct way to experience the practice. As a practice research PhD, the knowledge is contained not only in the written submission, but also in the practical work. The radio shows and podcasts developed as a part of the work contain new knowledge within them as a part of the process which led to their creation.

The structure of the audio submission is as follows. I have created an hour-long audio documentary about each aspect of the research. Links to the archived copy of this is included in Appendix A. There is also a table of contents for each audio file in this appendix. References to audio files are included in the text where relevant to highlight specific points. The reader is encouraged to listen to the audio with the text. Where links are provided in the text these can be clicked on to take you to that part of the

³ Graph created by the researcher from data in (Ofcom 2022a)

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audio file in an online resource. It is hoped that the audio and text together provide a sum more than its parts.

The written part of the submission (this document) has the following structure. In Chapter Two, I present a source review of the current knowledge in the areas of CR, podcasting, mental wellbeing, WebRTC and participatory media practice for mental wellbeing. As well as providing a robust survey, this chapter will identify the gap in the knowledge which this PhD seeks to address – namely practice research which challenges the demographic divide in CR in the UK and finds methods to overcome the barriers to participation amongst under-represented groups, embracing emerging technologies to do so.

In Chapter Three, I present the research design and theoretical framework for the project. I outline the mixed methodology used and my ontological and epistemological points of view and describe the methods used for various aspects of the PhD.

In Chapter Four, I outline the main body of practice research which I carried out. Rhizomatic Analysis is the approach that I feel is the best fit for increasing inclusion in CR in the UK. I explore the validity of a rhizomatic approach to CR to ensure the social gain aspect and the participation of as wide as possible part of the communities served by conducting a demographic survey of three CR stations in Cornwall and creating a rhizomatic map of one of the stations. The further practice entails the development of an OS peer-to-peer application, a mental health radio show and podcast, collaborative work at two radio stations and a reflective podcast. The work which is carried out is detailed along with the success or otherwise of this practice.

In Chapter Five, I present my conclusions and the implications of my research. The new knowledge which this PhD creates is mainly in this chapter. The thesis finds that new ways to increase participation in CR are possible. The most successful in the course of my practice involved the use of a self-help group in collaboration with supporting 3rd sector organisations. Old and new technology can be used to amplify the voice of those who are currently under-represented.

1.4.OUTCOMES

This thesis points to new ways to broaden the participation in CR by embracing emerging technologies such as WebRTC, the OS paradigm, and considering other

models of access. It establishes that the social or community aspect of CR is very important in terms of attracting people and keeping people involved in CR.

This chapter has provided an overview of the project, and the context within which CR operates. In the next chapter I will conduct a review of the literature and practice around the fields of study for the PhD and I will establish the knowledge gap which exists in the current research.

2. SOURCE REVIEW

In this section, I conduct a review of current literature and practice related to my research. I consider CR, first in the wider context of its place within Community Media, then I consider it from a world to local view and consider the current situation of CR in the UK. I identify the gap in the knowledge that exists that this PhD addresses. This process allows me to point to the issues I see within CR which my PhD interrogates. I consider examples of practice research in community media and participatory community work as an insight into the other research which is occurring in similar areas to this PhD. I consider the challenges which New Media brings to CR, in particular podcasting, to answer the question of why CR is still an important medium culturally and in terms of my research. This chapter will define why I have chosen CR as the medium to work in and provide the theoretical and contextual basis for my project.

2.1. COMMUNITY RADIO

Community Media is the broader domain which encompasses CR. Community media describes a DIY approach to creating media amongst communities, often with little money or government support (Rennie 2006; Howley 2010). Although centred around broadcasting, CR practice often includes other aspects of community media such as citizen journalism. CR can also be considered by its practitioners to be a form of Alternative Media; the description of the practice or the medium itself depends on the political or socio-cultural point of view of the practitioner. Community Media places the emphasis on the community – aspects such as community cohesion, social gain and empowerment are forefront in the minds of those creating it. Alternative Media emphasises the counter-cultural, viewpoints outside the mainstream and the outsider. By using the term “Community Radio”, especially in a UK context, CR has situated itself firmly in the Community Media camp, although those that work within it can be embracing opposing values. At least from a government support and policy view, CR is seen as an asset for communities rather than an alternative to the mainstream media.

I will look at CR in the UK in a chronological way: firstly, its roots in the birth of CR in the developing world leading to its establishment in the UK; I will then assess the present state of CR in the UK, its strengths, and weaknesses; and lastly, I will consider the future

of CR in the UK, what forms this might take and what challenges and opportunities lie ahead, especially after the impact of the Coronavirus epidemic.

CR around the world has different foundational histories. It can help to understand CR in the UK from a global context to consider these other approaches. In many ways, the establishment of CR around the world reflects the cultural and political landscapes of those regions where CR has established a strong foothold. In South America, CR arose out of a history of protest and struggle against tyrannical governments. In the USA, CR is individualistic, celebrates diversity, and pays for itself with little government support. In Australia, CR serves small communities over large geographical areas and Indigenous peoples. The UK has been somewhat late to integrate CR into its mediascape because of government intervention, the existence of public service local broadcasting in the shape of the BBC and a more elaborate bureaucracy.

The use of the phrase "Community Radio" as a term and a description of a specific medium has its roots in Latin America and radicalism. The first CR station, *Radio Catavi*, was founded in Bolivia in the late 1940s by the miners' trade union as a way for workers to represent their views in the conflict with the authoritarian government (Vierecke 2014). This radical aspect of CR in South America, including playing a major role in the overthrow of the dictator Pinochet in Chile (Bresnahan 2002, 2007), has ensured it has deep roots in the culture of that continent. The political aspect of CR remains strong in South America and has similar potential for empowering democratic change in newer CR cultures in Africa and Asia (Khan et al. 2017; Shahzalal and Hassan 2019). CR emphasises the importance of place and reflects the places in which it broadcasts (Keough 2010). We live in an era of increased globalisation and global connectivity, but geographical place is still important to CR. This geographical connection is one thing that sets it apart from and gives it an advantage over New Media which could otherwise replace it. The developing world is the birthplace of CR and in many ways the area which has the most to gain from CR. CR is relatively inexpensive to produce due to the low cost of digital audio technology and access to open source software solutions and can serve large, geographically dispersed populations. In many parts of Africa there is a tradition of radio listening clubs (Banda 2007), where villagers will gather to listen to and discuss radio programmes every week. This tradition affords CR

stations in those parts of Africa a great amount of understanding and comprehension amongst their audience as well as giving a great audience reach.

The CR landscape is more mature in Australia than the UK, dating back to 1974 (Forde et al. 2002). CR serves Australia's low-density population areas in a way commercial radio would find difficult to monetise. In the USA, CR developed out of the tradition of local micro-broadcasting. Due to the lack of regulation radio was free to develop, although, as there was no government support, stations all had to develop commercial income streams. Lorenzo Milam has a huge part in the development of CR in the USA, establishing several CR stations across the states and writing the seminal publication "Sex and Broadcasting" (1972) – a DIY guide to establishing your own station. The European CR cultures in contrast to the American model are all built upon government regulation and funding. What CR seems to have in common around the world is a sense of giving a voice to the outsider or those who are not represented well by the mainstream media but with a specific community emphasis.

CR cultures around the world have also been heavily informed by the underground movements which predated them. For example, in Italy, the *Telestreet* movement (Ardizzoni 2010), inspired by the Italian media theorist and activist, Franco "Bifo" Berardi and aligned to radical left politics, broadcasting only to a block or two of a city. In the UK, the heritage can be seen to be that of pirate radio, which CR was in some ways meant to replace within a legal framework (Bedford, 2012) and the micro-broadcasting community in the USA.

Howley (2010: 5) states: "community media is a notoriously vague concept". Raymond Williams (1976) notes the difficulties in defining community in "Keywords" but states that what distinguishes it from other similar concepts is: "working directly with people", and also: "[w]hat is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organization (state, nation, society, etc.) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term". Williams (1973) acknowledges the aspect of place in his definition of "knowable communities" and geographical locality will be implied in the use of the word community in this document along with the communities of shared interest music genre, ethnicity or other affinity groups. Zane Ibrahim of *Bush Radio*, South Africa said, "Community Radio is 90% Community and 10% Radio." (Ibrahim 2004) While this remark may be flippant it emphasises the role that community has in CR. There is often

a sense of community or even family amongst those that present or work at the station. This feeling can extend to the community of listeners and the way CR stations embed themselves into the towns they exist in.

I would now like to consider CR as it relates to the UK specifically in more depth. Lewis and Booth's text "The Invisible Medium: Public, Commercial and Community Radio" (1989) stands as an accurate history of radio prior to the establishment of the Community Radio Order in the UK. That is to say, the BBC were the monopoly up until the establishment of commercial radio in the 1960s due to the pressure from pirate radio stations operating in the North Sea. Gretchen King (2017) considers CR from a broader perspective. According to her analysis, CR in the UK was formerly provided by pirate radio and local commercial radio stations. Terms such as "public radio", "free radio" and "local radio" have been used to describe a similar concept to what CR offers. An officially recognised CR in the UK was a relative latecomer to the CR world stage. Media in the UK has always been heavily regulated and some of the function of CR in other countries was met in the UK by illegal means (pirate radio), public service broadcasting (BBC local services) and local commercial stations, who were often given a remit to broadcast local-specific and niche content. After a series of trials and a long campaign by advocates for the CR model in the UK, the Community Radio Order of 2004 under the then new Labour government (Scifo 2011) allowed radio stations to apply for the first round of UK CR licenses. From an initial application round of 97, the number of stations has quickly grown to around 300 as of the time of writing and CR has quickly established itself as an integral part of the UK's mediascape. CR in the UK was established with an explicit demand for "social gains" for a licence to be granted.

Sean Street in his *Sound Poetics* trilogy discusses sound as an underlying force that links us to the world we inhabit (Street 2012). Similarly, the style and form of the audio content created by CR stations can be considered a link to the communities in which they reside. There is a wide spectrum of different content on CR stations. At one end of the spectrum, stations like *Soundart* based in Totnes and *Resonance FM* based in London offer more experimental output including sound art and live broadcasts such as the live transmission *Soundart* broadcast of the dawn breaking around the world (Soundart 2018). At the other extreme, there are stations that try and emulate the traditional output of commercial radio (for the most part) with a more local specificity.

These differences in the stylistic makeup of stations' output can also be reflected in the general outlook of the station, including the management structures of the stations and the amount of access to the airwaves they give to the members of the communities they represent. More experimental stations tend to also adopt a more open access point of view, whereas the more traditional stations tend to exercise more control over who is allowed to broadcast and what they are allowed to play. A substantial number of stations adopt a daytime playlist, akin to commercial radio, which only allows presenters to play certain music during their shows. However, even the most traditional CR stations will have open access to some portion of their schedule, generally more in the evening/weekends. It is interesting to note that Lewis and Booth (1989) attribute the "failure" of local radio and the foundation of CR to a tendency amongst local commercial radio stations to aspire to traditional formats. The three CR stations in my case studies can be categorised according to this spectrum: *Source FM* (Source FM 2022) is more to the experimental side, *CHBN* (CHBN 2022) and *RSAB* (Radio St Austell Bay 2022) more traditional. There is little research into the content of CR output in terms of format, although John Grierson's PhD of 2016 monitored the output of the three stations in this PhD alongside *Pirate FM* (Cornwall's local commercial station) and *BBC Radio Cornwall*. His research was centred on the localness and community aspect of broadcasters and their success or otherwise in meeting the legal requirements of their licenses.

The aspect of liveness in broadcasting affects the aesthetic output but also affects the experience both of the listener and the performer (Anderson 1991). Listening live and the knowledge that you are sharing that live listening experience with others in geographical proximity creates a sense of community with the listener and the presenter (Crisell 2017). The presenter(s) will also perform differently in the knowledge that 100s or 1000s of people are hearing their performance directly as it happens, as opposed to the relative safety of a pre-recorded show, with its potential for edits and re-records. This PhD asserts that liveness increases the feeling of connection with the community being broadcast to, and therefore increases the likelihood of better feelings of social wellbeing on the part of the performers (and listeners).

Participation in CR either as a listener or practitioner has proven benefits in a number of areas (Dreher 2017): benefits for women (Mitchell 2000; Nirmala 2015), young people (Wilkinson 2015, 2017; Chávez and Soep 2005), people in rural areas (Al-hassan

et al. 2011; Krishna et al. 2017), LGBTQ+ people (Copeland 2018), older people (Order and O'Mahony 2017) and people with mental health problems (Meadows and Foxwell 2011). Some of these benefits are the same for all groups (social interaction, voice) and some can differ according to the specific demographic. For example, benefits for women can include greater empowerment (Nirmala 2015), for rural communities more of a sense of connectedness (Krishna et al. 2017) and for young people the chance to improve skills and gain work experience (Wilkinson 2015, 2017). The community and social aspect is highlighted in Order's work of 2017: "Participation in community radio could be described as the perfect antidote to loneliness or in other words, a way to foster the joy of social connection." (Order 2017) In Stefania Milan's 2017 (Milan 2017) analysis of what enjoyment CR practitioners derive from participation, "What makes you happy? Insights into feelings and muses of community radio practitioners", she breaks it down into three main "umbrella frames." These are 1) CR as a free space, 2) CR as a political tool for social change, and 3) CR as a collective experience. My practice embraces all three of these aspects. Some of the benefits of participation are not specific to CR but are common to any participatory Community Media/Creative Practice. There is a mindfulness or loss of ego which is associated with creative practice, what Csikszentmihalyi calls "Flow", which is proven to improve mental wellbeing (Csikszentmihalyi 1990, 1996, 1998). There is, however, little research into the specific benefits which CR affords including the connection with a community, social gain and Voice which are a unique combination in CR in the UK.

There is not much research into the audience demographics of Community Radio. Kitty van Vuuren has conducted surveys in Australia (van Vuuren 2002) but data in the UK is thin on the ground. Ofcom's guidelines to CR stations to estimate their audience reach is 10% of their broadcast catchment area (e.g., in the case of *Source FM*, which broadcasts to an area including 55000 people, 5500 people will be estimated to listen in at any point in the week). However, this is in all likelihood not an accurate figure and contains no information about the demographics or listening habits of the audience.

Whilst participation has proven benefits some parts of the community are not currently being fairly represented. Some existing research in this area includes the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's report of 2015 (UNESCO 2015) which shows 65% male involvement in both management and volunteers. The

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters AMARC (2007) states "women make up only 28% of leadership positions ... In technical positions, women make up only 28% as well." Van Vuuren's study of 3 Australian stations (van Vuuren 2002) found a 57.5% majority of men, and 69% of volunteers over 40-years-old, reflecting the bias towards middle-aged men. These figures are comparing the specific demographics of Australia with international statistics from different organisations, so it is hard to state with authority what the actual facts are with regard to the make-up of CR in the UK. The research in this area is not exhaustive and there is a gap for valuable research to be carried out into the demographics of participation in CR in the UK. However, participation can improve women's mental health (Rimmer 2021). Women's relative lack of participation means less opportunity to receive these benefits in mental wellbeing and mental health, a driving factor in the motivation for this practice research project, and a key reason why this research is important. Barriers to participation/accessibility vary according to the demographic. For women, this can be a lack of childcare (McLaughlin 2009), the biases of station managers, or feeling intimidated by an environment dominated by men. For people with disabilities, this can be an unwillingness to accommodate extra equipment or more support (Stewart 2019). For people with mental health issues, this can be social anxiety about the thought of visiting the studio, and for people from rural areas, this can be a lack of good, affordable public transport (Becquart 2022).

De facto access to participation in CR varies according to the policy of the station manager and boards at the varying stations. This can range from a more closed-access model, where potential presenters submit a showreel, conform to a station's existing format and play music from the station's playlist, through to a more open access model which allows anyone who expresses an interest to have a show. The station and studio managers are the gatekeepers. A brief survey of the makeup of the station managers of CR stations across the UK shows that they are predominantly men. This represents a demographic divide in CR, which is also reflected in the administration and technical staff and presenters.

There is no formal structure with regard to the makeup of the content which CR broadcasts and this ranges from the more traditional - which aims to copy the style of successful commercial radio or the BBC - to the more avant-garde which will broadcast sound art and experimental material. The Community Radio Awards were

founded in 2015 by Martin Steer (2020) and give an indication of the content which the sector values. As well as more prosaic categories such as "Best Male Presenter", "Best Female Presenter", others include "Best Outside Broadcast", "Best Community Development Project", and the "Innovation Award". CR stations in the UK can be broadly divided into categories: urban stations serving racialised communities, art stations, youth/social work stations, and hyperlocal stations serving communities too small to sustain a commercial station. All the stations in Cornwall fall into the last category.

Apart from being non-representational, there are other criticisms of CR. CR is often characterised as low quality and amateurish, a pale imitation of the already outdated format of commercial radio, which it slavishly attempts to imitate. It is hard to counter some of these accusations; a quick listen in on a good number of CR stations will illustrate this point clearly. Despite this, there is still vibrant and challenging content coming from the CR stations in the UK. To name a few: *Soundart Radio* in Dartington, London's art-community radio station, *Resonance FM*, and *Spark Sunderland*, home of Sunderland University's Radio MA and leading UK broadcasting academics Caroline Mitchell and Richard Berry. It is the amateur nature of CR which makes it exciting for me, allowing for content that you cannot hear anywhere else. It's very easy to find examples that portray CR in the UK to be the embodiment of Steve Coogan's character, Alan Partridge (Coogan 1991): patriarchal stereotypes stuck to emulating a format which is completely irrelevant to the modern world, and that aspect of CR is definitely present. While this aspect exists, I would argue that CR also does something revolutionary, that is to say, it gives a space and a voice to people who have not had it before in the mediascape of the UK. In the UK academics such as Janey Gordon (2007, 2009, 2012), Salvatore Scifo (2011), and Katie Moylan (2018, 2019) have led the way in terms of UK-centred CR research. The UK has a unique mediascape, dominated as it is by a public service broadcaster in the BBC. The research into CR in other parts of the world is more extensive, in part due to their longer heritage of CR.

Social gain is a key concept in CR in the UK. Social gain is defined by Ofcom (Ofcom 2018a: 13) as:

In relation to a community radio service, "social gain" means the achievement, in respect of individuals or groups of individuals in the community that the

service is intended to serve, or in respect of other members of the public, of the following objectives:

- the provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise underserved by such services,
- the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion,
- the provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service, and
- the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of links within it.

Social gain may also include the achievement of other objectives of a social nature and, in particular:

- the delivery of services provided by local authorities and other services of a social nature and the increasing, and wider dissemination, of knowledge about those services and about local amenities;
- the promotion of economic development and of social enterprises;
- the promotion of employment;
- the provision of opportunities for the gaining of work experience;
- the promotion of social inclusion;
- the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity;
- the promotion of civic participation and volunteering.

The work in this PhD aims to meet as many of these objectives as possible. Gordon (Gordon 2007) notes that social gain has sometimes been defined narrowly by individual CR stations, often by concentrating on one aspect of the Ofcom definition to the detriment of others, and that “gain” (p28) implies a profit or improvement. Many of the objectives are hard to measure, and little work has been undertaken in the UK to measure them.

During the course of this thesis, I talk about traditional CR and non-traditional CR. Traditional CR is CR that takes its model from the BBC or ILR. That is to say, it has hierarchical governance, traditional styles of show, mostly imitating forms that precede it. Non-traditional CR is the CR that tries to be more experimental in format and administrative structure. This is more of a continuum than a divide, with traditional

CR still having social gain and voices from under-represented communities, and non-traditional CR having what might be considered well-established formats and governance, but the distinction is a useful one as I will argue later.

The status of CR in the UK is far from secure. Funding is increasingly difficult to attain (Gordon 2007), while the number of stations continues to rise. Most CR stations in the UK operate on a shoestring budget and are constantly precarious. Meanwhile, local commercial radio in the UK is undergoing major changes, with a diminishing in the amount of local content. Small Scale Digital Audio Broadcasting (SSDAB) is a way for CR to broadcast digitally to a small geographic area (Ofcom 2019). SSDAB can carry many more stations on its multiplexes than the bandwidth of FM can allow, and comes with the advantages (improved coverage, less noise) and disadvantages (more expensive, incompatibility with older analogue devices) that digital broadcasting has compared to analogue broadcasting. (Gordon 2019) SSDAB is being rolled out to CR stations and applications for increased FM coverage are being approved by Ofcom, increasing the geographical areas for CR. At the same time the BBC is cutting back its local radio resources, in terms of staff and sharing output across local stations (Rosney 2022). It might seem that CR is being allowed by default to take over the role of local (non-public service) radio provider from commercial radio. Despite the rise in the number of stations overall, stations are constantly closing, and threats of mass closures are constantly in the air (Hardman 2020).

CR stations are limited in the amount of funding they can raise from sponsorship and advertising (Ofcom 2017a); for the majority of stations, this is £15000 or 50% of income. For rural stations and stations with small catchment areas, such as those in this study, funding from advertising could never realistically be a source of income great enough to sustain them. Most funding comes from applications to funding bodies, including the government's regulatory body Ofcom via the Community Radio Fund, as well as arts funding and funding from the National Lottery. These sources of money are always difficult to obtain, and the government has not increased the amount awarded by the Community Radio Fund despite a tripling in the number of licensed stations in the 15 years since CR was established in the UK. In comparison with other more well-established CR scenes in Europe the UK economically is increasingly precarious (Buckley 2001, 2009).

With the exception of CR stations attached to universities, funding is the greatest issue CR stations in the UK face. Meanwhile, the commercial radio sector in the UK feels increasingly threatened by CR's perceived encroachment onto its territory and recently published a report through its organisation *RadioCentre* (Lloyd 2018) which, although widely attacked as biased by the CR sector, raises valid points about the continued existence of CR in the UK. The report recommends a pause in the development of CR in the UK, with calls for an independent assessment of what 'social gain' actually means (Grierson 2016), as well as better definition from the CR stations themselves as to what they will provide, more rigorous enforcement from Ofcom of CR license commitments and scrutiny of CR funding. CR stations are often found in breach of license agreements or guidelines by Ofcom, in terms of playing offensive content, not maintaining a proper system of Recording of Transmission, and other things, but currently most actions are limited to written warnings, with some notable exceptions, including the sanction of *Radio Ikhlas* of £10,000 for broadcasting hate speech. (Ofcom 2017b) There is also a sense that CR stations are bending the rules around funding by, for example, setting up partner organisations to funnel advertising revenue above the £15,000/50% threshold.

In the last few years, media giants Bauer and Global Media have been acquiring independent local commercial stations across the UK. Global Media has acquired *Heart*, *Capital* and *Smooth*, for example, creating conglomerates that are reducing the amount of local content they broadcast. Ofcom published its changed guidelines for localness on commercial radio in October 2018 (Ofcom 2018b) allowing for nationally syndicated shows. Global Media then announced the national syndication of breakfast shows across their stations (Clarkson 2019), reducing staff and local content (Hardman 2020). It also points to a broader diminishing of locality amongst the commercial radio sector. Regions are no longer served to the same extent by local commercial radio. More recently, the BBC has announced reductions in the number of staff and cutbacks to the amount of local content on its local stations. (Press Gazette 2022; Rosney 2022)

Small Scale Digital Audio Broadcasting (SSDAB) is being rolled out across the UK and CR stations have been asked by Ofcom to apply for SSDAB licenses (Ofcom 2019). SSDAB would allow for greater coverage from CR stations. Applications have also already been accepted for CR stations to turn up their FM transmitters, increasing

broadcast coverage, which had been limited to 50 dB at a height of 10 metres. One of the stations in this study, Source FM, was permitted to do this during the course of this PhD. All this indicates that CR stations are increasing their geographical areas of coverage, while the local aspect of commercial radio is diminishing. Whether these developments will lead to CR replacing the local aspect formerly provided by commercial radio is yet to be seen. It also remains to be seen if the government will intervene or reconsider CR after this initial development phase and with which parameters this might be judged. The UK is also undergoing unprecedented political changes due to Brexit with unclear expectations for the political climate in the short and medium-term. In summary, CR's place in the UK media landscape is in flux and nobody is sure what the outcome will be. Anderson and Rodriguez (2019) argue that CR in the global North is in a state of permanent decline whereas it is not hard to see the continuing need for CR in the developing world, where it plays a major role in ensuring democracy and the spread of knowledge about health (Nyirenda et al. 2018) civics and politics amongst under-educated people, and with their tradition of radio listening clubs. (Banda 2007)

License applications for CR stations in the UK are generally granted on the basis of a pledge to deliver 'Key Commitments'. These set out how the station will serve its target community and deliver social gain (community benefits). They also include a description of the programme service. Ofcom regularly finds CR stations in breach of their key commitments, the report published by Ofcom every month into complaints and decisions is usually peppered with CR stations found in breach, for example, the "Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin" of Feb 2020 (Ofcom 2022b) found 4 CR stations in breach. CR stations are found in breach of Ofcom regulations more often than any other form of broadcasting in the UK (Mac Sithigh 2019).

Ofcom guidelines stipulate CR stations must serve one community, this could be an ethnic community or, as is the case in Cornwall, a rural community based on a small town or conurbation. Examples of social gain include offering training and improving skills for participants or offering accessibility and access to the airwaves for groups not represented on traditional media. For example, the key commitments of Falmouth and Penryn's CR station, Source FM, include the pledge that the station (Source FM 2016) "...offers a voice and a forum to the people who live, study and work in Falmouth and Penryn, particularly those members of the community who have fewer

opportunities to have their interests represented and their opinions heard." Given the pressures from a financial standpoint, pressures from commercial radio and the changing government legislation and an unclear future for the broadcasting landscape in the UK, ensuring resilience for CR stations in the UK is a difficult task. Social gain is an ephemeral term. CR is already doing some great things around accessibility and inclusion such as Vectis Radio's "Short Breaks" CR training for young people with disabilities or ALL FM's "Older Voices" which gives a space for older people to talk about their experiences, however, to a large extent CR in the UK is failing to represent its communities equally. CR is dominated by middle-aged men, people who already have more than their fair share of media representation. In the case of Source FM, for example, it had in 2020, 80 volunteers presenting shows, of that number 70 are men. This meant that 80% of the presenters are male, far from representative of its community.

One of the other challenges to CR is the rise of New Media. Social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube offer live video streaming to affinity groups, which could also be considered a form of community broadcasting. Podcasting is the obvious challenger to CR, as it uses a lot of the same tools and techniques to create audio content. Podcasting is audio content that is distributed via the Internet and an RSS feed that allows users to download content automatically when published, and which can then be listened to offline at the user's leisure. Because of the online nature of podcasts, they can also have other media and interactive elements such as attached notes and links to resources mentioned in the podcast. If we consider CR and podcasting in light of Neil Postman's (Postman 1992) theory of the "technopoly": podcasting is emerging as a new technology that competes with the old one (radio) in terms of dominance. Podcasting is definitely in the ascendancy. Both traditional broadcasting and podcasting are essentially the creation and distribution of audio content, designed to be listened to by an audience with similar interests, whether that be niche interests, music or simply the presentation style or format of the show. The format of podcasting is freer than that of radio content. There are no rules about length of show, station branding, inclusion of news, weather and travel that there might be on a CR station. CR is constrained by its obligations to meet Ofcom's regulations and guidance around areas such as swearing, political content and talking about sensitive or triggering topics, whereas podcasts have no restrictions in these areas. Both share a sense of pushing the boundaries – a lack of reliance on big

audiences, and the accessibility to the medium by non-professionals allows for radical new content (Llinares et al, 2019). Some of the unique affordances of podcasting include a sense of intimacy between the podcaster and the listener (McHugh 2017; Swiatek 2018; Spinelli and Dann 2019). Listeners are usually listening singly (up to 92% of the audience), with 45% plugged into earbuds or headphones (RAJAR 2019), hearing the voice of the podcaster(s) in the centre of their head, creating a feeling of connection between podcaster and listener. Podcasting also allows for the practitioner to create shows on a relatively low budget (Swan 2020). Podcasting is generally recorded and edited rather than performed live as in radio (Berry, 2018). There is also less gatekeeping than more traditional broadcast media (Heeremans 2018), with podcasts that have managed to build sizeable audiences produced, at least initially, using lo-fi, budget, DIY setups. The listener in many cases hears the voice of the podcaster themselves, offering it a great power of emotional connectivity (Karpf 2006; McHugh 2011). There are ongoing attempts to introduce more gatekeepers or to create the 'Netflix' of podcasting with attempts by Google, Apple and Spotify amongst others to be the platform of choice by limiting access to content. However, podcasting has, so far, survived these attempts, and at the core, podcasts are still free to access and, budgets aside, podcast producers compete on a level playing field (Doctor 2016; Sullivan 2019; Berry 2020).

"Liveness", which I've already considered, is one aspect of CR that sets it apart from podcasting, as by and large, podcasting is pre-recorded and downloaded at the listener's own leisure. CR on the other hand is mainly performed live and also listened to live. This adds to the feeling of "community" in that the imagined community (Anderson 1991) of the audience listening together. This leads to another difference between the two media, localness or geographical location as a defining aspect. Podcast listeners can be global and tend to be focused on niche interests, whereas CR stations broadcast a wide variety of content but to a geographically specific audience. This also means that groups within the audience of different niche interests whilst waiting to hear their favourite shows will catch other shows representing different groups' interests and thereby help strengthen the understanding of other groups. Developing an audience for a podcast is hard and takes time and marketing skills, CR has an immediate audience of listeners. This PhD also incorporates podcasting as one of the means of broadcasting content, both alongside and as an alternative to CR. In "Investing in the Podcast Ecosystem in 2019", Jin et al (2019) define the 5 types of

podcast producer, and it is the "Hobbyist Creator" which we are concerned with in this PhD. These are defined by a smaller audience size, the median podcast episode having 124 downloads. New media and technologies are more popular with young people than more traditional formats such as CR (Livingstone and Bovill 1999). New broadcasting tools such as Facebook Live, Twitch and Snapchat offer a means of broadcasting to the amateur without gatekeeping. This may explain CR's inability to attract large numbers of young people to engage with it as a medium.

In the UK, CR can be seen as a social experiment unwittingly unleashed by New Labour and it is the Alternative Media potential of CR that excites me. If we consider CR from the four approaches to Alternative Media defined by Bailey et al in "Understanding Alternative Media" (2007): 1: Serving a community, 2: an alternative to mainstream, 3: Part of civil society, 4: Rhizomatic, then CR meets all these approaches. CR can also be considered as a form of citizens' media or citizen journalism (Kocic et al. 2021). Clemencia Rodriguez's *Fissures in the Mediascape* (Rodriguez 2000) defines citizens' media as a more appropriate term than alternative media, which suggests an alternative to something. "First a collectivity is enacting its citizenship by actively intervening and transforming the established mediascape; second, that these media are contesting social codes, legitimized identities and institutionalised social relations; and third, that these communication practices are empowering the community involved, to the point where these transformations and changes are possible." (Rodriguez 2000: 20) CR fits into this definition.

This PhD was carried out during the Covid-19/Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and this certainly had an effect on CR in the UK (Radio Today 2020). The majority of CR stations dropped live output and relied on people recording shows from home. Some had remote stream capabilities already developed for live broadcasts from people's home studios, whereas others hastily developed facilities often using OS solutions. The amount of live broadcasts was definitely down, although eventually social distancing and rigorous cleaning procedures opened the studios up to live broadcast again (Coleman 2020). Much in the same way that the adoption of internet video calls was precipitated by the lockdowns, so the adoption of remote streaming and pre-recorded content was hastened amongst the CR sector.

2.2. CR FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

There is a substantial body of research which establishes that mental wellbeing is affected positively by participation in creative endeavours (Hacking et al. 2008; Leckey 2011; Slattery et al. 2020). Traditionally these have been studies into the benefits of collaborative and community work in the visual arts, film, and dance. There does not yet exist a study which conducts similar research into the potential improvements in wellbeing associated due to participation in CR specifically. It is hoped this study might contribute to the beginning to such a body of evidence.

One of the key hypotheses of this work is that participation in CR is good for mental wellbeing. Mental health is something all human beings possess, and it can be good or bad. One of the things that can make poor mental health is mental illness. Mental wellbeing is akin to physical fitness: it is a measure of the amount of work we put in or our strength to cope with mental pressures (Baldwin et al. 2021). Several studies point to Participatory Community Media, and more specifically, CR as a means of improving mental health and wellbeing (Meadows and Foxwell 2011; Order 2017). This study adopts the "Social Model of Disability" (Shakespeare 2006) which distinguished between impairment and disability, disability being a societal construct or a lack of infrastructure to overcome the barriers of impairment. This removes the blame or responsibility which is placed on the individual under a more traditional view of disability.

Cornwall is a rural county, with poor public transport. This makes for more loneliness and isolation, which is linked with anxiety and depression and also linked with a lower age of death. Cornwall has a higher-than-average suicide rate and a higher-than-average number of people on disability benefits (Public Health England 2019). This makes Cornwall a good place to conduct research into improving mental health. In Public Health England's Health Profile for Cornwall in 2019, Cornwall statistically has 'worse than average' levels of alcohol-related harm hospital stays, and self-harm hospital stays. The report identifies priorities including excess alcohol, and lack of social connections, which in turn have mental health implications.

Measuring mental wellbeing is an important aspect of this study which sets out to try and improve the mental wellbeing of its participants. The study used several methods to try and measure change in mental wellbeing throughout the course of the practice. The first was the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Measurement Scale (WEMWBS) (Stewart-Brown and Janmohamed 2008). This consists of a scale of 14

criteria (in its short form) which participants can rate according to their feelings at that time (see appendix K). A tool used by many mental health organisations and practitioners is the “Five Ways to Wellbeing”. (Aked et al. 2008) This was developed by the “centre for well-being” at the New Economics Foundation as the result of a commission by the UK government for the Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. 400 scientific papers were reviewed to identify the most common things which improve or maintain our mental wellbeing. The five ways to wellbeing which this report identified are: Connect (maintaining social connections), Keep Learning, Take Notice (mindfulness), Be Active (physical exercise), and Give (helping others). This report has been used to help people concentrate on areas of their mental wellbeing which require work and ensure a mentally healthy lifestyle. This also serves as a useful framework to consider the impact of the podcasting practice project on participants' wellbeing, and these areas will be discussed in the results part of this section. The need to maintain mental wellbeing and the role that the Five Ways can play in this has been brought into sharp focus by the mental health implications of the lockdown measures brought in around the world to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus (Stephens 2020).

To summarise CR in the UK, it remains divided in terms of format, between those seeking to emulate past forms and those seeking to innovate. It is challenged by commercial radio and new media such as podcasting. There exists a demographic divide in CR in the UK. Despite its shortcomings it has unique benefits to participants and listeners in terms of social gain and mental wellbeing. In order for the people and communities who are not currently being represented on CR to take advantage of those benefits methods need to be developed to overcome the barriers to participation. This is the problem which the study addresses.

2.3. RADIO AS (RESEARCH) PRACTICE

The wider discipline of radio and broadcasting has a heritage of practice research and reflective output by practitioner-researchers. In *Reality Radio* (Biewen and Dilworth 2010) practitioners such as Ira Glass and the Kitchen Sisters talk about their process in creating audio documentaries. There is also a tradition of Radio Art and Research Practice, for example, *Radio Rethink* (Augatis and Lander 1994) documents a Radio Art project which involved broadcasting programs from an art gallery's own radio station, including installations, performances, and a series of lectures. Examples

include *Écrit bruts* by Christof Migone, which broadcast writings created by people with a mental illness interpreted by a performer. There is not much existing practice research in CR in general and even less that is specific to the UK. One of the most pertinent pieces of research to this study is the PhD by John Preston (2016), "Voice in Radio", which looked into the use of voice in CR, in an urban context. Preston developed a new concept and definition of "Participatory Community Radio" (PCR): using Participatory Action Research and practice research working within a CR context. Hall's PhD of 2015, "Radio After Radio: Redefining radio art in the light of new media technology through expanded practice", which explores how new media has affected the world of Radio Art, was also an inspiration. However, this lack of participatory practice research in CR is at the heart of the knowledge gap for this PhD.

2.4. CONCLUSION

The chapter has provided a robust survey of the literature, practice, and knowledge in the fields in which the research is located. It has established a knowledge gap in the area of practice-based research which seeks to address the demographic divide in CR, that is to say, research which answers my research question: How can the use of practice research, OS software, digital audio, and peer-to-peer technology overcome barriers such as isolation and accessibility to increase participation in Community Radio and how does this affect the wellbeing of those participants?

In the next chapter, I will discuss how I designed a process to address the knowledge gap identified and answer the research question and the theoretical framework which underpins the research design.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will detail the overall design of the research for the PhD and some of the theory which underpins it. I will establish the overarching methodology of the project. I will then talk about why I adopted a mixed methods approach and some of the other methods used. The aim of this chapter is to give an insight into the overall design strategy of the research, with any specific methods mentioned in the appropriate practice sections.

3.1. THEORETICAL APPROACH

In terms of CR, my theoretical approach draws upon the work of key CR researchers in the UK including Janey Gordon and her work around the social capital that CR affords participants (2009, 2012) and her economic and cultural analyses of CR in the UK (2007); Caroline Mitchell, particularly in reference to her feminist approach to CR production (2000, 2004, 2015, 2020) and critique of the demographic divide of CR (2012); Katie Moylan in her work detailing ethnic minority participation in CR (Moylan 2013, 2018) and the cultural impact it has had (2019); Salvatore Scifo (2011; 2016) and Lawrie Hallett (2010; 2012) in their work detailing the history and possible future directions which CR may take; Rob Watson in his analyses of the state of CR and social gain (2021, 2022).

Mental health and disability are considered from the point of view of the Social Model (Shakespeare 2006): impairment is an undeniable fact, but disability is a construct of society. For those all to be given equity of access society must take steps to make inclusion possible. It considers creative practice to be good for mental wellbeing, especially the temporary loss of ego associated with what Csikszentmihalyi calls "Flow" (1990, 1996). CR offers a unique way to improve mental wellbeing due to its aspects of geographical connection and V/voice. I adopt Henry Jenkins' notion of Convergence Culture (2006, 2014), both as a descriptive but also as a model upon which CR practice can be actively pursued. Jenkins describes the phenomenon of Convergence Culture as when "new and old media collide". The study embraces open source and draws on Rute Correia et al's paper of 2019 which offers a basis to incorporate the OS ethic into CR: the practice, the administration and publication of content.

I address CR as an audio practitioner, specifically interested in collaborative practice. There are several influences on my approach as a practitioner. I consider myself to be a disruptor of CR – what Wark (2004) calls a member of the “hacker” class. I create alternative media, fully embracing a lo-fi, DIY ethic as described by Atton (2002); to put it another way: giving ordinary people the means to media production. Williams (2005) calls the “Means of Communication a Means of Production”, and this idea is further developed in Hebblewhite (Hebblewhite 2012). Practical precedents upon which this thesis is built include the PhD thesis of Jon Preston (2016), which defines a form of Participatory Action Research in Community Radio Practice: Participatory Community Radio (PCR), as well as CR practitioners such as Bram Arnold (2013) at Resonance FM, and Lucinda Guy and Alice Walker at *Soundart Radio* (Guy and Walker 2020). The work of Paulo Freire (1970) as well is a methodological influence that impacts my theoretical approach to collaborative practice. I embrace Friere's opposition to the hierarchical nature of pedagogy or research. I view the participants in research as co-researchers and that we are on a journey together towards an understanding of a topic. I learn just as much from the participants as they might from me.

3.1.1. VOICE

A theory that I found key whilst conducting the research is that of Voice (capital V). Voice is a term that refers to the human voice as well as the content of speech or opinions of an individual. Voice in podcasting and radio is a key concept to their power to connect at an emotional level with audiences. In this essay, I will use Voice (capitalised) to mean the concept which I will define below, rather than voice (non-capitalised) which will simply refer to the human voice. In Nick Couldry's work “Why Voice Matters” (2010), he identifies two aspects of Voice: the sound of a person speaking, and “the expression of opinion or, more broadly, the expression of a distinctive perspective on the world that needs to be acknowledged.” (Couldry 2010: 1). It is the combination of these two factors which defines Voice and the combination of hearing the person's authentic speech and their authentic story that offers some insight into first-person podcasting's power to connect to its listeners as described by McHugh (McHugh 2011). Anne Karpf (2013a) in “The sound of home? Some thoughts on how the radio voice anchors, contains and sometimes pierces”, argues that Voice in radio (and by extension podcasting) has the power to “hold” the listener together, and to transform overwhelming fears into more manageable feelings. The first-person,

lived experience of mental health which can be talked about in a podcast, is powerful for the practitioner and the listener because of this aspect of Voice. I will refer to this concept of Voice as I see it throughout the thesis, where appropriate.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

I will now describe the overall research design of the project. This allows for a changing and flexible approach to the research and for this reason, I will describe specific research design methods for the different threads of practice in their individual sections. I wanted to allow room for the research to change and evolve, within the parameters I created as long as it addressed the research question. This meant the adoption of a mixed-methods approach and a reflective, responsive attitude to the research design. This impacts on all of the practice, allowing participants to influence the direction of research, and when things don't work well or take off unexpectedly, having the ability to change direction accordingly. By this means the knowledge that derives from the research is as useful as it can be in terms of answering the research question as well as informing future researcher-practitioners and giving practical pointers to others within CR seeking to be more representative of certain communities.

The initial practice was to establish the context in which the practice is carried out by means of a survey of the audience for CR in Cornwall and the impact that this has in terms of a rhizomatic analysis. Through pursuing the research question, the four main streams of practice emerged: *Remote Radio*, Collaborative Practice, *A Space to Speak Your Mind* and the reflective podcast *PhDCasting*. *Remote Radio* is a WebRTC software which allows people to broadcast from their own homes, overcoming some of the obstacles to participation which requiring broadcasting from a centralised studio necessitates. The individual collaborations and *A Space to Speak Your Mind* sought to test whether the social aspect of CR is what keeps people involved or whether people are happy to broadcast somewhat in isolation from their own homes. *PhDCasting* was a reflective and reflexive tool which altered the course of the research and "think aloud" in conversation with podcast and CR practitioners and academics. The development of each of these methods and decisions relating to their implementation were informed by the preceding practice, as will be detailed in the Practice chapter.

The mixed-methods approach was the most suitable due to the diverse number of projects and methods required. The practice itself varies in terms of output: audio content created in collaboration, the development of an app, and podcasts. I have devised approaches to practice through which I hope to gain new knowledge according to the Nelson Practice Research model, each approaching from a different angle or seeking to gain a different insight. This reflects the "rhizomatic thinking" Nelson describes in his methodological model. Broadly speaking these range from a more "hands-off" approach: the development of a WebRTC app, which is then released to CR and journalistic practitioners, to a more "hands-on" approach: one-on-one collaborative radio practice. I hope the range of approaches will reveal a range of insights. The intent is to explore what methods yield in terms of practical output and interaction, with the knowledge deriving from the production of CR and podcast content, either directly or through the dissemination of the software application.

3.2.1. Practice Research Methodology and Methods

The study adopts mixed methods, but the overarching methodology is Practice Research (Nelson 2013) informed by Participatory Action Research (Freire 1970; MacDonald 2012). The model described by Nelson allows for the practitioner-researcher and the knowledge deriving from practice itself. As a practitioner-researcher, new knowledge is also generated by the experience of practice. Nelson defines three forms of knowledge that come from the Practice Research model: the embodied knowledge, which is experienced by me, the practitioner-researcher throughout the process, the knowledge derived from reflective practice, which is expressed in the reflective and analytical part of the thesis, as well as a reflective podcast, and the "outsider knowledge" which comes from the research of others' work (contained in the source review in Chapter Two).

PR is the main research methodology for the study, but this is informed by other research methods, some over the whole scope of the study and some for sections of the project. Particular methods will be expanded upon in the practice chapters which they relate to and explain the thought process behind them there (Chapter 4). Other methods which underpin the whole research are detailed below.

3.2.2. Participatory Action Research

PAR comes out of the work of Brazilian pedagogue, Paulo Freire (1970). It considers the participants to be co-researchers and incorporates them in the direction and evolution of the research. The top-down “banking model” of putting knowledge into students is eschewed for a model of collaboration, where the teacher learns from the student as well as vice versa. This model fits well with the collaborative practice of this thesis. Being led by the participants allowed the projects to evolve in a way that was not already decided *a priori*. It allows for a constant feedback loop in which the direction of research can be altered by both the researcher and the participants.

PAR was practised throughout the entirety of the project when working with participants. Developed from Participatory Action Research is the design methodology Human-Centred Design (HCD) which was used when designing the software application. HCD uses an iterative approach to fine-tune developments and works with participants and users of the software to implement design feedback in terms of functionality and user interface. An important part of practice research is reflexivity, and this was a method which I embraced in this thesis. This reflexivity is also built into many of the research methodologies used, including PR and PAR, including the reflective podcast.

3.3. ETHICS

As people who might be vulnerable were to be participants in some of the practice there was a need to create an ethical protocol, to safeguard those involved. The process of gaining consent was an evolving evaluation as the project proceeded. This was a process of three key stages, similar to the process outlined in the ESRC ethics case study of the *Imagine* project (Pahl 2013), which details some of the issues associated with co-production. During the course of my practice an ethical process was developed which offers a good framework:

initially co-producing an ethical agreement with community partners. This will include establishing terms of reference similar to those outlined on the Participant Information Sheet, setting up an ethical advisory board for sensitive issues, decisions about data recorded and stored (why and what kind of data is collected) and details about output authorship and intellectual property rights were collectively agreed.

allowing community partners to construct their own individual ethical protocols/procedures. In several of the research projects, they submitted a further ethical approval form to the host university's ethics board, to ensure the work was approved. As each project was devised, the process of applying for ethical review precipitated further questions between the groups about ways of protecting anonymity and ensuring the wellbeing of participants. (Pahl 2013)

Pahl also recommends a final meeting to discuss any ethical concerns around the output and dissemination of the project.

When working with vulnerable groups it is key to continue the liaison with the partner organisation as in the ESRC case study outlined by Ward (2010) which also recommends: "To ensure the consideration of the more unpredictable ethical issues that arise within qualitative research we would recommend introducing your own system for recording, discussing and responding to these issues." (Ward 2010)

Cornwall Mind⁴ were approached and offered their services to safeguard the mental health of any participants and provide channels for recruitment. A schedule of frequent meetings with Mind and the partner CR stations was devised to discuss any ethical concerns which arose and offer a forum to discuss and resolve these concerns. Cornwall Mind are a part of the national Mind federation, which is one of the UK's largest mental health charities. Cornwall Mind's safeguarding and ethical policies were adapted for the project, and these were agreed to be followed by all parties. Participants were told they would have access to the expertise of Cornwall Mind should they need mental wellbeing support during the project and that they could contact Cornwall Mind without going through me if they wished to do so. An informed consent form and participation information sheet were signed by all participants prior to any research being carried out. In the case of the group project which dealt with mental health, a debrief was given after each show to check if any trauma or triggering had occurred and a representative of Mind was present. Mind also advised on the trigger warnings and wording for any mental health content.

⁴ Cornwall Mind were originally two organisations serving different parts of Cornwall: Carrick Mind and Restormel Mind. The two organisations united to form Cornwall Mind during the course of the PhD. There may be references to Carrick Mind in the practice, but Cornwall Mind will be used in this document. Cornwall Mind is part of the national mental health charity Mind.

Meetings took place with the CEO of Mind once a month, and more where necessary. The CEO was invited to ASTSYM meetings and came to several. An informed consent and participant information sheet form were devised (Appendices G, H). In the appendices you can also see the Ethical protocol drawn up (Appendix F) and the guidelines that participants agreed to adhere to whilst involved in this project (Appendix I). The debrief after live broadcasts or recording sessions was useful in one context, where a discussion about suicide awareness took place and one of the presenters needed to talk to process triggering feelings. Participants were also offered further support if they needed it from mental health professionals at Cornwall Mind, although no one saw the need to take this up during the project.

During discussions with Cornwall Mind and the participants on the projects, the decision was taken to keep sensitive topics to a surface discussion rather than revealing personal lived experience or talking in too challenging a way about the subjects. When preparing broadcast content, if the subject was particularly likely to trigger personal support was given. Participants were able to nominate themselves for subjects they felt comfortable with and not take part if it made them uncomfortable in any way. As participants were broadcasting to a geographical audience which might contain friends, family, employers, etc, it was an area which needed to be negotiated how much personal experience to give away, and this was constantly discussed between those who created the shows in consultation with Cornwall Mind. Under Mind's guidance we erred on the side of caution when a decision was unsure.

3.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter has detailed the overarching research design of the project and provided context as to why the research methods used were preferred. An adaptable reflexive approach was taken to make the project as responsive as possible to the direction the participants (co-researchers) took the research in. Practice Research with influence from Participatory Action Research is the guiding methodology with methods used as appropriate. In the next chapter, I will discuss the practice as it was carried out, explaining the direction research took, further analysing methods used and discussing decisions made.

4. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF PRACTICE

Note: audio files representing the practice are available and linked to in the text.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will document the practice which I have carried out during the process of the research. I will discuss the various threads of practice in terms of their implementations and data. Firstly, I will discuss the practice I carried out to establish the impact of CR in its community using a rhizomatic approach and measuring the audience for three CR stations in Cornwall, where the study was carried out. Then I will talk about the WebRTC browser-based application, Remote Radio, its development and design process and the concepts behind it. I will discuss the collaborative practice which I carried out using this piece of software, and which was also a part of the design process of the software. Next, I will talk about the mental health CR show and podcast, ASTSYM, which was developed using PAR, in response to the poor results from the collaborative practice. Finally, I will talk about the reflective podcast which I used to influence and record my process. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, I actively sought to make the research responsive to the success or otherwise of each approach and incorporate the influence of participants and other factors. "The key method used to develop know-what from know-how is that of critical reflection – pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing." (Nelson 2013: 44) In this chapter I will detail the decisions made at each step of the reflective process which guided the research.

As a podcaster/radio practitioner I have prepared a reflective documentary-style programme about the practice and my progress through the research. I chose to do this as audio is the medium that I feel most comfortable working in and expressing my opinions. This audio documentary forms a part of this thesis. Some links to sections in the audio created throughout the project are included within the text to highlight particularly relevant points. I hope that the synthesis of audio and text provides a better insight into the work which was carried out than either would on its own. The PhD thesis has traditionally been a long written document but this form is being challenged within academia with Anna Williams submitting her thesis in the form of a podcast series in 2019 (Williams 2020). Podcasting lacks the means to embed text or comments, although strides have been made towards this by various podcast studies

researchers, including the work by Fox & Llinares (Fox and Llinares 2016), when an edition of the *Disrupted Journal of Media Practice* included a podcast recording as a peer-reviewed research article. This was achieved using the online audio hosting platform *Soundcloud* which allows you to embed hyperlinks and text.

Before detailing the practice carried out, I would like to make a note of a piece of practice which was considered and trialled but did not get completed, due to needing to streamline the amount of practice down into a manageable amount. The project was called *Be Your Own Radio*, and was a zine and podcast series, detailing how to create podcasts using some of the methods used throughout the practice in this PhD – using OS software, convergence culture and ubiquitous devices and embracing DIY culture and lo-fi aesthetic. I delivered a workshop at the Fish Factory in Penryn as part of the Anti-University festival detailing how to record, edit and publish a podcast. A website was in development (<https://beyourownradio.co.uk>) which would contain the podcast series and a downloadable zine, as well as links to resources such as *Audacity* and other tools. The idea was to test such a method as a way to encourage under-represented groups into podcasting. This would have allowed a comparison between CR and podcasting in terms of barriers to participation. Although this is an interesting question in itself, it became apparent that it was not answering the core research question about barriers to participation in CR and the project was stopped.

4.2. A RHIZOMATIC MAP ANALYSIS OF SOURCE FM

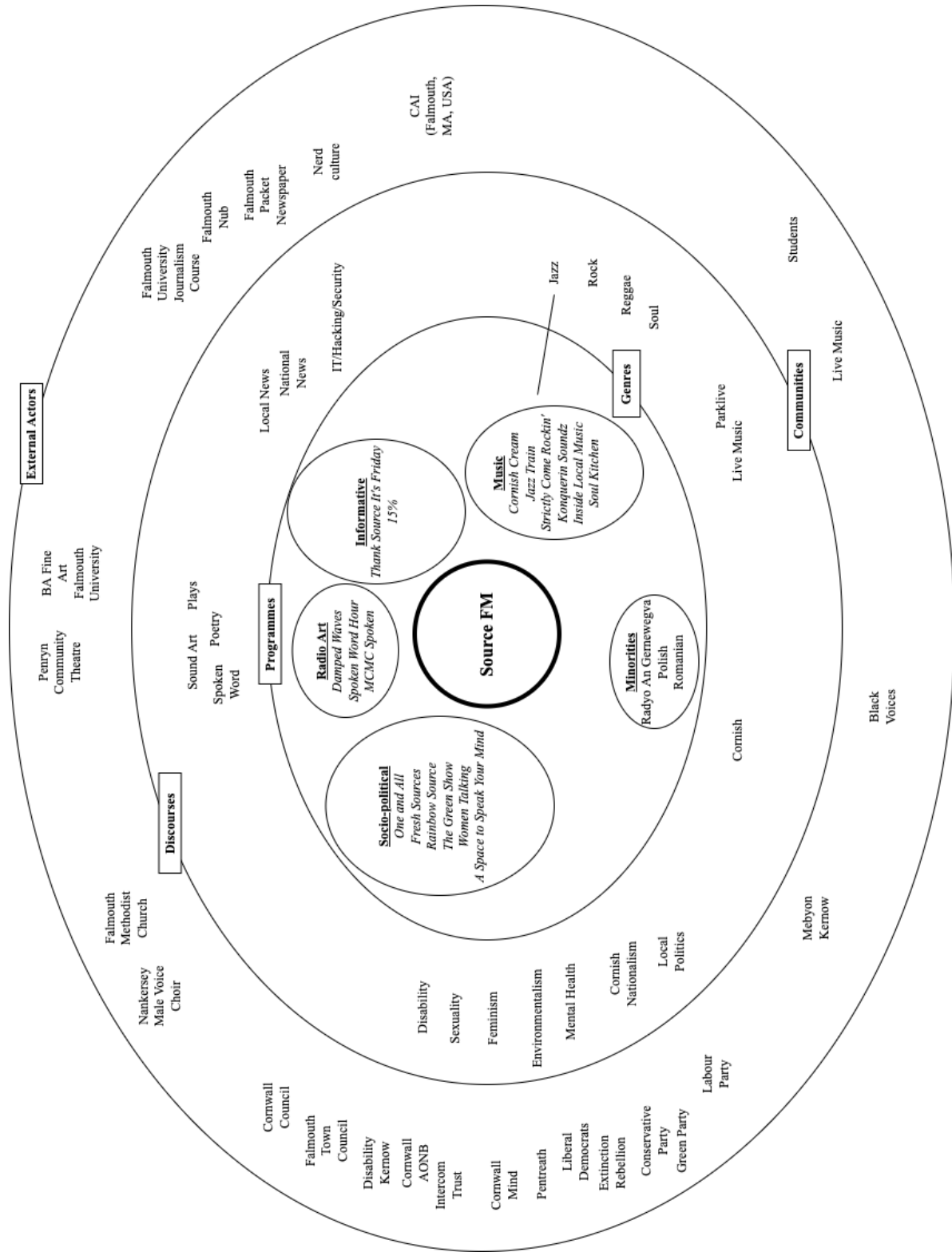
Whilst preparing for the practice in this PhD I found a need to assess the impact that CR makes on the communities within which it works. In this way, I could determine the social impact ("social gain") that CR can make. To do this I used two approaches: measuring the audience figures of CR in Cornwall to see if people listen and using a rhizomatic analysis and approach to assess the wider impact that a CR station can have. In this chapter, I will talk about the rhizomatic analysis and why it also might be a good approach to CR to increase participation amongst under-represented groups. The rhizomatic approach developed in the work of Carpentier and Santana (Santana and Carpentier 2010) in a community media context inspired by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). This section will describe what a rhizomatic approach entails, describe its effectiveness in the CR context and create a rhizomatic map of one of the CR stations in the study.

The rhizomatic map analysis will look at one of the CR stations in Cornwall, *Source FM*. *Source FM* is a CR station which is on the less traditional, non-hierarchical side of the CR divide. Following the rhizomatic map analysis, I argue that a rhizomatic approach should be actively and consciously pursued by CR to increase social gain and stay true to the radical ideas of the movement (representing the non-traditional voice).

4.2.1. THE RHIZOME

The rhizome was first described as a philosophical idea by Deleuze and Guattari in "A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia" (1987). The rhizome describes a non-hierarchical network in which any point can connect to any other point. Deleuze and Guattari used it to describe various organisations including social struggles and power structures. This concept was taken on by Nico Carpentier and Santana in their analysis of two community radio stations in Belgium in their work "Rhizome and Community Radio". Carpentier defines four theoretical approaches to community media: serving the community, an alternative to the mainstream, part of civil society, and rhizomatic. The community model is the largest basis for consideration in the UK – the notion of social gain being very much a part of that model. Santana & Carpentier (2010) use the rhizome to map the connections to other communities that CR stations have, politically, musically, socially and otherwise. After Carpentier and Santana's work, I conducted a rhizomatic analysis of *Source FM*. The programmes from the Source's schedule at the time of writing were placed into a diagram and sorted and expanded to include the roots and connections that they connect to in the wider community. This diagram can be seen on the following page.

Figure 2 Rhizomatic Map of Source FM



From the diagram, you can see that the many root-like branches of the programmes link into various communities within the larger community of Falmouth and Penryn. Various cultural, political and other communities are served by shows on Source FM, e.g., *Rainbow Source* serves the LGBTQ+ community in Cornwall. The various music genres serve their communities – for example, *Jazz Train* for Jazz and *Strictly Come Rockin'* for rock and roll. These shows based on musical genre connect to a wider affinity group than the geographical limits of Falmouth and Penryn. Socio-political ideas are served by the likes of the *One and All* show ("One and All" or "Onen hag oll" in the Cornish language, being the motto of Cornwall), *Thank Source It's Friday* and others. In this way, one can map the various communities and groups within the community which *Source FM* serves (Falmouth and Penryn) and how *Source FM* addresses them. This tool can also be used in a reverse fashion – one could ascertain which communities are not being represented on the map and seek to make sure they have shows on the station to represent them. At the establishment of *Source FM*, the then station manager made an effort to contact already existing community groups serving different communities and offered them a place on the schedule, to ensure as much diversity as possible. Taking this approach also ensures that communities with a traditionally unheard voice are served by the station (meeting the "social gain" remit of CR).

4.2.2. RHIZOMATIC GOVERNANCE

As well as using rhizome as a tool for analysis and increasing the connectivity of CR, it can also be used as a structural guide for the governance of CR. Traditional CR very much uses the top-down model, often with a station manager as the dictator and gatekeeper of who gets to air as well as the general direction of the station in terms of music played, target demographic and any social gain/outreach projects. The station manager would then report to a board of directors for approval or help to achieve their vision. A rhizomatic approach would imply a more non-hierarchical approach, and *Source FM* has tried to implement such a style during the course of its history. It does have a station manager but has tried a less structured approach with the establishment of various groups tasked with the responsibility for different areas of the station: outreach, scheduling, technical, etc.

This section has shown the roots into the community that a CR can have and how a rhizomatic approach can ensure adequate representation across the community. In

the next section, I will take a demographic survey of the listenership of three stations in Cornwall, including *Source FM*. In this way, we can get a glimpse into the potential impact that CR can make into its audience and the social gain that it is making in its communities.

4.3. A DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE AUDIENCE FOR COMMUNITY RADIO IN CORNWALL

This section is based on my article first published in *Radio in Britain and Ireland in the 21st Century*, "Community radio in the United Kingdom: Lessons from a demographic survey in Cornwall". (Padfield 2021) It will outline the results from a demographic survey I conducted in the broadcast areas of three community radio stations in Cornwall. This will point to the audience of community radio in a small-town, rural context such as Cornwall. It will also draw conclusions about the impact that CR can have. After establishing the reach and importance of CR stations to their communities through the rhizomatic map, I felt the need to establish exactly how large the audience is for CR in the towns which feature in the survey. This further establishes the impact that can be had on participants in terms of connecting them to their wider community and thereby the potential voice they can have as broadcasters, and the potential benefits to wellbeing by participating.

As discussed in the source review, over the course of its history, there has been little research done on the audience for CR in the UK. Commercial radio and the BBC generally use the Radio Joint Audience Research (RAJAR) service to measure audience figures, which charges an annual subscription of £7968 for stations with a Total Service Area (TSA) of less than 300,000 people (RAJAR 2020a). Subscription to RAJAR is something which the CR sector cannot afford, run as CR stations are on a shoestring budget, for the most part (Gordon 2007) £7968 often represents the value of the contents of an entire CR studio. Hallett's study of 2011 (Hallett 2011) has previously suggested an estimated reach of 10% for the CR sector based on the studies which had been carried out at that time. Accurate audience figures are useful as a way of measuring the level of engagement of CR with its broadcast area, and at a time when the structure of local radio and CR's role in the future of local radio is very much up for discussion (Ofcom 2018b; Clarkson 2019), proving the impact that CR has made in the communities it serves could help to ensure its sustainability and provide some important pointers for CR in the UK.

To judge the audience of CR in Cornwall, a survey was carried out to gain an indication of the levels of listenership to CR of three small towns in close geographical proximity in the rural region of Cornwall, UK, each with varying approaches to volunteer involvement and broadcast content. These results are analysed for the implications for CR in the UK and the potential of the rhizomatic model for CR stations in the UK to improve social gain and audience in a way that also fulfils its remit and offers a robust basis for long-term survival.

4.3.1. CONTEXT: RADIO IN CORNWALL

Cornwall has a local BBC station (*Radio Cornwall*) and a commercial station based in Redruth (*Pirate FM*), and six hyperlocal CR stations⁵, each serving a small Cornish town, or in the case of *Islands FM*, the Isles of Scilly. This is a large number of CR stations for a small population: the entire population of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is circa 566,000 people (Cornwall Council 2015), equivalent to the population of a city the size of Sheffield, which currently has two CR stations.

Commercial Radio is somewhat nervous of CR, fearing it may steal its audience and sponsorship money. A report published in 2018 by David Lloyd via *Radiocentre* (Lloyd 2018) – the organisation founded to represent commercial radio's interests – highlighted many of the concerns which commercial radio has in the face of the rise of CR in the UK: lost advertising revenue, lack of definition CR's remit, and lack of evaluation of CR's success or otherwise. Commercial radio is going through a period of change and redefinition in the UK, with local stations being bought by global media organisations and the local aspect of these stations being lost. Localised radio in the commercial sector and the BBC is disappearing, and CR is being left to fill the gap without increased government support. Whether this is by design or circumstance remains to be seen but CR is often ignored when local radio and its apparent demise are discussed (Ryan 2020).

4.3.2. METHOD FOR THE SURVEY

⁵ Stations in Cornwall with a CR license from Ofcom at the time of writing are *Coast FM* (Penzance), *Source FM* (Falmouth), *CHBN* (Truro), *Radio Saint Austell Bay*, *Islands FM* (Isles of Scilly), and *Radio Newquay*. Other stations in Cornwall using the description "community radio" but without a license from Ofcom and therefore FM transmission include *North Cornwall Broadcasting*, *Radio Liskeard* and *Radio Looe*. CR stations which had a license from Ofcom but closed are *Redruth Radio* and *The Hub* (The Roseland).

The method followed to gather data is that which is laid out in the 'street survey' aspect of the Prove-It methodology devised by Shember-Critchley (2012, 2014). It was chosen to follow as a robust method that has been rigorously developed and tested previously in the field. This method is a more developed version of the approach first mapped out by Janey Gordon (2006) in the CMA's now-defunct *Airflash* magazine, and subsequently by Lawrie Hallett (2011).

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak and subsequent lockdown and social distancing, data for Saint Austell had to be collected online. The Prove-It survey was adapted to a Google Forms survey and distributed via Facebook groups, *St Austell Friends* (8405 members) and *Saint Austell Live* (1400 members). These are the two largest Facebook groups for the town of Saint Austell. For that reason, data from this part of the survey may be less reliable due to the possible biases an anonymous online survey may contain, as is illustrated by the gender bias in the sample. Three stations in Cornwall were considered in the survey which serve similarly sized populations but represent diverse approaches to CR in the UK.

4.3.3. STATION ONE: SOURCE FM, FALMOUTH

Source FM serves the community of Falmouth and Penryn and surrounding areas, making a broadcast population of about 55000. Falmouth has, since 2005, experienced the establishment and growth of a university which gives the town a more cosmopolitan demographic than the rest of Cornwall. Most of Cornwall has an ageing population (Cornwall Council 2015), Falmouth however has a large population of 18 to 25-year-old students. Falmouth is also a seaside resort and a popular tourist destination in the summer.

Source FM is a station that belongs on the more artistic side of the content spectrum of CR, and it embraces a completely open-access ideology. Shows such as the *Cosmic Art Show*, which invites the audience to create art directed by its presenter, *Drewzy and the Robot* which is presented by a man talking to a robot. There is of course also more traditional content such as music genre shows *Jazz Train*, news content and magazine-style shows (*Jimmy Miller's Musical Allsorts*). Because of *Source FM*'s open-door policy and esoteric approach to scheduling it is the station with the most volunteers (88) broadcasting each week. *Source FM* also runs a highly successful live music event series in Falmouth, *Parklive*, every year which helps it to gain awareness amongst its potential audience. These factors mean *Source FM* is the

station in the study which has adopted the most far-reaching rhizomatic model, the other two broadly following a traditional hierarchical model along the lines of a commercial radio station.

4.3.4. STATION TWO: CHBN, TRURO

Community Health Broadcast Network (CHBN) broadcasts to Truro in Cornwall. Truro and the surrounding towns have a similar population to the Falmouth area of about 55000 people. Truro is Cornwall's only city and its administrative centre. It also has a substantial commuting population of office workers. Truro is also the shopping and travel hub for West Cornwall and most people in the South and West of Cornwall will travel here at some point.

CHBN is a more conservative station than *Source FM* in terms of output and is closely associated with Royal Cornwall Hospital Treliske (RCHT), growing out of the old hospital radio station, and having its studios based there. It now provides both a hospital radio station and a CR station, is based in RCHT and has a health remit attached to its license application. The hospital radio side of the station takes several hours a day, playing requests from the wards and traditional hospital radio content, and the rest of the schedule is given over to the CR for Truro and surrounding areas. There are none of the experimental programmes to be found on *Source FM*, output mainly consists of Adult, MOR content, although there is a focus on the community (*The Community Help Show*), literature (*Bookmark*), and a children's bedtime story show.

4.3.5. STATION THREE: RADIO SAINT AUSTELL BAY, SAINT AUSTELL

Radio Saint Austell Bay (RSAB) is the oldest station of the three surveyed, winning its Ofcom licence in 2007. Saint Austell is a more working-class town than the other two in our study, relying on the China clay industry for its existence. *RSAB* has recently been through a period of great change, with three of the management team, including the founding station manager, resigning shortly after the study was conducted. This change is partly because of a run of Ofcom breaches within the space of a year which has given *RSAB* some notoriety within the CR sector.

RSAB favours the most conservative approach to the scheduling – with presenters appearing in the same slot every day during the week in the vein of commercial or BBC radio stations, meaning fewer volunteers are involved.

4.3.6. RESULTS

Where possible terms and definitions echo RAJAR's to make the data as comparable as possible. The RAJAR data from the first quarter of 2020 (RAJAR 2020b) was used as a reference (the same timeframe in which the study was carried out).

4.3.6.1. SOURCE FM, FALMOUTH

The Falmouth survey interviewed 177 people giving a margin of error of 7% at 95% certainty, 134 of whom listened regularly to the radio. 21.76% of the sample listen to *Source FM* at some point representing 30.08% of the radio listeners. 37% of the population are aware of *Source FM*'s existence. Extrapolating this over the whole population of the broadcast area this represents 11,968 people listening in to the *Source* at some point. Interestingly *Source FM* was the only CR station to have listeners reported outside its broadcast area with two people in the Truro survey saying they listened to *Source FM*.

Age Group	Percentage of Sample
17-	2.35%
18-24	30.59%
25-34	12.35%
35-44	7.65%
45-54	9.41%
55-64	11.18%
65+	26.47%

Figure 3 Listeners by Age for Source FM

Source FM has a broad range of age ranges listening, with an obvious spike in the 18-24 age range. There is a slight majority of women listeners. Reasons given for not listening included it being too "old sounding", and the reception being poor. Things that people appreciated about *Source FM* included the *Parklive* series of events (mentioned by 10% of participants), and people felt *Source FM* was "good for the community".

4.3.6.2. CHBN

The sample size was 130 people, giving a margin of error of 8.51% at 95% certainty. There was a smaller listening reach for *CHBN* in the community with only 8.51% having ever listened to *CHBN* and 20.45% aware of its existence. Reasons for not listening by people who were aware of the station included: it being “too amateurish”. Significantly, several people mentioned they did not think it could be received outside of the hospital and *CHBN* remains perceived as a hospital radio station by the inhabitants of Truro. Positive impressions amongst listeners included the fact that it provides local community news. Criticisms from those aware of the station included the choice of music played.

Age Group	Percentage of Sample
17-	0%
18-24	16.67%
25-34	16.67%
35-44	0%
45-54	33.33%
55-64	16.67%
65+	16.67%

Figure 4 Listeners by Age for CHBN

4.3.6.3. RADIO SAINT AUSTELL BAY

127 people responded to the survey, giving a 9% margin of error at 95% certainty. 12.16% of those who responded to the online survey listened to *RSAB* or 13% of the radio listeners. *RSAB* has great awareness in the town with 66% of the population aware of its existence, Reasons for not listening amongst the people aware of the station again included: “Too amateurish”, and poor reception. The reports of CR sounding too amateurish were echoed across the three stations surveyed. There is an expectation amongst some of the audience that radio should sound a certain way, and CR's unwillingness or inability to sound that way puts people off. This is also, of course, what draws others towards it. Positive impressions of the station included that it was “good for the town”. Criticisms of *RSAB* amongst those who have listened included the choice of music and that the reception in the area is poor.

The listeners to RSAB were majority male (61.5%), despite the sample being majority women. The age range of listeners is skewed towards the over 65s.

Age Group	Percentage of Sample
17-	0%
18-24	0%
25-34	15.38%
35-44	0%
45-54	23.08%
55-64	15.38%
65+	46.15%

Figure 5 Listeners by Age for RSAB

4.3.7. COMPARISON OF LISTENERSHIP AND AWARENESS LEVELS AMONGST THREE COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS

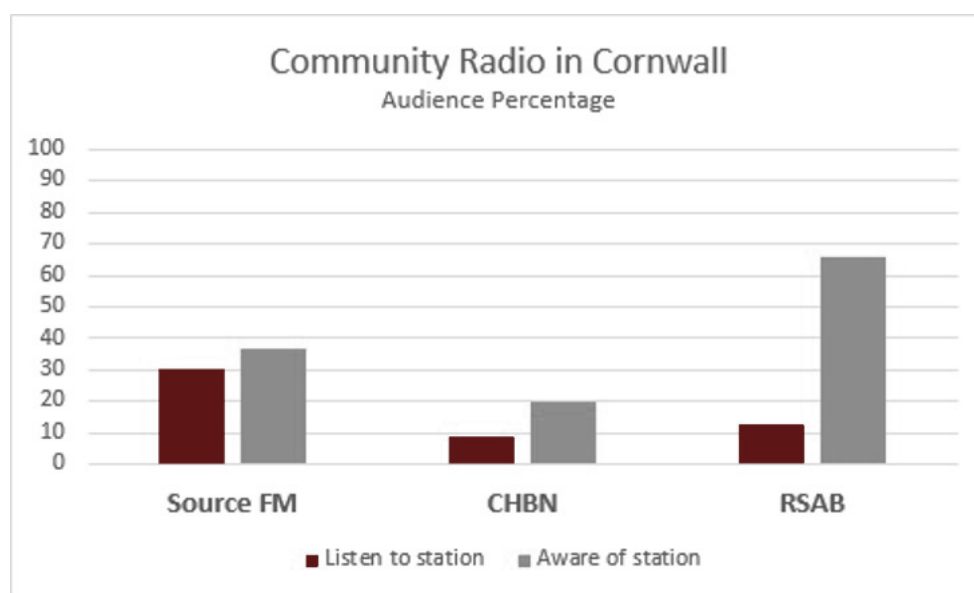


Figure 6 Audience and Awareness at the Three Stations

The results show that all three stations are listened to by a small but significant percentage of the population of each town. There is a small cohort of regular listeners

who listen weekly, daily or monthly. The random listening habits of the listener somewhat reflect the unpredictable output of stations.

Reach is defined by RAJAR (RAJAR 2020c) as the number of people who tune in at least once per week. If we use our sample of those who listen at least daily or weekly to each station as an indication of reach that gives us: *Source FM* with a reach of 8.46% (4653 listeners), *CHBN* a reach of 3.29% (1829 listeners), *RSAB* a reach of 6.3% (3465 listeners). To put these figures into context with a comparison to the reach of national stations, that would put *Source FM* on an equal reach with Radio 5, *CHBN*, Radio 3 and *RSAB*, *KISS FM*, albeit within their limited geographical area.

4.3.8. FINDINGS

This survey indicates that CR is being listened to by the communities they serve and fulfilling a function. Even in the case of the least listened-to station, around 10% of the potential audience were listening at some point. This means for CR practitioners, that work in CR is having an impact wider than the community of the station itself, in the wider community. All three stations share some common positive perceptions and criticisms: that the output is not for them in some way, that they serve the community well and give opportunities to local people.

Some areas where CR is failing include the listenership amongst young people. Interesting to note that to some extent comments as to why they didn't listen to their local CR station, from young people were "it's for old people" and for older people "it's for young people". Despite CR's lack of equal representation of the genders in terms of presenters and staff, women are still tuning in to CR. One could also point to the BBC and commercial sectors for failing in this regard. There still exists a perception of the "ideal radio voice" which by and large excludes women's voices (Karpf 2006, 2013b; DiPasquale 2019) and perhaps women stop themselves from applying to become presenters on CR because of this internalised bias.

The results from the demographic study show that CR has an audience in the UK and is being listened to in small but significant numbers in the areas they broadcast. *Source FM*'s success in gaining audience and awareness points towards its adoption of a rhizomatic model of open access as being the strongest for CR stations in small rural towns to adopt. *Source FM*'s large number of presenters and its many root-like connections to affinity groups within the community it is based in, extend its outreach:

Rainbow Source serves the LGBTQ community, *One and All* the Cornish independence movement and *Damped Waves* the sound art community. *Source FM's Parklive* concerts help it to be seen in the community in a positive light. The non-hierarchical structure it adopts also serves to ensure that it connects to some of the communities which have traditionally been under-represented.

Brand awareness or notoriety does not translate into listenership: *RSAB* has by far the largest awareness in its own community, but this is not reflected in terms of people tuning in. Applying an artistic approach such as *Source FM's* may not go down so well in a more working-class town such as Saint Austell, but what *Source FM's* open-access approach means is that it reflects the spirit of the town it serves more accurately. A rhizomatic approach to the schedule, and perhaps more importantly, the governance of the CR station can lead to increased listenership, engagement and sustainability.

4.3.9. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has shown how the rhizome serves as a useful analytical tool for CR and can be used to help increase engagement in the community, providing more potential for social gain, and amplifying under-represented voices. This chapter points to the potential for a rhizomatic approach to better serve the whole community, and also increase listenership, as more members of the community feel engaged with their station. The rhizomatic approach to governance has the potential for CR stations to remove some of the negative gatekeeping aspects which can be present. It has also provided a snapshot of the kind of audience numbers CR can expect in a context like Cornwall.

This section has discussed an assessment of the impact of CR in Cornwall, measuring this using a rhizomatic map analysis and an audience survey. It shows that CR has a listenership and therefore broadcasters on CR have a voice which is heard. In the next section, I will talk about the development of a piece of software to enable remote broadcasting from people's own homes and communities, which I developed to try and address some of the inequalities of representation on CR in Cornwall.

4.4. REMOTE RADIO

4.4.1. INTRODUCTION

Some of the barriers to participation that stop people from under-represented communities from taking part in CR, especially in a rural context such as Cornwall, include public transport (lack of provision and cost), unwillingness to travel to a centralised studio, feelings of social anxiety, and childcare. It would be possible to circumvent these obstacles given the ability to broadcast direct to air from one's own home or community. With the ubiquity of internet connectivity and devices capable of recording and streaming digital audio over the internet, I decided to investigate this possibility. There are a number of commercial solutions to this problem (*ipDTL* and *Cleanfeed*, for example), which allow you to send peer-to-peer audio between two or more computers, but these are rather technical programmes, and their closed-source nature means they are not adaptable to CR's specific needs. No OS software using WebRTC for live radio broadcasting existed at the time of the PhD, or to my knowledge at the time of writing. Therefore, I decided to develop the WebRTC software *Remote Radio*. This gave me a bespoke piece of software which I could alter according to the needs of the participants in a way which I would not have been able to if I had used proprietary software. The hope was that the resulting application could also be useful for other CR practitioners. This chapter will explain the reasoning behind and development process of *Remote Radio*.

CR stations are enthusiastic adopters of OS software (Correia et al. 2019). OS software such as *Audacity*, and *BUTT* are integral to the operation of CR stations throughout the UK. *Audacity* is an audio editing suite which allows stations to record and edit pre-recorded content. *BUTT* (Broadcast Using This Tool) is an audio-over-internet streaming software which connects the output of a studio to its *Icecast/Shoutcast* stream, thereby allowing the output of the station to be broadcast to a wider audience on the internet. Apart from these audio-related pieces of software, CR stations also rely on OS software such as *LibreOffice* (an office suite), *GIMP* for image manipulation and social media posting platforms. For CR stations, FOSS is a great fit for several reasons. Firstly, it's free as in it does not cost much money, and as we have discussed, CR stations by-and-large have very little money. Secondly, it's free as in stations have the option to manipulate the source code to suit their particular circumstances. And as stations are the living embodiment of convergence culture and their own unique

studio setups rely on the equipment bought and donated to the station, they often require unique and unusual solutions to allow them to broadcast.

Previously it would have been too difficult for a lone programmer such as myself, with minimal specialist audio streaming programming knowledge to have the ambition to develop their own standalone piece of software. It would require developing complicated networking algorithms from scratch, and/or adopting specialist APIs. It would also necessitate developing for different operating systems, and most likely using different programming languages to do this. For this reason, historically, early audio over IP solutions such as *Skype* have been developed by large teams of programmers, with individual members of the team specialising in different areas (GUI, networking, UX, etc). The recent development of WebRTC as an emerging technology embedded within the browsers that we all use daily enabled me to aspire to create my own peer-to-peer audio software to meet some of the particularly niche problems which small CR stations in the UK face. The software developed was called *Remote Radio*. *Remote Radio* is an OS, browser-based application that uses WebRTC to allow audio-over-IP connections. As WebRTC is built into browsers and is programmable using JavaScript (JS), it makes it easier for bespoke applications which are suited to the niche requirements of CR. *Remote Radio* offers a simple interface, developed using a Human-Centred Design approach with the participants in the collaborative practice and allows people to broadcast from their own homes and communities using a browser on their own devices.

In many ways, software is the medium of our age (Manovich 2013). Open Source, by its nature, is adaptable; because the source code is free to be modified CR stations can adapt code to fit their specific needs (Berry 2011, 2015). There is usually a good online community of support for successful open-source applications. Commercial software such as *Pyramix Myriad*, which is one of the most common playout software applications, meets well the needs of commercial radio stations, however, for community stations, with a large number of presenters with different needs, the less flexible nature of closed-source software becomes limiting. An OS WebRTC application could potentially be a great boost to the CR sector. Audio over internet OS software such as *VNC Viewer* etc, and *VLC* which can be configured to send audio are used by stations but require quite good/niche skills in programming.

The emerging technology, Web Real-Time Communication (WebRTC), enables peer-to-peer audio and video streaming via a web browser built upon HTML5, JS and WebAudio. Work towards complete compliance with the WebRTC 1.0 specification (W3C 2021) is an OS project started by Google and implemented to varying degrees across browsers. Google Chrome, the most WebRTC-compliant browser, is actively maintained across all the major operating systems (Windows, OSX, Linux) and devices (computers, tablets, Android and iPhone smartphones), meaning it is possible to develop a “write-once, run anywhere” application as long as people are able to install a reasonably up to date version of Chrome on their device.

To give some context to the workings of WebRTC, WebRTC effectively introduces two or more computers to each other, establishes a connection and lets them stream audio between themselves. This means it has a relatively low bandwidth requirement for an audio streaming server. In some circumstances, complicated networks will require a Traversal Using Relays around NAT (TURN) server, which will stream all the audio via a computer on the cloud, requiring more bandwidth. Another common problem is the issue of latency. Latency is the small delay between the audio departing and arriving at its source, which is introduced during its travel via the internet. This can be a matter of milliseconds, but this is still significant for musical performances. For example, in a piece of music at 120 BPM, a delay of 50 ms represents a semi-quaver, or a 16th of a beat, which can make synchronised performances impossible. Composers and performers have got around this problem by performing non-time-based music or delaying by a division of the bar, or pulsed music. The emergence of 5G which cuts latency times down to as low as 1ms versus average latency of 50ms on 4G networks (Kavanagh and Rogerson 2022) and 10-15ms on broadband (Ofcom 2021c) will mean this problem disappears and complex online video and audio collaborations will become possible.

Latency can be extremely problematic in musical audio applications. Online orchestra (Rofe and Reuben 2017) was a music-based project which used WebRTC to allow live collaboration of musicians. They managed to overcome the problems of latency, by delaying performances with collaborating musicians by the duration of a musical beat. In a radio context, the issue of latency is not such an issue, being problematic at the start and end of switching broadcast between the studio and remote transmission. In all likelihood, the presenter can talk over the tail of an outgoing

song, or a pause of less than a second is not likely to be discernible by the listener. It may become a slight issue when talking to a remote guest over a connection – a problem most of us have become familiar with when talking via video over the internet.

4.4.2. PRACTICE: DESIGN OF THE SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE

4.4.2.1. SOFTWARE

WebRTC is implemented in JS/ECMAScript and can be run in WebRTC-compliant browsers, such as Chromium-based (*Chrome*, *Edge*, *Opera*) or other standards-compliant browsers such as *Firefox*. The internal structure of the software is shown below.

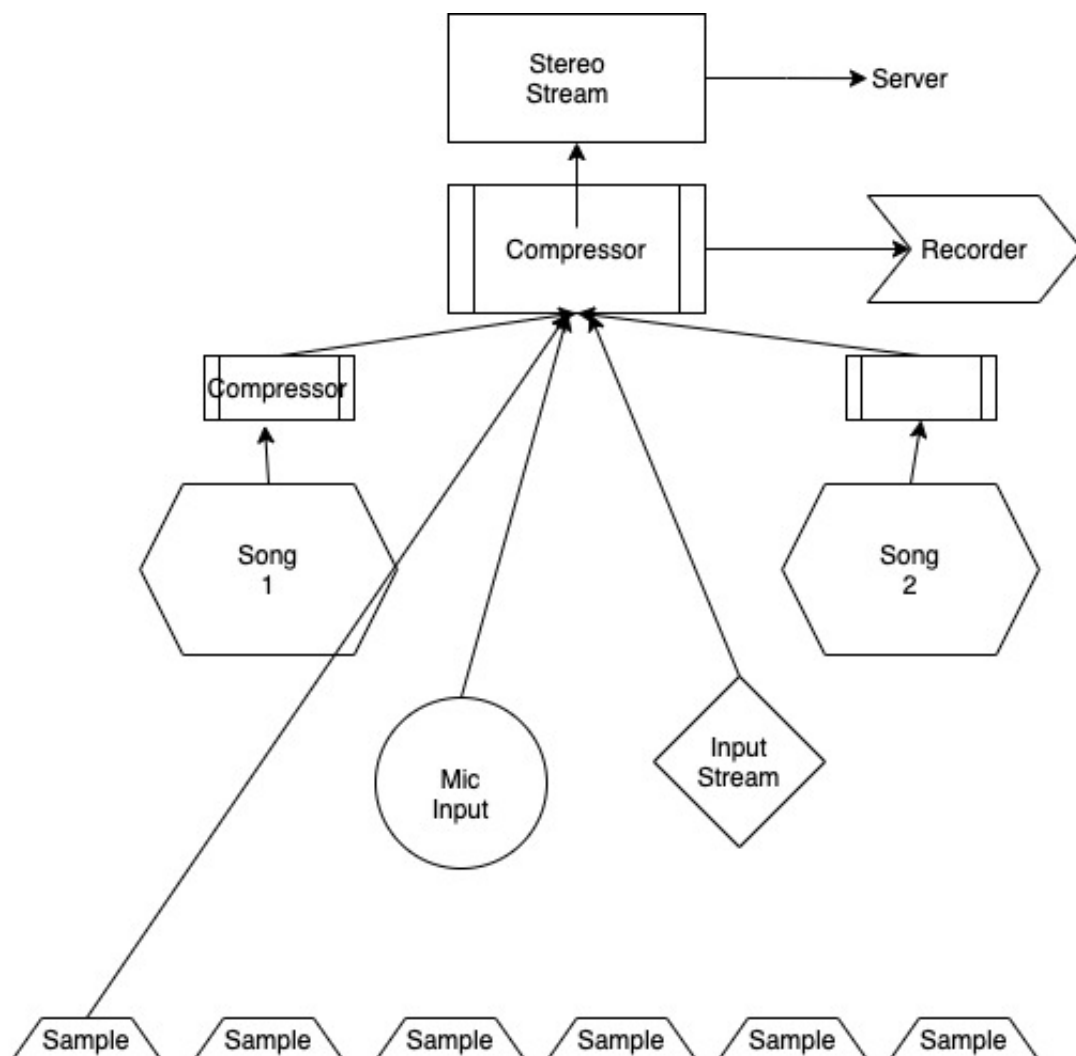
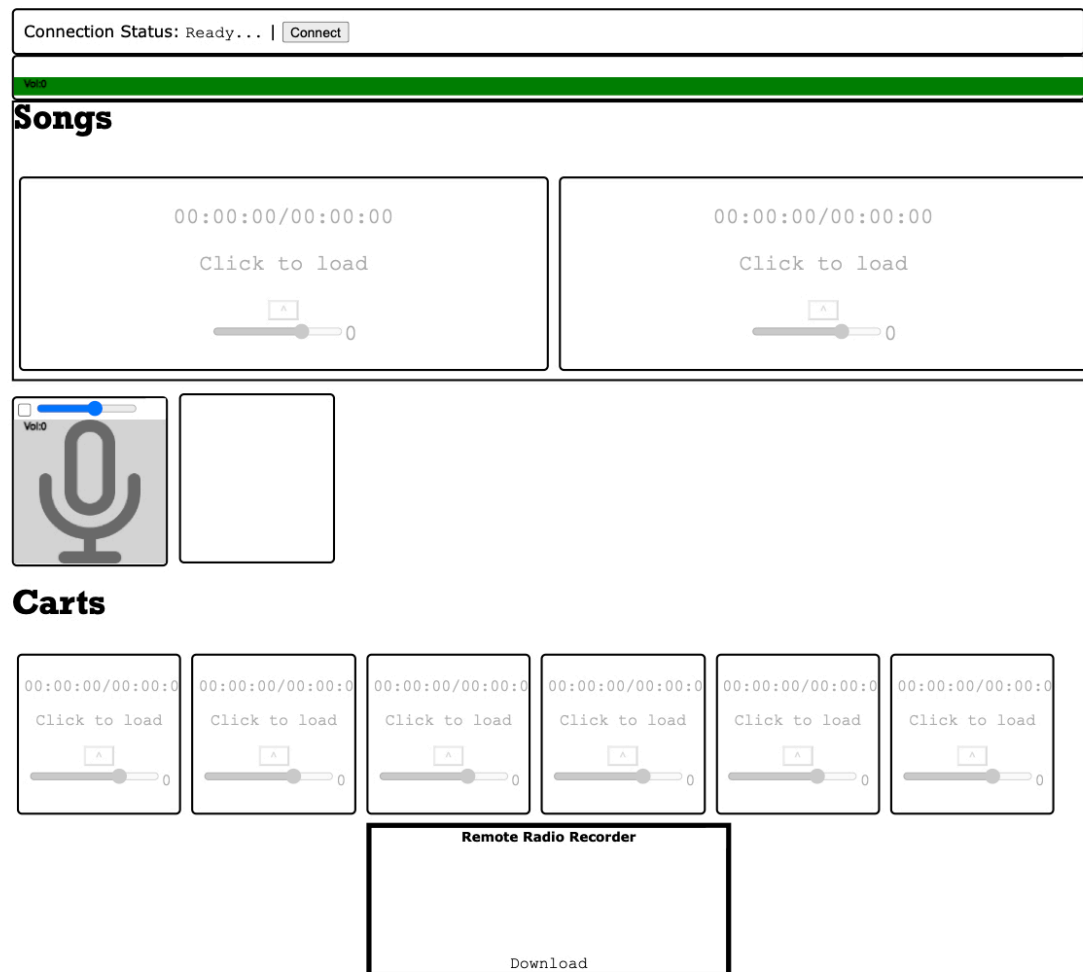


Figure 7 Internal Structure of Remote Radio Application

The decision was made to use the latest version of JS (ES6) to write the code. ES6 is, like WebRTC, a new standard which at the time of writing the software was not fully implemented across all browsers but is an attempt to make elements of JS more user-friendly and easier to read. Object-oriented programming techniques such as classes and modules were possible in previous versions of JS but were implemented in diverse and often bizarrely complex ways. The reasons to use JS6 are twofold: firstly, as WebRTC is only implanted partially across browsers, it does not break the code too much to not support older browsers' versions of JS. Secondly, it makes the code far easier to write and understand. Other modern web APIs that are not universally supported by all browsers, such as MediaRecorder (in-browser audio recording API) and Dialog (easily programmable computer dialog boxes) APIs were also used. The standards for these have all been published and browsers are continuing to support new features even during the period of this PhD.

Remote Radio

[Help](#) | Mode: [Studio](#) | [Interview](#) | [Direct](#) |



Remote Radio is released under the [MIT License](#). It uses [PeerJS](#). Parts of volume meter adapted from code by [Chris Wilson](#) under MIT license. Images are from [Feather icons](#) (MIT license) - some adapted. Visit Remote Radio [home on Github](#).

Figure 8 Remote Radio Application in Google Chrome Browser

Rather than build the WebRTC code from scratch it was decided to use the *PeerJS* library (Bu and Zhang 2018). This is a WebRTC library that wraps some of the low-level functions, making programming even easier. There are several WebRTC JS libraries, with varying levels of implementation and so on. Others were too video-specific, or too high-level, not allowing access to some of the WebRTC functions required. Another reason for choosing *PeerJS* is the very simple *PeerJS Server* script which is hosted via *Herokuapp* and merely tells the two or more peers each other's URLs. One of the problems which WebRTC applications can face is when complicated networks don't allow a connection. In this instance, a TURN server is required to maintain the connection and stream the audio. During all my testing of the software, such a situation never arose and so I did not feel the need to set up a TURN server, although

this is something that CR stations could do if they want to have a more reliable connection.

The UI for the application was initially based on the OS software *Mixxx*, which allows one to DJ in the sense of mixing records together and performing a mix. I have used this software to train people to pre-record shows for CR in the past and it has met with a good response, although it has a very complicated interface. For this reason, I kept the interface simple. Human-Centred Design was used to inform the development of the application. This was done in conjunction with fellow PhD student Joskaude Pakalkaite, whose research area is noise-free digital interfaces. An early prototype of the software was designed, and this was tested with a focus group. A revised version of the UI was built informed by this, and this version was then developed in conjunction with the participants in the collaborative practice element of the PhD. At every stage of the practice input from participants was used to change the design of the software – if people suggested a feature or design change effort was made to incorporate it. For example, the inclusion of a timer which is always visible, so that the performer can be aware of how long they have been on air or recording, was included at the behest of participant R in the collaborative practice, as a result of her experience using the software.

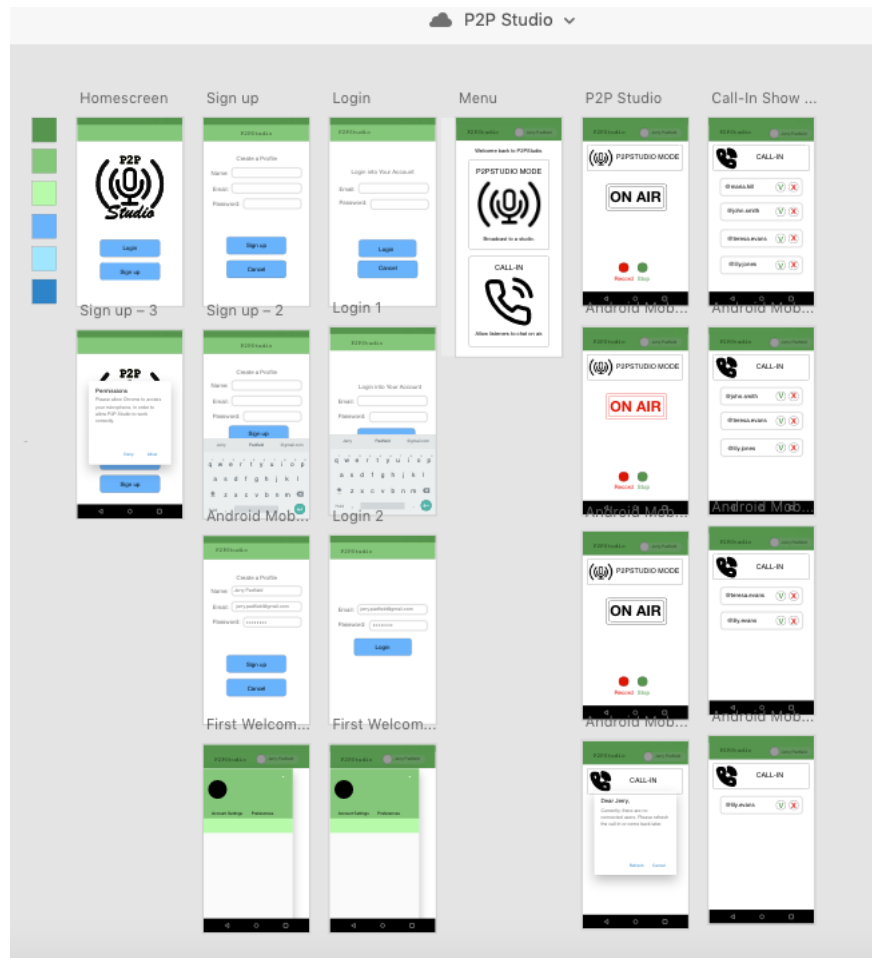


Figure 9 Original Mock-up for P2PStudio on Android by Joskaude Pakalkaite

The focus group unanimously felt the application was a good idea and would encourage them to take up broadcasting, even if the idea of a show on CR had not occurred to them before. The group also did not like the initial name for the application, *P2P Studio* and the name *Remote Radio* was decided upon. They felt there were some possible negative connotations to the word “Remote” but felt that the name overall was positive and sparked interest. The group responded well to Pakalkaite’s minimalist designs and liked the colour scheme but felt they would like the option to be able to change the colour scheme, perhaps also allowing a high contrast scheme for accessibility.

4.4.3. HARDWARE

As well as the software running on the presenters’ machines a computer is needed in the CR station’s studio to receive the presenters’ audio and broadcast it via the station’s FM aerial and/or internet stream. A Raspberry Pi computer was used to operate in the CR studios. Raspberry Pi is a modular and inexpensive computer system.

It contains many different additions which can be put together to build bespoke devices for any situation. The default operating system, *Raspbian*, is a variant of Linux, but other versions of Linux can also be installed. This also makes it very good for programming and OS software in general. The studio computer simply contains a constantly running version of Chrome, with a static peer id to which other computers can connect. When they are ready to broadcast, presenters connect to the peer id and go live at the correct time. In a more robust development, a database could be implemented to enable access only when the presenter is meant to be on the air, together with a secure system for logging in. The hardware was installed at the studios of each of the CR stations in the study so that audio could be streamed in, and, for the prototype, I managed the switchover from studio broadcast to remote broadcast. Remotely switchable solutions exist to make this even easier, or tools like *VNC Viewer* or *Team Viewer* could be used.

As well as the live streaming of a show to air on the radio the application has other potential uses, reflected in different modes within the software. It can be used to record a remote interview in the style of *Cleanfeed*. It can be used to provide a call-in list for call-in shows – the peer id of the studio could be given out on air for people to call in to. It can be used in a stripped-down fashion to stream an outside broadcast, with the added functionality of messaging between remote locations and the studio. All of this can be done without the need for complex technical knowledge, such as how to set up static IP addresses on networks and the inner workings of audio over internet protocols.

4.4.4. CONCLUSION

The application was developed to the point of being usable for live broadcast and I worked with it with the participants in other parts of the practice, informed by their experiences using it. The prototype application is now available on the project's *GitHub* page for anyone to see, download, use or improve. I had hoped that a community of programmers may get involved in developing the application, but this has not happened. OS projects can take time to build up a head of steam, particularly in such a niche and emerging area as WebRTC, and it is still the hope of the researcher that this project can expand. One of the stations involved in the practice does still use it as an easy way to set up outside broadcast connections. *Remote Radio* is a functional piece of software which allows people to broadcast live to CR from their

own homes. It also allows for multiple remote recording locations. It represents the start of an OS project which could allow an OS programming community to develop around it to offer new possibilities and allow individual CR stations to adapt it to suit their own ends. The most important part of the development of this software was that it enabled me to carry out research with people, allowing them to broadcast from their own homes, which I will discuss in the next section.

4.5. COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

Shows produced as part of this practice: *House of Rachology, Wasson in Saint Ives?*

4.5.1. INTRODUCTION

The development of *Remote Radio* as a piece of software afforded me a piece of adaptable software with which I could work with people and broadcast from their own homes or communities, without the need for them to travel to a central studio. Equipped with this tool, I set about working with people who have traditionally been under-represented in UK CR to create radio shows, using *Remote Radio* to broadcast and record. In this section, I will detail a study into the effectiveness of using WebRTC/online recording and broadcasting systems to include under-represented groups in CR, using the software application I developed. I will explain the practice which was involved and summarise the effectiveness of this method for overcoming barriers to participation. I will then discuss any implications for future research in this area. I wanted to work with individuals in their own spaces to see how effective this approach would be. Obstacles which have been identified earlier in the thesis include childcare, public transport (cost and lack of provision), and intimidating studio cultures. Working with people to perform shows from their own spaces would overcome some of these barriers and therefore identify how much of a role they play in stopping people from under-represented communities from participating in CR. Radio is often performed alone and so this also seemed like a logical approach to take. Is individuality reflected in the desire to broadcast from one's own home or is the community and social aspect of CR too important?

To test the effectiveness of the *Remote Radio* software and the usage of WebRTC/online solutions for at-home broadcasting, a study of collaborative practice (PAR) was carried out at two CR stations in Cornwall, to try and overcome barriers to participation in CR and measure whether mental wellbeing was affected. A call for participation was put out via various channels – firstly via *Cornwall Mind* and also via the social media channels of *Source FM* and *CHBN* for people from the under-represented groups to get involved. From this sample, suitable candidates for the project were chosen.

4.6. PRACTICE

4.6.1.1. SOURCE FM

The first practice was conducted at Falmouth's CR station, *Source FM*. *Source FM*'s situation for remote live shows at the beginning of the project was almost non-existent. There was a system for streaming live outside broadcasts which involved using the commercial software *Apple Quicktime Broadcaster*. This was an involved process that involved logging in to the studio via *TeamViewer* and needed technicians present at the studio as well as the live location. It had proved an unstable option and also relied on a complicated networking set up at the studio, involving several static IPs and holes allowed in the firewall. Several live outside broadcasts had to be called off in the past due to the unreliability of the setup. As a result of Covid, the schedule on *Source FM* switched entirely to shows which were recorded and produced at home. Many internet audio solutions were utilised, such as using Zoom or similar. WebRTC was embraced with applications such as *Cleanfeed* used to record interviews.

4.6.1.1.1. Initial Round

With each participant a schedule of training was given. This involved teaching participants about aspects of audio technology, including microphones, gain structure and digital audio editing and showing them OS software such as *Audacity* and *Mixxx*. Alongside this, we developed the concept for their shows in a PAR fashion. Some wanted me to appear in the shows, to make them feel more comfortable, whether as a guest or co-presenter. I then showed them the *Remote Radio* software and trained them how to use it. They were told that this was software in development and asked to recommend or ask for features if they required them, to influence the development of the software.

Initially, three participants were signed up (J, a woman in her 30s with poor mental health; C, a woman in her 40s with childcare requirements and F, a man in his 50s with poor mental health). Initial sessions were carried out face-to-face. Participant F dropped out relatively early, citing work commitments as a reason why they did not want to continue to participate. Two shows were developed with the remaining participants – *Wasson In...?* with J and *The Discomfort Zone* with C. Both shows were with women with lived experience of poor mental health. In March of 2020, the lockdown due to Coronavirus was announced. As a result, the studios were locked down and there was no access to be able to broadcast live shows. Both remaining participants dropped out of the project due to the restrictions and mental health implications of the Coronavirus lockdown. Participant J had developed *The Wasson*

show quite far and recorded location interviews and features for the intended live show. As a result, links were recorded, and the show was broadcast non-live.

4.6.1.1.2. Second round

In Sep 2020. Three participants were again recruited. (R, a woman in her 30s who has not taken part in CR due to childcare needs; AC, a woman in her 50s with poor mental health; JB, a man in his 50s with poor mental health and rural/public transport issues). Two participants (AC and JB) dropped out, one due to deteriorated mental health after several weeks, the other due to work commitments. One show was developed to completion and broadcast on Source FM on October 31st. This was the *House of Rachology*. The participant is a young mum in Falmouth who has a busy working life and childcare responsibilities and so would find it hard to come into a centralised studio to perform a live show. She had been on Source FM as a guest on someone's show and had developed an interest in having a show but did not have the free time to come to the studios every week to perform a live show. Over the course of three months, we worked together to develop the show format and imaging. The concept was it was R's house and in each room, there would be a different feature. So, in the games room, she would play a game, a quiz, etc with a guest. In the TV room, she might have some entertainment news, etc.

The first show was broadcast live (a link to a recording of this show is included in Appendix B). There was a dropout of a few minutes with this early prototype of the software, but R was able to broadcast from her spare room at home using the software interface.

R continued to create shows for *Source FM* using the *Remote Radio* software for 18 months after the initial show. Although live shows are difficult to arrange, she prefers its interface when pre-recording to more visually confusing applications such as *Audacity*. R also asked for several features to be implemented in *Remote Radio*. These include having the recording/broadcasting time always visible on screen to be aware of how long your show had been on the air for.

4.6.1.2. CHBN

CHBN in Truro is based in Treliske hospital. The second round of practice was carried out here. As stated, participants dropped out which led to me changing tack and

seeing if the software could be used to bring people who had dropped out of CR back into the fold.

The existing solution to outside broadcasts involved a dedicated server and using a *Shoutcast* stream to send audio from one computer to another. *CHBN* also uses *Zetta* as its main playout system, which has remote access capabilities that allow people to use voice tracking from home. This was embraced when the Coronavirus struck, and live remote shows were on the schedule. However, this was not an ideal solution as presenters had to log in to stop playout before their shows with *TeamViewer*. Audio via USB and the remote *Zetta* interface were not well synchronised, with a delay of some seconds, so presenters had to guess when they needed to speak.

4.6.1.2.1. Initial Round



Figure 10 Social Media Call-out Post for CHBN Collaborative Practice

Three participants were signed up, (HG, a man with poor mental health from the LGBTQ+ community; DA, a woman in her 50s; DF, a woman in her 60s) but then all dropped out, so none of the original practice was able to be carried out. This points

to the need for face-to-face contact, at least at the beginning of a project to establish the relationship with the practitioner-researcher. In the case of ASTSYM, this happened and then the move to online was made. Because the connection was already established, the project survived, and participants kept up their involvement. When trying to start a project from scratch online, participants drop out more readily as the relationship is not there.

4.6.1.2.2. Second Round

Due to the high drop-out rates, I then chose to take a different tack and contacted people who had not been able to take part in CR because of obstacles. I chose two participants who had a previous history of participation in CR but who had not been able to participate due to the lockdown and the switchover to broadcasting pre-recorded shows. One was a man in his 30s, someone I had worked with before who has a muscle-wasting disease which makes it difficult for him to use traditional mixing desks. He had stopped his involvement in live CR due to the cost of petrol travelling to and from the studio, and the cost of employing a carer to accompany him on this journey.

4.6.2. Surveying the Impact

Participants in the collaborative practice were asked to fill in the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Measurement Scale (WEMWBS) (Stewart-Brown and Janmohamed 2008) to assess their wellbeing throughout the project (see appendix K). This was used for the early parts of the practice, however it felt slightly intrusive and participants were reticent to fill the forms in, so I needed to move to a way of measuring which was easier for participants. This was achieved by conducting interviews after the project was finished and using thematic data analysis to assess for improvements in wellbeing, particularly in reference to the Five Ways to Wellbeing. This method was also adopted for the rest of the practice in the study. The participant, R, reported an improvement in wellbeing⁶. She reported that she would use the software in the future, and has continued to do so with a show on Source FM. She also stated that she would want to do a live show from the studios, when possible, but the software would enable her to broadcast from home when it was not convenient to travel to the studio, for childcare or other reasons. The reasons for dropping out amongst other participants are shown

⁶ See Appendix D for full transcript of interview.

in figure 9. Out of 11 participants, 10 dropped out and only one show was completed to broadcast. This low success rate indicates that this is not a good method for getting people involved in CR. The community aspect of CR is not to be underestimated as the reason for people's ongoing participation in CR.

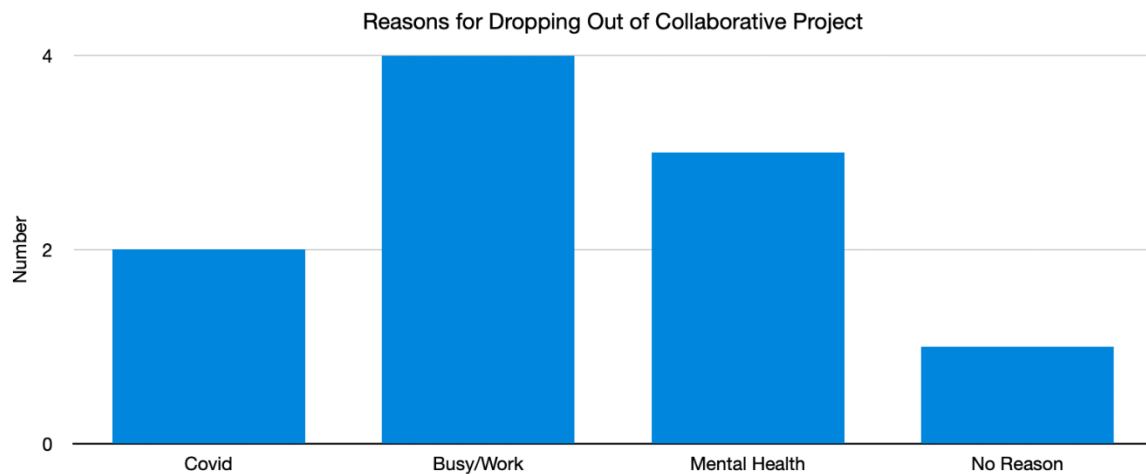


Figure 11 Reasons for Withdrawal from Participation

4.6.3. Conclusion

Unfortunately, the impact of the Coronavirus, which necessitated non-face-to-face training meant there was not a successful take up with this project. This does however show that in-person is preferable, at least to start the involvement of people in CR. The software *Remote Radio* was able to be tested in the field and successfully allowed broadcasting from home.

Developing shows completely online, with contact only via online platforms is not a good method for increasing participation in CR. Future research could entail using WebRTC solutions and online broadcasting, but with an emphasis on face-to-face training and even incorporating the group aspect of *ASTSYM* to ensure that participants maintain their interest in community broadcasting. The two case studies which were able to broadcast live show that the software is useful.

Coronavirus has brought about something of a paradigm shift amongst the stations, with the emphasis on the studio slightly lessened. Station managers were much more amenable to the idea of shows being recorded or performed live from remote locations.

With the lack of success of broadcasting from home in enticing people into partaking in CR, I set about devising a project which would allow people to connect face-to-face to the studio, still using the power of the internet and WebRTC to enable people to share and create content, and broadcast in a more informal way and also bypassing some of the problems. In the next section, I will talk about this project.

4.7. A SPACE TO SPEAK YOUR MIND

Shows produced as part of this practice: *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, *Song Remains the Same*, *Lost in Translation*, *Maid in Kernow*, *Sunshine Show*, *Songs in the Key of Life*, and *Sports Report*.

4.7.1. INTRODUCTION

This will detail the establishment and development of the mental wellbeing self-help group in collaboration with Mind which produces a monthly podcast and CR show about mental health, created by people with lived experience of poor mental health. People with experience of poor mental health are one of the key demographics which are under-represented on CR. A barrier to participation in CR amongst certain groups and individuals is the “culture” at some stations. This can be very male-dominated or intimidating in some way. People with anxiety, particularly social anxiety, can feel unable to approach a CR station. Others with issues with mental health benefit from a more supportive environment, such as a group context where peers can support each other. With this in mind, I devised a group radio show and podcast which would test whether the group approach could overcome some of the barriers which this thesis sought to overcome. CR stations often talk about being open for all to participate but often the outreach is passive (an open-door policy). This part of the study also tests if a more active outreach would be able to address the demographic divide in CR in the UK more effectively.

4.7.2. PRACTICE

The CR show/podcast which this chapter addresses, *A Space to Speak Your Mind* (ASTSYM), attempted to create a mental health programme that would allow people to talk about their lived experience of mental health. Founded as a Participatory Action Research project, ASTSYM uses convergence culture, FOSS (Free and Open-Source Software) software and digital audio to create monthly mental health content from a lived experience perspective in Cornwall. For this PhD, the participants and stakeholders in the project were interviewed and thematic analysis was used to draw out key themes from the participants' experiences, particularly in reference to their wellbeing. The results are presented and the implications for the potential of CR/podcasting practice to improve mental wellbeing and talk about mental health in a more open way are then discussed at the end of the chapter.

During the practice of producing the ASTSYM podcast, at every step, the concern was to be as inclusive as possible and minimise gatekeeping. As well as a participatory approach, OS software such as the digital audio workshop *Audacity*, and ubiquitous devices were used for production. This ensured both a low cost for participants and a less intimidating process for those involved. Modern smartphones include applications that allow recording to standard file formats such as WAV and MP3 and the microphones in them are now of suitable quality to be broadcast. 92% of adults in the UK now own a smartphone (O'Dea 2021). There were also dedicated digital audio recorders available for those with more advanced technical skills, or who did not have a smartphone, but encouraging the use of phones helped to create a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. By and large participants' own computers were used to edit audio and complete post-production, aided by the researcher where necessary.

Broadcasting is a multi-disciplinary practice, which allowed the participants to develop skills in audio production, broadcasting, and journalism as well as experience the feeling of inclusion as part of a group. The feeling of inclusivity was hoped to allow participants the chance to share more freely their experiences of mental health. Pragmatically, an element of Jenkins' idea of "Convergence Culture" (Jenkins 2006) was also evident in the production of the show, with equipment and practice brought together from the worlds of new media (digital audio, software, the internet) and old media (mixing desks, microphones, and other analogue devices). Inclusivity was also encouraged by offering flexible involvement and levels of involvement, so people did not have to contribute to every show, and they could also contribute in different ways, from asking for a particular topic to be discussed, or writing a script, to presenting the programme or recording an interview or feature. The show is a magazine-style format, with two co-hosts each episode. These hosts change based on who from the group wants to present that month allowing people to take a break if their mental health needs it. Content includes monologues from people about a topic or their own experience, interviews with mental health organisations or professionals, interviews with people about their lived experience and presenters' views on the topics discussed. There was also a roundup of the mental health news in the area and news of mental health support, from the ongoing support from organisations such as the Samaritans, Mind, or local mental health services, to current events, support groups or opportunities. Cornwall Mind played a role in making sure trigger warnings and adequate support were offered when difficult topics were discussed on the show. All

participants were offered safeguarding and support with their mental health during their involvement with the project from Cornwall Mind.



**CONTRIBUTE
TO A NEW
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*A Space to Speak
your Mind!*

We're looking for anyone interested in contributing to a new mental health radio show on Source FM. This could be anything from just picking a track you'd like to hear through to presenting, recording interviews and learning all about broadcast audio. It will be a drop-in style show where you can chat freely & you don't need technical skills!

Get in touch to register your interest:
enquiries@cornwallmind.org.uk
(01326) 617220

SOURCE FM 96.1

mind
for better mental health

Figure 12 Call-out Poster for A Space to Speak Your Mind

4.7.3. THE IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS ON THE PRACTICE

The outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns and social distancing had an impact on the production of the programme, with face-to-face meetings made impossible, online meetings were held via video conferencing software and recordings were either prepared individually or with the help of the researcher online, using OS video messaging software such as *Jitsi*, or the dedicated application *Remote Radio*. *ASTSYM* was the only wellbeing group supported by Cornwall Mind which was able to continue during this period of total lockdown. As well as online remote solutions, participants were also encouraged to record audio using apps on their phones which they were familiar with such as *WhatsApp*. By

sending *WhatsApp* voice messages to the researcher, these messages could then be downloaded and edited into an audio piece for inclusion in the programme. A *WhatsApp* group was also established for team members to keep in touch, provide moral support and exchange ideas for the show. Digital audio, modern smaller file formats thanks to audio compression codecs, ubiquitous devices such as tablets, smartphones and laptops and the affordances of the internet now allow for the rapid recording and exchange of audio and ASTSYM's collaborative practice embraced these possibilities.

Since its conception in September 2019, ASTSYM has produced a monthly show, with occasional extra bonus podcasts when available. As the research aspect of the podcast has ended, the show and structure have since been taken on by Mind as a wellbeing group and remains ongoing as a vibrant podcast and community radio show. During the period that the show was run as a research project, topics discussed included suicide, menopause, Parkinson's, men's mental health, and bereavement and interviews were conducted with organisations such as *Man Down*, *Cruse* and *Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change*. Statistics from podcast host *Anchor*, show downloads for the podcast during this period averaged 44 per episode. The highest audience for a single episode is 105. This is somewhere around the average listenership for a podcast (Gray 2021). At the time of writing the podcast has 2171 all-time listens with 40 episodes. Although, as expected due to its geographic specificity, the majority of listeners (89%) are from the UK, there are listeners from another 26 countries, including 5% of listeners coming from the USA. Listenership is skewed towards women listeners 64%/31%, perhaps reflecting the increased stigma about talking about mental health for men (Herron et al. 2020). The whole age range is represented, but the majority (64%) are over 35 – reflecting the ages of those involved in creating the show.

The CR show was broadcast on community radio stations Source FM (Falmouth), CHBN (Truro) and Radio St Austell Bay (St Austell) which would have added a listenership of several thousand live listeners. Community radio stations in the UK serve populations not well served by traditional media (Scifo, 2010), and these stations gained their licenses on the grounds of the rural, low-population areas in which they are located.

4.7.4. MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental health, mental illness and mental wellbeing have specific connotations which need to be addressed before we consider any impact the collaborative practice in ASTSYM may have had. Everyone has mental health, either good or bad, and anyone can develop a mental illness which can lead to poor mental health (Slade 2010; Galderisi et al. 2015). Mental wellbeing can be considered in the same way as physical fitness is to physical health, good practice such as the Five Ways to Wellbeing can be used to help to maintain good mental health and mitigate the effects of mental illness, in an analogous way to physical exercise and good diet and maintain good physical health. This study aimed to measure self-reported improvements in mental wellbeing in the participants in the podcast.

To give some context: A tool used by many mental health organisations and practitioners is the "Five Ways to Wellbeing". (Aked et al. 2008) This was developed by the "centre for well-being" at the New Economics Foundation as the result of a commission by the UK government for the Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. 400 scientific papers were reviewed to identify the most common things which improve or maintain our mental wellbeing. The five ways to wellbeing which this report identified are: Connect (maintaining social connections), Keep Learning, Take Notice (mindfulness), Be Active (physical exercise), and Give (helping others). This report has been used to help people concentrate on areas of their mental wellbeing which require work and ensure a mentally healthy lifestyle. This also serves as a useful framework to consider the impact of the podcasting practice project on participants' wellbeing, and these areas will be discussed in the results part of this section. The need to maintain mental wellbeing and the role that the Five Ways can play in this has been brought into sharp focus by the mental health implications of the lockdown measures brought in around the world to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus (Stephens 2020).

Participants and stakeholders were interviewed after the project had been established for a year to assess how effective a group-based podcasting practice can be in improving wellbeing. The initial process was to interview those who helped create the programme and stakeholders in the show. These were semi-structured interviews. Themes were chosen via a deductive approach, in particular, in alignment with the five ways to wellbeing. Thematic data analysis was then used to extract the key themes and highlight any points which came out for the participants as useful or

otherwise for their own mental wellbeing (LeCompte 2000; Harding 2018). The results are presented below including quotes from the interviews and key themes which arose. I then discuss the implications for CR practice for mental health at the end of the chapter.

As the sample was made up of the participants in the project, it makes sense to talk about how the participants were chosen for the project in the first place. Cornwall Mind were contacted to provide safeguarding and support for the project, and they promoted the call-out to people whom they work with who have had lived experience of poor mental health. Only people who were deemed well enough to participate were involved. This means a random selection of people with lived experience of mental health issues, who were relatively well were the sample. A random selection of stakeholders was selected to ask about their experiences, some who had been interviewed on the show, and listeners who had interacted on the social media for the show were also asked for their thoughts about the show.

Most of the participants involved had a history of mental illness or poor mental health, which is why they were in contact with Cornwall Mind. Diagnoses were never asked for, but individuals reported experience of depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and personality disorders. Some participants had never been through the mental health system but volunteered for Mind or were mental health practitioners themselves. In total, 12 people were involved in the timeframe considered with varying levels of involvement. Participants identified in roughly equal numbers as male or female. The lack of non-binary participants was due to the sourcing through Cornwall Mind and bringing the voice of non-binary and trans people to CR is another potential avenue for this research methodology; the age range was 30+.

4.7.5. RESULTS

Note: Full text of the interviews in this section can be found in Appendix D

The themes which arose from the interviews are now presented. Interviews are anonymised, as are the quotes. Participants were uniformly positive towards the project, and although there were some criticisms, discussed later, all interviewees stated that the project had improved their wellbeing and that they had enjoyed being involved.

"It gives it a focus to each month, there is something to work towards." (RD)

"...it's almost like having a job, but it's the best job in the world..." (MD)

"It gives me a focus. So, every week. There's always something I can focus on when I am in that right frame of mind." (HW)

All participants said they would recommend someone else to take part in ASTSYM or a similar project. Participants were welcoming of the fact that there was no editorial pressure or gatekeeping as to what could be said, and allowances were made for levels of contribution based on how participants were feeling:

"I love the fact you're a part of it, even though sometimes you might contribute, maybe very little or a lot, or maybe nothing. You're still part of the team. And obviously, because it's a show for people with mental health issues or people who've had them in the past, there's allowances." (HW)

There was also a positive response to the lack of pressure on meeting a minimal threshold of audio quality or journalistic standards:

"It was inclusive, with no pressure. It doesn't have to be perfect - that is such a relief, especially when you're dealing with people with anxiety, but just for anyone who likes to put content out there, and are dealing with, you know, websites and businesses, it has to be perfect because people can be really critical ... we make mistakes and we're going to fluff our words and it doesn't have to be perfect, just put something out there, it's just such a relief." (AH)

4.7.6. HOW PARTICIPATION AFFECTED WELLBEING

Participants all reported an improvement in wellbeing as a result of being involved in the show, due to several different aspects of participation in ASTSYM. Most were happy to be involved in a team and to be to develop relationships within that team. There was also the chance to connect to the wider mental health network when interviewing other individuals or groups:

"I think for me because I've just become so disconnected from the world since I gave up work ... and recently, even more. Being aware that I needed to reconnect with people, it gave me a chance to become part of that team, and I felt like a bit of a reason for living. I don't mean that so dramatically, but it just gave me something to aim for, and something to actually think 'yeah I can contribute to this, and I'll be appreciated.'" (FT)

The group production of this project does not translate across all podcast practice, which is often a solitary experience. Participants were happy to learn new skills in audio editing, journalism, software, subjects they might not have approached without participation in ASTSYM:

"I've really appreciated being able to learn and have training on something so specialised that I wouldn't have had the opportunity to. That's been useful."
(BW)

This, in turn, led to increased confidence and enhanced career prospects; several participants felt the project had taught them skills that would be useful in their careers or even their creative lives outside the project:

"...It's a good thing to say to people or put on your CV and it opens up discussions because everyone is really interested. When I went to my last interview ... and when they had a question: what else are you interested in? I mentioned I was involved in this [ASTSYM] and they were like, 'Oh, yeah, we read that, tell us about that'. So, it opens up discussions, and especially in an interview..." (BW)

The chance to do something creative and self-expressive was an important reason for improved wellbeing amongst a majority of the group:

"I just love interviewing people. I love editing. I love using my imagination and my brain." (TY)

Many participants felt that ASTSYM gave them the opportunity to give back something to the community based on their own often difficult experiences with mental health.

"I chose to take part in the project because ... I really enjoy being able to help other people. So, by me being involved with A Space to Speak Your Mind, I thought I could bring any knowledge that I've got regards to mental health to help other people." (HW)

This was mentioned by several of the participants as a reason for signing up to the project in the first place.

As the project was carried out during the Covid-19 outbreak, it was impacted by the subsequent lockdowns. One of the things which came out of this was the fact that participants felt very grateful that the project was able to continue during this time, some describing it as a "lifeline", as many, if not all, other support groups were closed during this time.

"When the lockdown came, it really was a saviour, because you could spend time doing bits and pieces for A Space to Speak Your Mind and it gave me something to focus on and do." (FT)

4.7.7. VOICE

It was felt by some that the relative anonymity that an audio-based medium such as CR and podcasting provides, made it easier to speak about delicate topics. The diversity of voices and the chance to speak about mental health and hear other people with lived experience of poor mental health talk in their own terms was mentioned:

"Well, I've read all the books there are to read on anxiety and agoraphobia and CBT and everything, which has made me quite knowledgeable about everything to do with it, but I think ... when you hear people explaining how they feel and actually talking about it is more effective ... you're not using your eyes. You're homing in on just one sense of your ears and actually that makes you listen more ... at the end of the day it's individual people's voices, lots of different, different types of voices, different genders, sexualities, ages."

"...you're drawn into the person's story, and their delivery, because it's not, you know, perfect spoken English and where you can just sort of phase out a little bit is listening to all those little nuances of the interactions of people and how they paced it differently and the content is for me feels more rich, because of that. So, it's a nice listening experience." (RD)

One participant in particular, MD, who had Parkinson's disease serves as a useful example of the aspect of Voice. MD initially thought his severely affected speech due to the effects of Parkinson's meant he would not be able to present the show, initially only wanting to write scripts, help with production and be a team member. However, after some encouragement, he now talks about his experiences with Parkinson's and even presents the show. Hearing his actual voice, with its repetition and pauses, often struggling to find the word adds to the authentic experience of Parkinson's in a way which a report from a journalist without it would not. He talks about how he initially had an idea for a feature on the show about Parkinson's:

"I thought it would be a good idea for someone else to do. I suggested it and I remember that time when you said to me - I can almost quote it - 'Why shouldn't you have a radio show?' Just because you have Parkinson's and can't speak as clearly as some people?' I thought 'Yeah. Why shouldn't I?'" (MD)

MD then recorded an interview with a friend who also has Parkinson's and discussed some of the issues they face because of their slurred speech, including being refused service in a shop because of the perception that their speech is due to intoxication.

(<https://open.spotify.com/episode/7mkslmRRDfvoX03fcpjcNh?si=a10cff0042994ef6>
@34:00 minutes)

Stakeholders were very happy to be able to be involved with a show which was produced by users with lived mental health experience, some of whom have

experience of the mental health system. The show was recommended by the *National Survivor Union Network*, a mental health charity which “centres the survivor and lived experience” in their monthly newsletter. The show was shortlisted for a Community Radio Award for three years in a row at the time of writing and won two bronze and a silver award at the Community Radio Awards 2021.

There was some feeling that there could be more structure for the group, although the laidback approach was appreciated by others in the group. There were social tensions between members of the group and a process for complaints and resolutions of disputes needed to be put in place by Cornwall Mind. There was also feeling that due to the nature of the podcast, and to some extent the involvement of national charity Mind, subjects were not tackled on a more surface level and taboo topics were steered away from whereas others found some of the subjects triggering or difficult to think or talk about. Pitching the level of discussion about mental health was often discussed by the group at production meetings.

“I think it can be a little bit triggering in some respects, so it's kind of getting that balance. I mean, it might have been Suicide Awareness Month, but I think we could have broken it up with some other bits, just so that people when they listen to it, it won't all be suicide...” (TY)

This necessitated a balancing act that required some navigation with support from Cornwall Mind.

4.7.8. DISCUSSION: BROADCAST PRACTICE FOR WELLBEING

ASTSYM has had a positive impact on the mental wellbeing of those involved. Are there processes specific to podcasting practice that can be used to improve mental wellbeing? I would like to consider ASTSYM, and the collaborative broadcast practice involved in relation to the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

4.7.8.1. CONNECT (SOCIAL CONNECTION)

The group structure of this particular project means that people were able to form connections with others who have experienced difficulties with their mental wellbeing. Engaging with individuals and organisations in the community to conduct interviews also allowed for a feeling of connection to others and the wider community. This provides a source of support for those involved in the project. For another podcast, perhaps with a single producer, the opportunity for making connections would be

less, but they would also possibly be able to establish connections with others in affinity groups, or interviewees.

4.7.8.2. KEEP LEARNING

The participants were, by and large, new to broadcast and digital audio equipment, and so a great deal of learning was involved. Software, digital audio, editing, journalism and broadcast skills were all learnt. This mixture of disciplines is, of course, in itself unique, and as a CR/podcast producer, some or all of these skills need to be learned or acquired along the way.

4.7.8.3. TAKE NOTICE (MINDFULNESS)

Although mindfulness was not explicitly practised during the project, the act of creativity can be a form of mindfulness, as Csikszentmihalyi talks about in “Flow” (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). Csikszentmihalyi asserts that people are at their happiest when in a state of flow, or complete absorption with the task at hand. Any experienced podcast producer will recognise this state when editing audio or recording monologues. It is not always experienced, but when it is it can be described as being “in the zone” or “losing oneself”. A loss of the self in concentration on the creative act allows the individual to escape all pressures and anxieties in everyday life, which is very useful for those with mental health difficulties. This state of flow is a form of mindfulness. Flow is not always achieved when pursuing something creative, and processes must be taken on with a mindful approach, as stressful deadlines and pressure to complete work or provide content will destroy mindfulness and can be detrimental to mental wellbeing.

4.7.8.4. GIVE

Preparing the mental health podcast was a source of giving back to the community, information which other people might find useful for their own mental health, and indeed several individuals mentioned this as a reason for joining the project and the fact that it gave them a good feeling to be “giving something back”.

The only one of the Five Ways to Wellbeing which the project did not provide an opportunity for was Be Active (physical exercise).

4.7.9. VOICE

Participation in ASTSYM gave the participants a chance to speak about lived experience of mental health in a way they felt comfortable, without interference, and to feel listened to. Hearing another's voice is an intimate experience, especially when stripped of visual distractions and centred in the listener's head as is often the case with headphone listening. MD's experience of fighting his own preconceptions to be able to record and broadcast his own voice, despite his speech being affected by Parkinson's disease is a case in point.

This project points to some ways in which CR and podcasting have a very great potential for talking about mental health, breaking down taboos, sharing information and allowing others insight into the experience of poor mental health and mental illness. Putting aside the unique aspects of ASTSYM, such as its geographic location and the 'self-help group' structure, we can draw some inferences which may point to broadcast practice as a tool for the improvement of mental wellbeing. It can be produced with little expense, ideal for those who are experiencing mental health difficulties. It taps into four of the five "Ways to Wellbeing". It can be a means to self-expression, finding a community, networking, and creativity. The group-led aspect of ASTSYM points to the potential for broadcasting for mental health organisations to roll out this model as a wellbeing group, and this has happened with Cornwall Mind in this instance. Podcasting has the benefit of no gatekeeping, whereas CR offers an immediate connection to the geographical area that the station broadcasts to. It is much easier to see the development of a CR group show because of the community context than the establishment of a "community podcast".

The unique combination of skills and practices associated with preparing broadcast content align well with wellbeing, and the broadcasting experience between practitioner and listener is very intimate, allowing people to discuss sensitive or taboo topics such as mental health. The publication of podcasts via the internet, with its anonymity, and the connection of CR with its broadcast audience also allow for affinity groups of support and interaction to develop. Combined these aspects of broadcast practice provide a great potential for podcasting practice to improve mental wellbeing.

4.7.10. SURVEYING THE IMPACT

ASTSYM was shortlisted for one CR Award in its first year in the category "Community Development Project of the Year 2020" and for three awards in 2021 in the categories,

"Community Development Project of the Year", "Community Show" and "Innovation". At the time of writing it is currently shortlisted for an award in the "Community Show" category for 2022. It also won a *Mind Network Excellence Award* in the category "Tackling Stigma and Discrimination" in 2021.

All the participants in the main show were given the opportunity to develop and perform their own shows on *Source FM* if they wished after they had developed confidence in being in the studio and operating the equipment. Some of them wanted me to co-present for a time, others were more confident to present on their own. The following shows came out of the participants in *A Space to Speak Your Mind*:

- *The Song Remains the Same*. classic rock show, with the stories behind songs.
- *Songs in the Key of Life*. Musical selection.
- *Sports Report*. Occasional interviews with local sports people.
- *Maid in Kernow*. Poetry, music, and chat.
- *Sunshine Show*. Feelgood chat and music.
- *Lost in Translation*. Comedy.

This points to this method as an effective way to increase participation amongst communities which CR has struggled to include historically.

4.7.11. CONCLUSION

ASTSYM has been successful in including people in CR that might otherwise not have become involved. The group aspect of the project seems to have contributed to its success, with the support that people were able to give to each other enabling longer participation. ASTSYM proved the most effective of the attempts I made at developing a methodology for increased inclusion. It adopts whole-heartedly the affordances which the internet gives us, but also builds in the human connection, which conversations over the internet can lack. The number of participants in ASTSYM who felt confident enough to go on to have their own shows on *Source FM* without the mental health context shows how effective the group work is as a way to overcome people's reticence to get involved. One of the original ASTSYM participants has now joined the *Source FM* board.

4.8. REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Shows produced as part of this practice: *PhDCasting*

4.8.1. INTRODUCTION

In this section I will detail the reflective practice which has been integral to this PhD thesis. As an audio practitioner researcher whose primary medium is audio, I wanted to use audio to reflect on my practice, as well as the written word. Reflection is also a key part of the Nelson Practice Research model, which is the main methodology for the work. (Nelson 2013) A large part of this reflection was in the form of a reflective podcast, *PhDCasting*, produced initially every quarter, reflecting on my progress through the PhD and talking to a series of podcast and community radio academics and practitioners. This podcast was initially published via the *Podcast Studies Podcast* (rebranded from *New Aural Culture Podcast* during the podcast's run). I have published the series on its own site for the sake of convenience (see Appendix B). The creation of a podcast about the PhD and the practice each month allowed a dedicated time and space for reflection on the status of the project, and the research themes it addressed.

I also prepared a documentary podcast reflecting on the other practice aspects of the PhD (Appendix B) and which I consider to be a part of the thesis submission. Using podcasting to reflect in this way allows me to use the medium in which I feel most comfortable to express myself. The reflective process for the documentary was conducted after the practice, unlike the *PhDCasting* podcast, and so represents a more considered and informed point of view.

4.8.2. PRACTICE

I will talk about the podcast which was created and the new knowledge which was generated. The process of creating the podcast every quarter allowed me to reflect according to the Nelson model of Practice Research and gain new insights into my practice and the research which I was carrying out. Below I link to clips from the podcast which illustrate these points.

Each episode was designed to represent a quarter of the PhD and starts with my own personal reflections of the previous quarter of the PhD, whether that is about the PhD process or the particular problems or insights which are occurring at that stage of the PhD. After that there is the recording of a conversation I have with a different podcast

or CR practitioner or researcher. Through these conversations, I gained insights, and it helped to move my work forward. The topics of conversation varied from podcasting, community radio, community media to the PhD process itself. Due to the Covid-19 lockdowns, the episodes did not stick to the academic quarters as originally planned, but represent a journey through the PhD experience, nevertheless. I will now consider each episode in the podcast and the impact it made on my research.

4.8.3. THE EPISODES

Some of the text below is adapted from the shownotes for each episode of the podcast with additional thoughts and observations. Links to each episode are provided in the text. Prior to the release of the series I recorded a short conversation with Dario Linares talking about the idea behind the podcast which can be heard here:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6mmZYhPFNFdp3Vj8PLPuH?si=mfmCZgX6S5aiSgzEZMyw0w>

4.8.3.1. EPISODE ONE: Q1 WHAT'S A PHD? HELEN MOORE FROM CLIENT

CULTURE ARTS MAGAZINE, PLYMOUTH

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q1-Whats-A-PhD---Helen-Moore-from-Client-Culture-Arts-Magazine--Plymouth-eai7t0>

The first episode covers quarter one: September 2018-December 2018. In this episode I reflected on the experience of starting a PhD. What expectations I had, which were true and what surprised me. Meeting my supervision team and generally learning what it means to be a PhD researcher. The guest is Helen Moore, editor of *Client Culture Magazine* which is a subject-driven Arts magazine based in Plymouth. Helen also produces a podcast to go alongside each issue of *Client Culture Magazine* and has a history of producing art-based CR content.

4.8.3.2. EPISODE TWO: Q2 APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION.

ILLUSTRATOR/RESEARCHER JOHANNA ROEHR

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q2-Application-for-Registration--IllustratorResearcher-Johanna-Roehr-eai80q>

The second episode spans quarter Two: January 2019 - March 2019. It details my experience of the Application for Registration process, which is the first step towards being accepted as a PhD at University of the Arts London/Falmouth University. I talk to

Johanna Roehr, who is an illustrator who works with people with neurodiversity. She also has a show on the community radio station, Source FM, called *Guilty Pleasures*. For the first two shows I talked to practitioners with whom I had already had some contact, as I was still establishing myself as an academic. These conversations solidified my thinking around the importance of CR as a way to connect to an immediate audience and the affordances of podcasting in terms of lack of gatekeeping.

4.8.3.3. Q3 SURVIVING AFR - MOVING FORWARD. DR NEIL FOX OF CINEMATOLOGISTS, NEW AURAL CULTURES

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q3-Surviving-AfR---moving-forward--In-conversation-with-Neil-Fox-of-Cinematologists--New-Aural-Cultures-eai82a>

Episode three represented quarter three: April 2019 - June 2019. I start my literature review after passing the Application for Registration process. I talk to Neil Fox, one half of the *Cinematologists* podcast, a co-founder of *New Aural Cultures* podcast research and podcast academic. During our conversation it enabled me to develop ideas around how important podcast practice is for the practitioner and some of the wellbeing effects it might have. At this time the first work was being carried out with the participants in the collaborative practice.

4.8.3.4. Q4 SUMMERTIME BLUES. IVOR RICHARDS, BRITISH BROADCAST AUDIO, FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q4-Summertime-Blues--Ivor-Richards--British-Broadcast-Audio--Falmouth-University-eai83f>

Episode four discusses quarter four: July 2019 - September 2019. I gave the first presentation of my PhD research at the summer symposium and hit a wall after experiencing burn out. I talk about the need for good mental health as an academic, something which is all the more important as a researcher trying to improve wellbeing. I talked to Ivor Richards, senior technician at Falmouth University School of Journalism and teacher of podcasting and he gives me some tips for producing a good podcast. I wanted to cover some of the technical aspects of podcast production in *PhDCasting* as even though my work embraces a DIY attitude it still aspires to good production

values. During this period ASTSYM was founded and the focus group testing the first prototype of *Remote Radio* was conducted.

4.8.3.5. Q5 PUSHING WATER UPHILL. DR ROB WATSON, DECENTERED MEDIA

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q5-Pushing-Water-Uphill--Dr-Rob-Watson--Decentered-Media-eai842>

In episode five I cover quarter five: October 2019 - December 2019. I talk to Dr Rob Watson, community media academic and podcaster, former director of the *Community Media Association*, the body responsible for representing community radio in the UK. Our conversation gets me thinking about my role as a disruptor, challenging the norms of CR and the importance of social gain. ASTSYM continued broadcasting live from the *Source FM* studios.

4.8.3.6. Q6 CONFIRMATION OF ROUTE HERE WE COME. DR SHEREZADE GARCIA RANGEL, ON THE HILL PODCAST

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q6-Confirmation-of-Route-Here-We-Come--Dr-Sherezade-Garcia-Rangel--On-the-Hill-Podcast-eai84i>

Episode six spans quarter six: January 2020 - March 2020. I present at the MeCCSA conference in Brighton and talk about PhD candidature. I talk to Dr Sherezade Garcia Rangel, academic at Falmouth University School of Communication and creator of *On The Hill* podcast which documents the stories behind the gravestones at a cemetery in Falmouth. *On The Hill* mixes creative writing, research, storytelling and documentary style podcasting. Our conversation leads me to think about the podcast as research and the importance of expressing myself in the podcast form as an audio practitioner. The first Covid lockdown is announced and ASTSYM has to adapt to using more online processes to create the show.

4.8.3.7. Q7 COVID CONFIRMATION. RUTE CORREIA, COMMUNITY RADIO AND OPEN SOURCE RESEARCHER - THE PODCAST STUDIES PODCAST (FORMERLY NEW AURAL CULTURES)

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q7-COVID-Confirmation--Rute-Correia--community-radio-and-open-source-researcher-elcoilh>

Quarter Seven: April 2020 – Jun 2020. I pass the PhD candidature process at almost the same time that the Coronavirus pandemic forces a lockdown in the UK. I am asked to become a part of the MeCCSA Radio Studies Network steering group. I talk to Rute Correia, PhD student at the University of Lisbon, CR practitioner and host of *White Market* podcast, researching OS software and CR. This conversation engages with the importance of OS for CR and the enthusiasm we both share as practitioner researchers for CR and the potential of OS within a CR context.

4.8.3.8. Q8 – PRACTICE. KIM FOX, THE PODCAST PROFESSOR

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q8-Practice--Kim-Fox--the-Podcast-Professor-e1coi2v>

Quarter Eight: July 2020 – September 2020. I talk to Kim Fox, Professor of Practice at the American University in Cairo and leading podcast academic. We talk about developments in podcasting, podcasting studies and the *podacademics*, radio studies, her practice and research.

4.8.3.9. Q9 – ADAPTATION. JOSEPHINE COLEMAN, BRUNEL UNIVERSITY

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q9-Adaptation--Josephine-Coleman--Brunel-University-e1coi3i>

Quarter Nine: October 2020 – Dec 2020. I think about the constant need to adapt during a PhD. Research leads to new discoveries, which leads to new outlooks, and new paths to explore. A PhD is not a static thing and should always be changing until you hand it in. I talk to Dr Josephine Coleman of Brunel University who is an academic with a great interest in CR in the UK. We talk about CR, the impact of Covid-19 and the nature of the PhD process. The first live broadcast using *Remote Radio* is performed on *Source FM* in Falmouth.

4.8.3.10. Q10 – REFLECTION. JERRY PADFIELD, FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q10-Reflection--Jerry-Padfield--Falmouth-University-e1dehou>

Episode 10. Q10 Jan 2021-Mar 2021. At this point in the reflective podcast, I decided to interview myself. I felt this would be a good reflective exercise to check what I have

learned through the course of the PhD, and to help unravel my thoughts and feelings about where to go next with the research.

4.8.3.11. Q11 – EXTENSION. DR ABIGAIL WINCOTT, SPATIAL AUDIO, PAST SOUNDS

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting/episodes/Q11-Extension--Dr-Abigail-Wincott--spatial-audio--Past-Sounds-e1dehtr>

Episode 11: Quarter Eleven: Apr 2021 – Jun 2021. A 6-month extension to my PhD funding is confirmed due to the impact of Coronavirus. I talk to Falmouth University based researcher Dr Abigail Wincott about her research into spatial audio and binaural recording, her *Past Sounds* podcast and academic life.

Episode 12 will be the last episode in the series, completed after the viva and (hopefully) successful completion of the PhD. It will describe the viva process, my thoughts and feelings about completing a PhD, life after a PhD and the lessons and insights I have gained due to this process.

4.8.4. CONCLUSION

Reflective practice is key to Nelson's practice research model. This podcast enabled me to reflect, talk about my research, engage, and network with others as well as move my work on using the medium in which I feel most comfortable. The process of creating *PhDCasting* was not only a useful tool in reflecting on my work and the stage I was at in the PhD it was also a part of the research itself. It is an integral part of the thesis and the new knowledge which this thesis represents.

4.9. PRACTICE: CONCLUSION

Through a series of iterative processes, each allowing for a period of reflection, my research has developed, especially with the “data” or feedback from the participants, or co-researchers according to PAR, in my various projects. Without this reflection, the PhD would not have taken the shape it does. Each part of the practice has been informed by the other, and in turn by my reflective process. It has also been steered by the participant-researchers with whom I have collaborated. The 4 major parts of the practice (*Remote Radio*, *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, the collaborative shows and *PhDCasting*) combine to create a body of work which help to answer the research question: how can emerging technology be used to overcome barriers to participation in CR? In the final chapter, I will draw conclusions from the practice and synthesise the lessons from each aspect of practice into the main themes which have arisen from this research.

5. CONCLUSIONS

I began this study having identified the problem of lack of equity in representation in CR and the knowledge gap which exists in methods to overcome the barriers to participation amongst under-represented groups. I designed a research methodology which would allow me to answer the research question in a flexible way, using the knowledge and insight of the participants alongside those of the researcher. This chapter will detail the conclusions I have drawn from my research and answer the research question: How can the use of practice research, OS software, digital audio, and peer-to-peer technology overcome barriers such as isolation and accessibility to increase participation in CR and how does this affect the wellbeing of those participants?

5.1. NEW KNOWLEDGE

This practice research project set out to find ways to broaden participation in CR amongst under-represented groups using OS, WebRTC and innovative methods. I examined the demographic divide which exists in CR in the UK. I then established that participation in CR has implications for the improvement of wellbeing, and the inequality inherent in a situation that fails to provide access to this improvement in wellbeing to under-represented groups. I pointed to the knowledge gap that exists – namely that methods and practice research addressing this issue do not exist. I then carried out a series of practice research projects to test whether barriers to participation could be overcome, to what extent and any whether participation in CR would lead to any improvement in wellbeing. In this thesis I have shown that these barriers can be overcome with varying degrees of success depending on the methods used. I have shown that technology and innovative methods can be used to increase participation and emerging technology such as WebRTC can play a large role in this. I have shown that the wellbeing of participants can be improved after participation. I have approached community radio practice research in a number of new ways. This is the first research project to show community radio practice's potential for creating flow states and the way that practitioners' feelings of anxiety can be reframed as excitement.

The practice shows that although technologies such as WebRTC can be used to develop tools which can overcome obstacles to participation in CR, it is still very much

the social element of CR that encourages continued and involved participation. Working online with participants and allowing them to broadcast shows remotely was not as engaging as the chance to be a part of a team and feel a part of a community, hence why there was a high drop-out rate in the collaborative practice and the success in terms of engagement and wellbeing improvement of ASTSYM.

This study moves forward the subject of what Preston called "Participatory Community Radio" (Preston 2016) and points to methods which can work in improving the inclusivity of CR in the UK. It also acknowledges that technology and remote work is not the entire solution and practice such as group work and face to face interaction is essential to get people on board, before or alongside technologies which can be used to maintain or increase involvement. The singular approach of the collaborative research was not as effective as the group work of ASTSYM.

Human beings form relationships and connections more easily when in physical proximity (Latané et al. 1995; Marmaros and Sacerdote 2006), at least initially, and so the online aspect may be more of an addition to rather than a replacement for face-to-face work. This "proximity effect" also accounts for the lack of success for the collaborative practice. Due to Coronavirus and social distancing relationships had to be established online and no real bond was formed between the researcher-practitioner and the participants, or co-researchers. In ASTSYM, where these bonds had already been formed face-to-face, prior to the pandemic, the bond between the researcher-practitioner and co-researchers had already been established and was able to survive the move to an online relationship.

The software *Remote Radio*, although it has been used by some people to create shows, and the radio station *CHBN* and others have expressed an interest in its continued usage, has not developed a vibrant OS community around it, which is a necessity if it were to become a successful longstanding OS tool such as *Audacity*. Perhaps the CR community is too niche and does not have enough amateur programmers and software engineers to make the project take off in the way that was hoped for, or perhaps the solutions which CR has already adopted (*Cleanfeed*, *ipDTL*, etc) work well enough for CR practitioners to spend much time seeking alternative solutions. I would hope a more developed version of *Remote Radio* would be seen as an asset for the CR community and so its relative lack of functionality and requirement to understand Raspberry Pi and potentially set up a small server, at least

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in this early version, may be the reason for this lack of engagement. Future research can use the potential of WebRTC to build niche applications, with very complicated latency-free peer to peer audio applications that can allow CR to develop. There is great potential for researching the affordances of PhD, and a post doctorate research project following this PhD could include the further development of *Remote Radio* into a more fully functional piece of software.

ASTSYM was successful as a research project but also outside the realm of academia as a CR show – it won CR & national Mind awards, raised £6000 of funding, employed a facilitator and is now a continuing wellbeing group and CR show across Cornwall on 4 CR stations. Six standalone shows developed out of the participants from ASTSYM, and one is at the time of writing a board member. All of these participants had either never heard of CR or expressed that there were barriers to their participation which prevented their participation that involvement in ASTSYM helped them to overcome.

The success of ASTSYM shows that greater inclusion and representation in CR stations in the UK is possible and topics that are hard to talk about such as mental health can be tackled. ASTSYM addressed topics often considered taboo such as suicide, menstruation, and domestic abuse, using the voice of people's lived experience. CR in the UK stands at a crossroads at the time of writing. The diminishing of local radio provided by the BBC and ILR has left a gap in the provision of local radio content. Some within CR stand eager to fill that gap, hopeful for a relaxation in some of the restrictions around CR, so that stations may effectively become hyperlocal commercial radio stations. However, CR was set up as a movement to provide a voice for the unrepresented. It is in danger of becoming a pale imitation of commercial radio, policed by an army of middle-aged men as its gatekeepers. If it is to maintain its social gain aspect and truly represent the diversity of the UK, and indeed to amplify the voices of the under-represented it needs to embrace the potential of methods outlined in this PhD such as innovative outreach and participation projects and the affordances of OS, peer to peer audio technology as a tool towards this end.

Future studies based on this work should draw on the lessons learnt during the course of my practice. These include the need for face-to-face contact. The community aspect of community radio is not to be underestimated; while radio is definitely a key aspect in the power of CR, community and social interaction is the reason for people's continued participation. It is hoped that the implications of this research for CR stations

can be put into practice by CR station managers and boards to improve diversity. A CR station which develops a rhizomatic governance and approach to scheduling, coupled with active outreach to marginalised communities and innovative methods such as those represented in this PhD can provide more social gain as well as improving its audience "reach", as we showed in the demographic study of CR in Cornwall.

The work in this project which involved partnering with an organisation, creating an ethical protocol in partnership and the interview schedules, participant information sheet and informed consent forms all form a set of new knowledge that will give anyone carrying out future research into collaborative practice in community radio a starting point to build from. The continuing existence of *ASTSYM*, albeit in a different form as a wellbeing group, but with funding secured for a facilitator, points to the lasting impact such groups can have. The reframing of anxiety of excitement and the potential of flow states in community radio practice are also interesting areas for future potential research.

This study also shows that participation in CR practice improves wellbeing. All the participants in *ASTSYM* reported improved wellbeing from participation in the project, which shows that CR in the UK could be made more diverse and representative and fulfil its social gain remit, whilst at the same time improving its listening figures. In the next section, I would like to reflect again from a more personal perspective.

5.2. AFTERWORD

This thesis was inspired by my experiences working in CR in different roles. I started as a volunteer, enthused to be able to broadcast my audio work to a wider audience and connect to the other volunteers at the station, and the wider community in which I lived. I then became a studio manager, as a paid employee, working to train the volunteers, help to curate a schedule and engage with the local community. Now I also approach CR as an academic, a practitioner researcher who has sought both to discover more about the potential of CR for changing communities and to seek ways to ensure that access to this potential is equitable. I have tried to adopt the viewpoint of these three roles at different stages of the research – to see the work through the eyes of the volunteer presenter, the studio or station manager and the academic. Being able to use these three perspectives in my practice has, I hope, given me a

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useful insight into CR and the drive to make change. To reflect as a volunteer/presenter, I hope this PhD shows some of the reasons why being a volunteer is so powerful. Having a voice/Voice in your own community gives you a feeling of connection to a place and people. The freedom to be able to be creative with relatively few restrictions, within the radio format, and for that to have an instant audience is still a source of joy. To reflect as a studio or station manager, this PhD shows that active outreach and innovative recruitment methods and show structures, including the rhizomatic model, can allow a station to be representative of a community and also to amplify under-represented voices within that community. CR is imperfect in its output, structure and governance, but it has such enormous potential for community-building and creating impact on individual's lives that it remains a source of great pleasure and inspiration. Giving people access to the means of media production and letting their creativity and passion run free are why I remain involved in CR and intend to for the foreseeable future.

The initial inspirations that drove this research were the power of CR to improve people's wellbeing and the demographic divide that exists. As someone who is motivated to change inequality, I felt the need to see if this problem could be addressed. The methods I have used have increased participation in the small corner of the world where I am a practitioner. The radio show *ASTSYM* which developed out of the practice is now broadcast across Cornwall, disseminating knowledge about mental health in Cornwall and has, by their own words, improved the mental wellbeing of those who have taken part. Many of those who first broadcast via *ASTSYM* went on to have their own CR shows, not particularly related to mental health. It is in the moments when I drive around Falmouth with the radio tuned to *Source FM* and a show from one of these participants comes on that I hear the proof of the power of CR practice for the individual. The confidence with which people express their Voice, and the connection to their local community which in many cases they were lacking before involvement in CR, that still leads me to believe in CR as a tool for "social gain". The thought that people's lives were improved in some small way, friendships forged, relationships established, self-esteem improved by participation in this practice that gives me pleasure and gratification that I was able to be in the privileged position to be the researcher-practitioner in such a project. It is my hope that the method or methods which proved useful in the course of this research can be used by others, but more importantly perhaps, establishing that innovative

methods work and can prove a positive impact on lives of the individual and the wider community will inspire others to seek new ways to include all communities. Giving people who have not traditionally had a voice in traditional media or even wider civic society has a potential greater than the impact on the individual. I hope this PhD can play a small role in the work which gives CR a footing as a tool for social gain and exciting creative cauldron, embedded in the mediascape of the UK and be used to protect CR from commercial and political forces that might lessen it in a drive to make it a form of local radio or for individuals who want to see radio in an format that they understand, rather than to allow the creative potential of diverse communities to create new formats.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: GUIDE TO THE PRACTICAL SUBMISSION

Audio Documentary

Edited presentation of radio/podcast content and PhD thesis as a podcast:

https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhBod4mvlVTh_BgLp?e=wlQ7fd

See Appendix B for links to audio from shows produced.

PhDCasting

Full podcast available at <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/phdcasting> (first published through *New Aural Culture/Podcasting Studies* Podcast)

APPENDIX B: REPOSITORY AND LIST OF AUDIO CONTENT

This appendix links to audio content created as part of the practice of the PhD.

Collaborative Practice

House of Rachology

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhB5G4YQ19u8sk7rB?e=exHMIh>

Wasson in St Ives?

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhBKHIB4XF5zVzNLV?e=IfEGCw>

A Space to Speak Your Mind

Website containing an archive of all ASTSYM podcast shows:

<https://podfollow.com/aspacetospeakyourmind/view>

A selection of radio show episodes:

First show <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhB9qjvbToPSV4pIW?e=2p87W3>

First post-Covid-19-lockdown show:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBhCC59VsKDJY3U6LR?e=NarBza>

Shows which came out of ASTSYM

Lost In Translation <https://www.mixcloud.com/LostInTranslationSourceFM/>

The Song Remains The Same <https://www.mixcloud.com/shuds/>

Maid in Kernow: <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBg2Y6ijfmFFYujldg?e=LYj3Zv>

Songs in the Key of Life:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBg2nOrhnTtzfo1czu?e=37kOM8>

Sports Report:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AmZUzgO73ZUBg3rxDjmUU2mGFZDn?e=mF4lcj>

APPENDIX C: REMOTE RADIO

Source Code in GitHub repository link:

<https://github.com/JerryPadfield/RemoteRadio>

```

155 //
156 // Called when we get permission to access audio from end-user
157 //
158 function onUserMediaSuccess(s) {
159   // notSupported.style.visibility = "hidden";
160   notSupported.classList.add("byebye"); // remove splash screen
161   document.getElementById("RemoteRadio").classList.remove("disabledRR");
162   // get audio devices
163   navigator.mediaDevices.enumerateDevices()
164     .then(gotDevices)
165     .catch((e) => RRError(e));
166   accessedAudio = true;
167   var AudioContext = window.AudioContext || window.webkitAudioContext;
168   theAudioContext = new AudioContext();
169   // set up busses
170   outputBuss = theAudioContext.createGain();
171   outputBuss.connect(theAudioContext.destination);
172
173   mixedAudio = theAudioContext.createMediaStreamDestination();
174
175   outgoingRemoteStreamBuss = theAudioContext.createMediaStreamDestination(); // remote buss we send to remote guests (switch between PGM and TALK)
176   remoteBussGain = theAudioContext.createGain();
177   remoteBussGain.connect(outgoingRemoteStreamBuss);
178
179   recorderBuss = theAudioContext.createGain();
180   recorderBuss.connect(mixedAudio);
181   if (remoteRadioMode == RRMMode.STUDIO) {
182     crossfader = new RRCrossfader(playerLeft, playerRight);
183   } else {
184     document.getElementById("songs").style.display = "none";
185     // document.getElementById("carH1").style.display = "none";
186   }
187   mic = new RRMicrophone(s);
188   micMediaStream = s;
189   mic.connect(recorderBuss);
190   //mic.connect(remoteBussGain);
191

```

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Collaborative Practice

Interview with participant R from the collaborative practice. All questions asked by Jerry Padfield and shown in italics. Interview conducted Nov 23, 2020.

Why did you choose to take part in the project?

I think I answered it a bit in the first show, actually. I always look for interesting things to challenge myself a bit further and between you and I my job... I'd got to where I wanted to get much sooner than I anticipated, which in some ways is great, but in other ways has kind of left me where I've got nowhere to go apart from more pressure and more stress, so I'm always looking for new challenges and new things to do. Probably saying too much, but I had a bit of a breakdown when I was working for a London law firm and I just could not, it was just too much it was absolutely ridiculous. I had no work/life balance. I literally was juggling so many plates that I just... I was in a mess. I didn't really leave the house. It's not like me at all, because I'm a really positive, upbeat, happy person and I was in a really dark place then. And my parents are medical, they were really, really worried about me. They were down all the time. [My husband] was amazing. It was a just really awful dark time, and I thought I could never... Because that was all I ever wanted to do... I was like, well what am I going to do? I can't, I do not want to do that job anymore. I never want to go back to that ever, ever again. And then as I started to get better, I found a really random post on Facebook - not yours - it was a local photographer that's been like an international photographer. And I never thought I was very creative. I always thought, you know, I could never draw anything, so I thought I've got no creativity clearly but whilst I was off sick, I did a lot of making stuff and started enjoying that a bit more I thought, "oh, I'm enjoying this!" Anyway, he put this post out saying I need some admin help. So, I contacted him, and I had the most amazing experience for probably about nine months with him. So, I kind of thought, you know, I can do other things and perhaps I would like to different things and explore different things. So that was a really great experience. Then obviously I went back into law, and I was quite happy at the moment, but I still had this yearning for learning more and wanting to make sure that if doors ever close on me, I've got other skills and other opportunities available, and so... I did a couple of interviews with A on his show and although it was obviously talking about my job, I was like, oh this is actually quite fun and a couple of my work mates were like, oh R you sounded alright on that, and I thought oh OK. I love talking. Anyway, I'd never really thought about it and then I saw your post and I was like, oh my God! That's talking to me! I have to do it! It just sounds amazing! And it's made me really happy and got me through a very difficult nine months. You know, workwise, home life, everything just has been really difficult, and it's been so brilliant, and I've loved it.

Why didn't you take part in community radio before. I know you'd been on A's show. Was there something that put you off or was it just lack of opportunity?

Do you know what? I never really sort of looked into it I suppose. I just thought, "Oh, this is quite fun." And then I suppose I didn't really know how to access it or what it was really all about and I thought "there's no way I could do all this." You know, I'd need to be trained and I couldn't really see any training and I thought in my mind... I mean I've done obviously degrees and other things like a Masters, you know, it's a very academic process to get to where I am in my world, and I didn't really know I was like, you know, I'm not going to go and do a degree now in journalism or radio or presenting or media, it's not possible. Do you know what I mean? So, I didn't really know how to access it I suppose, in a roundabout way. And then when I did come in for A's show I was like Oh my God I'm never going to be able to use all that equipment, that is pretty mental, like, that is specialist!

It's intimidating, although it's easier than it looks. So, what did you like most about the project, if you can pick one thing?

Being able to be creative.

Okay, good answer. And can I flip that? What did you like least about the project?

There's nothing I like least. I just wish I had more time.

Which areas of the project did you find most useful? That could be useful in terms of practical stuff or useful in terms of a creative outlet or anything. Basically, anything you found useful.

Well... "Useful!" I found all of it useful and then drawing it all together as the process has gone on... You know, when we started off and I just had all these crazy ideas and it was just like "blah!" and I wanted to put that into action and couldn't really, you know, couldn't really see how I was going to be able to do a whole show in an hour, you know, an hour's show with all these different features, but then learning all the different bits... Everything was useful to then tie it all together. There was nothing that wasn't useful. I've used everything that you've taught me.

Okay. What was the biggest challenge?

The time. Time, just having that... I just needed... I just wanted more time. But then that's maybe like... everyone wants more time. I want more time for everything. So, it was just trying to fit it in sometimes not all the time, because I'd have to, sort of, I just have to book it into my diary and make sure that I could have some quiet space to do it. What was the question again?

Biggest challenge?

Yeah, probably the time and wanting to be able to do things quicker or getting a bit frustrated. Like when I recorded that show and it didn't record?

Oh, yeah. So, you've worked at few different ways. What was your preferred way of working? You've used Mixxx, Audacity, Cleanfeed and my bit of software? What was the way that you prefer to work? Was it doing the live show? Was it pre-recording interviews? Which bit?

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I liked doing both actually. So, it was nice to do the live... be live and I knew that people were listening to me at that time. I found that really good. Although it was hard just being in a room on your own and not getting any kind of thumbs up from anyone. And I didn't look at my phone or anything, so... but I liked that. And then... what was the question? Sorry, Jerry.

Preferred way of working?

Yes, preferred way of working. So, I liked having them both... So, I liked being able to pre-record, I suppose because in my working life everything's... I just do stuff... I'm probably a bit of a perfectionist. So, I like to be able to do it over and over and over and amend and change and... So, it was nice having my set pre-recorded bits so I knew I could just play and have a bit of down time in the show to then plan what I was going to say next. But I did enjoy the live. I found I got, you know, I got a bit nervous and energy, you know, I like that.

Yeah. Is there anything that could have made the creative process, or the whole process altogether really, easier for you?

Not really, because it was like my show and what I wanted to do, and it was just learning how to make that possible. I mean there's loads of things that I want to be trained up in going forward, you know, like you said, let's come up with a training plan and I'm really keen to keep going and learn new things. Sorry, Jerry, what was the question? I keep talking and then I can't remember where I was actually going with that.

That's alright. Let me put it a different way then. Is there anything that you would change about the project? So, if you imagine that somebody else was going to do this project, what would you change to make it better for that person?

I suppose... It's not a criticism, it's just to make it better. Perhaps, a kind of guide, a sort of rough guide to some of the... Mixxx, Audacity, you know... just a beginner's... I mean, I've written my own notes which is fine, and I know you probably haven't got time to do that. Or just a sort of plan for the weeks. Just to see... again, in my working world I'm always looking to the end result and what I want to get at the end of it and trying to argue my way back and work out... That's just how my mind works. But I suppose just having a sort of rough guideline as to what's covered each week. And actually, as you said, it was really great because when we started, we weren't sure when it was going to be on air, when my slot was going to be, but I think that was really good having all those practices and having that time to do it all, so I was ready for it. I think that was... although I would have been like "Oh! Quick, quick! I want to get on and do it." I practised. I spent a long time with you... not long, but do you know what I mean? But really having the time to practise, getting my practice shows to you, so by the time I came to do it I felt really comfortable with everything. I did find Mixxx confusing, I have to say. I felt like I was going to be some DJ in Ibiza!

Do you think it would be better to bypass Mixxx altogether then? Just go straight for my bit of software in future?

Yeah, definitely. Definitely. Because that's what I want to use going forward, I think. Because I just found... although I did like a little bit of *Mixxx*, there's just so much stuff on there and there so many times when I clicked the wrong thing, like I said to you the cues and things and jumping forward and, oh, it was just, yeah, that was quite annoying. Something else that was useful was being able to have practice doing an interview, edit it, record it, get the song in, and send it off for another show. Just to get how that was feeling, that was really nice, and useful because you felt like people were listening.

I know the answer to this one, but I'll ask it you anyway: do you think you're more likely to be involved with Source FM or community radio in the future as a result of taking part in the project?

Absolutely.

Yeah. And you've got a show...

Yeah. I've got my show and I've got ideas for other shows and my friends are just like, "Oh, can we do requests?" And everyone... I just feel like, really excited about it.

Excellent. Do you think you'll... This is a big question, so it might be hard to answer. Do you think your participation in this project has affected your health or wellbeing in any way?

In a massive, positive way. Yeah. So, as I sort of said to you, I suppose. I haven't, you know... there's things that have been going on in the last nine months. And work's been incredibly stressful and Covid and everything else, and this has just saved me, because it's meant that I've switched off from my job. I've been able to do something that I'm loving, and I feel really... don't get me wrong, I feel passionate about my job. But it's so you know, there's cases I'm dealing with which are very stressful, very harrowing and difficult and depressing and I just want some happiness and fun and listen to songs that I love, and I just don't have the time, you know, so it's just been absolutely brilliant to make me switch off from that and focus on something that I really enjoy.

That's really nice to hear. Another kind of difficult question, maybe have your feelings altered towards your community as a result of this project? So, the community could be Falmouth, it could be your friends. It could be you know, basically I'm asking whether you feel that you've got a bit more of a connection as a result of the radio show?

Definitely, so I felt... I didn't tell anybody that I was doing it, actually. Nobody really knew. Couple of my neighbours did. I didn't say, I just wanted to suddenly go "Listen to this! listen to my show! And see what you think." I think people were just... the feedback I had from some of my friends and family was just, you know "wow, that's really, really good" and one of them said it sounds, you know, I couldn't believe it was you, and all this nice stuff. Obviously, they're going to say nice stuff but I felt really... and I've got people texting... my mate Joe, she's in London, she's texting me "my friends want to be on your show you know they'd be really good in this and this" and people have... "are you going to take requests" and people

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are starting to like my page and I just... Yeah, I do feel connected. I hope I can feel, be more connected, and I sort of feel, I hope, you know, there's obviously people listening, which is brilliant. Yeah. And I hope more than just my friends will listen.

And actually, something else... I mean, during lockdown, even my neighbours who we were friendly with, we've become very close in my little cul-de-sac and just a couple of others just round the corner. And we set up like a *WhatsApp* group and we're on there loads chatting and stuff. And even then, you know, they're just I've got to know them. And they're all interested in the radio. And I've asked, you know, I've introduced some of them, and they think it's brilliant, and not necessarily for my show but for A's show. And so, they're all thinking it's wonderful. And yeah, it's just things to talk about. And yeah...

I kind of asked you this a bit earlier, but I'll ask it you again it specifically, what advice would you give to someone interested in taking part in a similar project?

Just go for it. Don't be... Don't feel overwhelmed by any of it. You are the best teacher. Ever. You're so patient and encouraging and gave up all your time. And just have a go. It's really, it's so fun.

So, my final tricky question is, is there anything that you can see in this project that specifically radio that was helpful as opposed to just doing a creative project? Was there anything about the "radioness" of it that was helpful in a way that something else might not be, like you mentioned earlier your photography thing you did? What's the radio aspect?

Yeah. So, when I first... I don't know if you remember when I first got in touch with you, I mean, our dream is to live in France. And I would love to, I've always thought about what I can do out there. So, transfer, I'm not going to do law out there in a way, but it was just kind of what could I do? And I thought, oh, this would be really, a really amazing skill to learn and platform to use that I could possibly take and do from anywhere. I mean, how amazing is that? So, there's that and being able to do it from my house is just what is amazing, it's just easy.

Brilliant. And my final question is, is there anything else you'd like to say or anything else you think I should know?

Just that I'd like to carry on training, and you've been absolutely brilliant. Thank you so much for all your time. I've just absolutely loved it. Didn't think I'd love it this much. But I do, which is brilliant.

That's really nice to hear. Thank you, and thanks for answering my questions.

A Space to Speak Your Mind

Of the 12 participants involved with ASTSYM during the period of my practice, seven were willing to give interviews about their experiences. These are presented below. Redactions have been made to protect anonymity or remove sensitive personal content relating to participants' mental health. All questions asked by Jerry Padfield and shown in italics.

Participant RD

Interview conducted Sep 8, 2020

Why did you choose to take part in the project?

I chose to take part because I could see from my husband's taking part, what a brilliant project it was, and I have a background in mental health. At first, I didn't have the time to take part. So, I was a bit "Oh, that's a shame". But once I had the time to take part, I really wanted to do it, because I could see the positive impact it had on the people taking part, but also of course getting the message out there to a wider audience as well, is something that I feel quite strongly about.

Why did you or why have you not taken part in community radio before? Or have you?

I didn't have the time. I haven't. I've done the odd interview to promote my businesses, but running two businesses, and being employed and being a carer and wanting to find time for myself, to take time out. I just didn't have the time. But I'd always followed community radio.

Right. What did you like most about the project?

That it was inclusive, with no pressure. It doesn't have to be perfect. That is such a relief. Especially when you're dealing with people with anxiety, but just for anyone who likes to put content out there, and are dealing with, you know, websites and businesses, it has to be perfect because people can be really critical and community radio is just about celebrating differences and we make mistakes and we're going to fluff our words and it doesn't have to be perfect... just put something out there, it's just such a relief.

And can I flip that question and just ask you, what did you like least about the project?

So, my structured brain, probably didn't like least - I would lose track of dates and times and what we were doing for each show because it was... we wouldn't promote the next show in the previous show. So, it's like do one, and then you have a break and then it's all "go" for the next one. So, there's no... you can't plan for three months. You can't plan for like three months ahead or think this is what we're going to do seasonally, or these are events that are happening that we could tie into. It was just "we'll do one show" and then what would happen is, you do one show and probably the theme of that show had already passed by the time that show aired. It's already old news.

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What areas of the project did you find most useful? That's different from liking or not liking, but is there anything that was useful in your other life? Or even in the production of the show.

Right, so in the production of the show, I really liked having the WhatsApp group, because that was an instant way of keeping on top of what's going on. And it was a really good way to build the personalities of everybody and... because we were in lockdown and we couldn't have the face-to-face meetups, and that was really nice way to get to know everybody, get to know each individual's character, a little bit more about everybody so that was really nice. And then for my other work as well obviously I've taken the recordings that I've done and used them on my website as well. That's been a really nice thing to be able to kind of tie the two things in together. And, you know, acts to promote *A Space to Speak Your Mind* but it also promotes me as I'm taking part in a community show, and I've got content that I can put on my website.

Again, this is the next question so slightly differently phrased. So, what were your biggest challenges, so you've said what you didn't like about the project, but it might have been that it was a challenge, but you actually enjoyed it once you got you got through it, or it might be this the same answer as before.

The challenge was recording stuff. And it's that same old... hearing your voice, actually putting it out there and just making sure, you've got some good content. But for me, not trying to make it too wordy, too techie, just to put something out there and literally to go with that flow of like, let's just produce something. Let's record it, let's get it out there, let it go. For me that's quite a challenge because I'm generally kind of planning and quite structured about things, but it was in a nice way. It was great to be able to do that, but it was a challenge to have to sit down and record and think, "oh God I said that wrong. We're going to have to do it again". Yeah, that's the challenge.

You mentioned a bit about recording... What was your preferred way of doing that because I know you use WhatsApp, and you might have used your computer as well and you've definitely seen MD be involved with the kind of online stuff, is it...? What sort of technology and not even technology, just the way of working did you find the best for you?

I did a few, so I started with, I've got a really nice little mic, but it only plugs into my phone. So, I used the mic and phone setup. But then I could also only edit it on my phone, and it's so tiny that I just couldn't stare at the screen and work it out. So, though the quality might have been good, I couldn't... I struggled with it because I couldn't edit. So, what I did in the end was just use my voice recorder on my phone and just voice record and I would do it... I'm currently... rather than do the whole thing all in one go because I still haven't got around to figuring out the editing. I would record, you know, maybe. I've got notes, maybe a page, my notes or a paragraph and then stop. And then do another recording and stop. So, I then send it off to you, or whoever, in about four or five chunks, maybe, which is not ideal, but it works...

Broadening Participation in Community Radio

Well, related to that is there anything that could have made the process creatively or technologically or otherwise any easier for you?

I guess easier would have been if I had said what I would like to talk about, and somebody interviewed me on it.

Okay. Well, this is a suggestion, so feel free to say no but maybe some training, I know that, maybe the way the project went, we kind of had to deal with a huge crisis in the middle of it, so that was closed down a little bit, but it would have been... I mean the offer would have been there, because that you kind of took out when the pandemic hit didn't you? So, if we'd been able to meet face to face or if circumstances have been different, we could have offered you some audio training. Would that have been something you'd have taken up?

Yes, definitely. I know the offer is there now to do it online. It's just a little bit more difficult in terms of my learning style. You do that online. And then, then of course it's motivation... to OK this is something I should do, but I'm going to have to do it online. So, the motivation dips a little bit. But yes, training, I jumped at it.

Yeah. Okay. Is there anything you'd change about the project, if you could?

Well, it would probably change the feel, but I would like a little bit more of the structure of: "Let's sit and plan, some scenes around say the next three to six months, where we have a structure", not for the whole show but maybe a part of the show where it is themed, and then we do all our other stuff around. So, we have some kind of anchor to each show, so that then your listener, then knows "it's that bit coming up in the show, I like that bit".

Yeah. Okay, that makes sense. Yeah. Do you think you're more likely to be involved with Source FM or community radio or even podcasting in the future as a result of taking power and A Space to Speak Your Mind?

Definitely, because I'd like to pick your brains on podcasting for the future. I have an idea.

Okay, that's good. Do you think your participation in this project has affected your health or mental wellbeing in any way at all?

Yes, because it gives it a focus so each month, there is some focus, something to work towards. And of course, socially it's opened up a new group of people, to me, which has been really lovely. I work, generally on my own all day. Lockdown has been great because I have been able to be out and a bit more sociable and less work. But having that *WhatsApp* group, and then we have had some *Zoom* sessions and social sessions. It's just really nice to have some new people to meet there. Yeah, that was good. Sorry, what was the question again?

Has the participation in the project affected your health or mental wellbeing in any way?

Yeah, so yes in a good... definitely in a good way, more sociable, and also having that relaxed feel around doing the show has been really

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nice to have something that I'm involved with that is... yeah, just has a really nice feel about it. And also, obviously, because my husband takes part in the show. It's been brilliant to see the benefits to him. And that I can support him to do it, but now my support is becoming less and less, so that's been really lovely.

Yeah. So, you've talked about the positive aspects of the social side of it, and even maybe a little bit about creativity of it. Is there anything you could... I know it's a difficult question. Is there anything you could say that is specific about the radio or the audio aspect of the project that you wouldn't have got from something else?

I guess it's that focus of the listening part. When you watch things, it's very easy to sort of glaze over a little bit. But the listening, so I guess it's probably also due to the fact that when I listen. So, I'm a bit more intense. Um, it might be there in the background. So, if I'm cooking something it might be on in the background, but I've chosen to listen to it. Because I generally don't listen to it in real-time. I'm doing it on a listen again or an app. So, I've made that choice to listen to it. And also, you're drawn into the person's story, and their delivery, because it's not, you know, perfect spoken English and where you can just sort of phase out a little bit is listening to all those little nuances of the interactions of people and how they paced it differently and the content is for me feels more rich, because of that. So, it's a nice listening experience.

Yeah, thank you. So have your feelings altered towards your community. As a result of this project. So, community is quite a big word so that could mean the obvious one to Falmouth it could mean Cornwall, it could mean even the team on a space to speak your mind. So, there are various communities have you. I guess what I'm driving at is do you feel. Do you feel more integrated into your community, your wider community as a result of having a voice on community radio.

Yes, because it does have its own communities, doesn't it? Yeah, so it's been nice to be able to be part of that. You kind of dip into the community radio but you realise community radio is a bigger part of another community that is in a community in Falmouth and Penryn, but it's also spreading the word to... or promote the show so we're ending in getting communities from our friends and our friends, sharing it to our friends. So, it's within my cycling community now, because I've shared the show with them. So, they're all listening to it. And then it gives me and my husband topics to talk about when we see people out or having other zoom sessions or social sessions. So, the radio community of the show has kind of been spread into the wider communities.

Yeah. And what advice would you give to someone who was interested in taking part in this project, if say if I run it in another town again? What would you say to someone who is thinking of getting involved?

I would say give it a go. Just because there are so many levels that you can be involved in. Right from tiny deadline of I think when you first promoted it could be choosing a song just you know doing a little voiceover right up to, you know, full on producing a show, presenting shows. So, there were so many different aspects and I think once you dip your toe in you, then build up your confidence quite

quickly to wanting to do something else because you can see how other people are benefiting from it around you, and it's easy.

Right. That's the end of my questions. So is there anything before we finish that you think I haven't asked you, or think I should know about what, or you'd just like to say about the project.

It's been brilliant. Well done, well done with keeping it together. That's a good test of your project, isn't it? A really good test for your project.

Yeah, and it's survived and thrived even.

It's thrived. Yeah, and it would be lovely to see more people involved. We've kind of got the core group now, haven't we? We've had for quite a while and I promote it lots and say, you know, "Come on everyone try and get involved". No one seems to be taking it up at the moment and I don't know why. That's where it's at. They need that face encouragement of somebody saying to come and do that rather than it being an online thing.

Participant BW

Interview conducted Sep 2, 2020

Why did you choose to take part in the project itself?

That's a really good question. I love it when the first question is very good. So, I think I took part because I'm passionate about mental health but not just passionate about mental health. I think people should be more aware of the difficulties that people face with mental health struggles, especially kind of more severe and less known mental health problems. And I thought the radio is a good medium to do that. I also thought the project was unique and something that I'd be interested in, just because it was a bit different to the usual community projects. And also, at the time I was going through a terrible time, and I thought it'd be a good way for me to focus on something and also maybe potentially meet people. I think that's it for question one.

So, I know you've taken part in community radio before. I was going to ask you to talk about that and why maybe you haven't... your involvement petered out or you didn't have a show of your own before for example...

No, that's interesting because I was involved in a completely different way and, in a way, I didn't feel like I was involved in community radio. I was involved in a... I would call it a... I can't think of the expression but like "out on a limb project" like I was part of an arm if you know what I mean. And, although I got a lot from it at the time, and so I made friends, and it was just fun to be involved in something. Again, it was quite a different creative project. So, I did enjoy it. I enjoyed it probably more for the novelty of it and the friendships and connections. But by the end, I didn't really get anything from it, and I didn't enjoy it and it did just peter out, that project. I did really want a show actually at that time, but the person that I was going to do it, or thought I could do it with, was

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not very committed, and it never happened. But I did want a show. It was going to be like a chat show. And no, I can't really remember it's quite a long time ago, but yeah, I did want a show.

Did you think there were anything there was anything that made it difficult to do a show of your own other than the other person, you know, obstacles in your way or things that just put you off?

No, no, at that time, I was quite keen. Yeah.

So, going back to A Space to Speak Your Mind... What did you like most about the project?

Are you talking in the past tense?

Yeah, it can be present as well.

What do I like most about the project? I think I like it because it's so varied and it's got a lot of scope, and because we are a fairly sizeable team now, there's potential for lots of different points of view and I just think there's so much scope. Again, it's the mental health thing I think, it's a good... radio is a good way of informing and educating people. But also, for me, I do like the social bits of it as well.

So, going back to what you said, why you took part, would you say that those things that made you take part have been realised?

Can you just remind me of them?

You did mention the fact of being able to talk about mental health, which you felt was important and also, you mentioned about potentially meeting new people, making friends and then you mentioned about being in a bit of a bad place and you thought it might take your mind off that or help you...

Right. Okay, so definitely... I mean, I think for me, we might not have gone as, kind of... we haven't focused on... I don't know how to explain it, but I think, we haven't achieved my aim yet, which would be to kind of go deeper into sort of specific problems maybe and explore them and inform and educate people on how distressing it is, maybe, to live with a condition that people only know stuff from watching the telly. Like, say if someone says they're depressed because their football team lost and that's not depression at all or OCD is just like organising stuff. So maybe that, but in terms of... I think we have explored quite a few themes. Like what's beneficial to mental health and stuff like that and like self-care. That's been really good. Because what I like - oh yeah, this is what I like - also we give practical tips. I think that's really important, that there's always something that people can take away. And because there's so many different views, hopefully it can relate to... hopefully people can relate to it, because it's different voices.

I've definitely got something socially out of it. I've made connections and I enjoy the opportunity to kind of meet people outside of the radio context. Yes, it has given me something to focus on and I often need really different stuff. Like, it helps me to get

massively, in a way, out my comfort zone so I'm in a different place entirely. And so that did help.

I'm going to flip that question now. I'll ask you what you like least about the project, or anything that troubled you?

Okay, so I think if I'm honest, I think at times I feel that sometimes we... And I don't know if it's because of the views of people involved, but we almost don't... I don't know how to say this, really. Not because I don't want to, I can't come up with the words. I'll give you an example...

Please...

So, you know, the last show we did, which was self-care, was it?

Yeah, it was.

Yeah. And it was very focused on exercise. So, that's not my issue, although it is a bit of an issue, but the issue to answer the question was that I think it's easy to kind of gloss over things and just say, "Oh, yeah, exercise." But I know that for me and a lot of people with depression can barely like get out of bed when it's bad. So, exercise is brilliant if you can get to the point of being able to exercise. So, I think sometimes that... and I don't know how to...

I'm a researcher so, I want to hear what you've got to say but from what your previous answer just said there, the word that is leaping into my mind - feel free to disagree with me - is "superficial". Perhaps we're superficial about talking about mental health in a way that's not in depth, and with some sort of slightly glib answers, and...

I think we are but also like at the beginning, I remember saying to you, and this was probably more to do with my triggers and stuff I said to you, "Oh, do you think we should be talking about suicide on the first show?" And I remember you saying, "Oh, we don't want to shy away from anything." And I thought "that's good." So, that's probably my own personal triggers. So, I think we do do that. But then sometimes we don't. And there's... it's like quite an extreme thing. You know?

I mean, content-wise, we're very reliant on what people contribute.

I think that's what I mean, because exactly it's to do with the viewpoints of the show. If you think about the people who presented content for the exercise show, whatever, the self-care show, I think those people are possibly... they can kind of get through and they're quite practical people and... I don't know everyone's problems.

We do have a kind of a policy which comes from Mind, mainly, of keeping it positive. Let's say, for example, a contributor said "Right, I want to talk about something really difficult and dark in a way that wasn't just 'and here's some things you can do about it' in the way that we normally do." And from personal experience. It hasn't happened yet. But that's because I think people are already aware that there's not somewhere to go.

What do you mean like if someone...?

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If you want to talk about self-harm, and they would think... Oh, you know, because some people on the internet and other places feel free to talk about whatever they like. So, you can talk about, let's say, the "positive" aspects of self-harm, which there are some like with anything, like with heroin, or any drug.

Yeah, I know. But yeah, I don't think that should be on the radio.

Exactly. But so, we haven't allowed someone to do that, even if they were talking about... trying to talk about it in a balanced way. We haven't allowed anyone to go anywhere dark, not that they've asked to, but we've always made it clear that that's not somewhere to go. So...

I think that's right, because...

I'm not saying you go to that extreme, but maybe we should allow...

What I would want to do would not be anywhere near that, it would be just delving a bit further into the specifics of lesser-known mental health conditions. So, that would be factual.

I don't think there'd be a problem with that.

No, it's just like making people aware, I think, of... like not everything you read in the paper is mental health.

Again, that makes me think sort of superficial because what we do is we kind of do these themes every month as you know, and that kind of tends to make it... I don't know if that makes it or maybe you can answer this question. Maybe that makes it more superficial. Or maybe we should pick a theme of like "OCD month" and explore a subject in-depth rather than picking a theme that's too broad, and then having to do a little superficial...

Yeah. The only trouble with that, though, is hardly anyone would know about, say OCD, or... The good thing about having such a broad theme in a way is that everyone can contribute.

So, maybe that's a feature of the group method is that because we have a diverse group, we can't talk about specifics too much, because if we did, we couldn't do an OCD show or self-harm show, because only maybe two people would think I can contribute to that because I've got experience of it. Is that fair to say?

Yeah, I think so. That is fair to say.

But then I'm sure there must be a way of including... maybe we could have a feature with every month with a different diagnosis that we feature?

Yeah, possibly.

I'm going to phrase those last two questions in a slightly different way because I want you to consider them in in a different way. So, from a practical point of view rather than an emotional or personal point of view. Which areas of the project did you find most useful? That could be personal as well actually thinking about it. So that

could be in your career or in your... even in the way you interact with people, even learning how to use a mixing desk or...

I was going to say initially before you said all that, like the technical... I've really enjoyed - not the right word - but I've really appreciated being able to learn and have training on something so specialised almost, that I wouldn't have had the opportunity to. That's been useful. And also, I think it's a really good thing to... because it ticks a lot of boxes, this project. It's a good thing to say to people or put on your CV and it opens up discussions because everyone is really interested. When I went to my last interview ... and when they had a question: what else are you interested in? I mentioned I was involved in this, and they were like, "Oh, yeah, we read that, tell us about that". So, it opens up discussions, and especially in an interview. It's a nice discussion. Like, for me, particularly in interviews. I like talking about fun stuff or just things that are a bit different, you know, that brings the conversation away from boring stuff. And also, I think I've learned to sort of hone my interpersonal skills a lot more and stay away from potential conflict. That's been really useful, for me, to kind of reflect on my thoughts and... behaviours isn't right but kind of how I might react to something and so that's been really useful. Yeah, just boundaries and...

Okay, what were your biggest challenges?

What? With the whole project?

That includes the show that indirectly has come out of it. Your show.

That can include that?

You can include that in your thinking. Yeah.

One of the probably biggest challenges was - and achievements actually was doing the first live... because don't forget Jerry it was all live at the beginning.

It was and you did three shows.

Yeah. Live. So that was a really big challenge, especially the first one because I've never entered a radio studio and I've not done anything like that. So that was a big challenge but as I say it was a big achievement probably one of the biggest achievements of my natural life.

That's good.

I have found it very challenging trying to deal with different characters and personalities. I always find that a challenge anyway. So yeah, I found that a challenge. And also, working with people who are so different maybe from me or who I don't click with or who just don't get me, that kind of thing. So, basically, clash of personalities. That's challenging. Yeah, not much else, I don't think, apart from... I mean, I've got an excuse now that I've not been there for ages, but I still couldn't get to grips with the studio stuff.

You need more training?

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Well, I don't think there's any point, I think I'm a lost cause.

Why?

Because I can't do it.

You were doing it!

Well, just about. I was clinging on with my proverbial fingers.

You were fine. I wasn't doing anything on the desk. You were playing the music and everything, setting the mic levels and recording. The only thing is you need to practise it regularly and because of the lockdown, that's not happened. If you'd been doing it live over the last 12 months, by now it wouldn't be an issue.

Another thing I found challenging is maybe speaking about topics or doing shows for *A Space to Speak Your Mind* that are difficult issues or triggering in some way. Yeah, so that's challenging.

Do you feel that you've had support in that?

Well, I have from you definitely. But I did once contact one of the workers at Mind - this was early days, and I didn't really know you so I didn't come to you. I think you were away. I knew it was going to be a very difficult show for me because I wasn't in a very... I was in a really bad frame of mind and I think it was the Christmas show. I think we had a Samaritan on, and it was just quite a dark place for me. And I remember the next show I couldn't do it. Anyway, God, I guess [Mind worker] would be there, if I wanted to talk to him. I know you would. So that's good, but I've had one bad experience, and that's the only time I've sort of asked for help.

Maybe there should be a person that is assigned that you can contact that you feel comfortable with. So, that's agreed before we even start doing the show? This person or two people, three people that you are comfortable with...

Well, yeah, potentially.

Okay, moving on. What was your preferred way of working? So, you've had probably more ways of working than we would have expected because you've done the live show from the studio and now we've done remote shows. You've also done recording interviews and things for the show. So, what's your preferred way of working? Or do you have one?

Well for me, I don't think I mind... I quite like the variety I have kind of... I quite enjoyed the flexibility of - I don't really do interviews part from with [removed] - but I quite enjoyed that kind of ad hoc, get your phone out... That's quite nice, I think and really accessible and really flexible. I think my preferred method if I was presenting a show would be to do it at the studios because it's more... it just makes it more of a show thing, like more... I don't mean more professional, but I mean, more like an event if you like. More special, I suppose.

Would you prefer live to pre-recorded?

Well, this is the funny thing because I tell you... I did the live shows and the first time I was terrified. Well, not terrified, nervous. I did really enjoy it, doing it live. I think it gives you this kind of different feeling. Have I got options?

Yeah. Well, you've said you prefer to go to the studio as a kind of an event.

I don't know if I mind live or pre-recorded but what I do miss and what I do prefer is us all having live conversations, like meeting face to face without computers. I don't like that, but obviously that can't be helped because of the global pandemic because it's unprecedented.

Is there anything that could have made the creative process or the whole process easier for you?

Oh, right. So should I just take that question as I see it?

You can do but I'm happy to clarify.

I love a bit of clarification.

It says creative process here. But I'd like it to be more open than that. I'm asking you, if you've got any opinions about stuff that would be useful for anybody else in the future, who would do this project in the future?

Don't think there is, Jerry, if I'm honest.

You're happy with it? I mean, you're a creative person.

Yeah, I've realised that so much more in the last six months.

Is there anything you would change about the project if you could?

No.

Okay, well there are things you already mentioned, I guess, like the support, things like that. I know the answer to this question because you already are... Do you think you are more likely to be involved with the Source FM or community radio in the future as a result of taking part in the project? And you are doing your own show now...

I'm in the past future. Interesting. Yeah. Well, yes, obviously, because we wouldn't have done a show together because I wouldn't have met you. So on that basis, but you're talking more about has it made me more confident or has it made me...

Yeah, confidence, but also, let's say it wasn't me, let's say you had you wanted to do a show with somebody who you knew like Joe Blow? Do you think that A Space to Speak Your Mind has made it more likely that you would feel able or confident to do a show on the Source?

Yeah, probably because then I would have presented a show on A Space to Speak Your Mind. Yeah, I think so. Yes. Okay.

This is a big question but do you think that your participation in this project has affected your health or wellbeing in any way?

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Yeah, yes. Oh, on both ways. So, I'm going to talk about the negatives first because the positives are always nice after. I wouldn't, no. I would mention it only positively. There was only that one show that I felt affected my health negatively. It's affected my wellbeing really positively, because... I'm sorry. Can you ask the question again?

In what ways has your participation in this project affected your health/wellbeing?

Right. It's definitely been a really good focus for me and helped distract me from difficulties too. I guess the social connections I've made have improved my wellbeing, definitely. I think also being part of something and almost - and I don't know if this is too grand - shaping something. Yeah. Shaping something it's really empowering to shape something.

Have your feelings altered towards your community as a result of the project and the community is a big word and it could mean people in this block of flats, it could mean Falmouth, it could mean the A Space to Speak Your Mind team...?

Because of this project?

Because of the project.

Yes. Also, when we were saying about... when I was doing the question before about... With what knowledge I might gain from hearing people's stories I've become more compassionate. I do feel a bit warmer, I suppose...

What advice would you give to someone interested in taking part, say it was run again in a different town?

Hard that question. I would say take all the opportunities. The training, take it. Embrace the opportunity.

Would you advise people to do it?

Definitely. 100 per cent. You'll gain a lot from it. It's a really important thing to do. Not just for yourself, but for your community.

Is there anything else I haven't asked you about that you think I should know?

I'm really glad for the opportunity to have been involved. It's a brilliant project. It's almost ground-breaking. Just really enjoyed being involved and I've got so much out of it, so thank you.

Participant BT

Interview conducted Nov 24, 2020

So why did you choose to take part in the project?

S from Pentreath. When I was having meetings with her, she suggested it might be something nice to get involved with. I got involved because it seemed like a nice project, and it... I was obviously out of work still and I was out of work then. And it may help bridge the gap between going back into work, and it may be like something to be involved in in a team where there's not too much pressure so it's kind of... Yeah, just a feel of being back in a workspace environment without your finances relying totally on it. And, yeah just seemed liked some fun as well. Fun to be on the radio and to contribute, give something back to the mental health community which has been good to me.

Can I ask why haven't you been involved in community radio before, or have you?

I have not. It's just, it's never crossed my mind. My opinion of the media in general is quite dim, so it's just something I've not really considered just based on externally looking back at the media and you know tabloids and whatever else it's just not... It doesn't always strike me as great from a moral perspective sometimes so that's why I stayed away. I mean people have suggested to me before... somebody said to me weirdly a couple of people have said you've weirdly got a voice that would be good for a news anchor. So that was in the back of my mind when S suggested the radio thing. I wonder whether that's partly why she suggested it to me as maybe she saw it might be something that would be... I'd be good at doing or something like that. So yeah, that's basically it.

And what did you like most about the project?

Just the way it's... from a personal perspective it's helped me build some confidence. And it's good. It's quite challenging as well especially when you're on-the-fly trying to think up questions and talk with people and you've got [facilitator] in your ear, giving you some information on what to ask - so it's quite challenging, and, obviously, it gives back to the mental health community and it's just quite fun when you're involved in it. There's a challenge to it and it's... I guess that's all I can give you, I think.

Okay. And what did you like least about the project?

A difficult one. I should have thought about this before.

I quite like asking you on-the-fly because it makes it... it means it brings out things from your head.

Yeah. I think the lack of structure, especially as we started... from where we started, I assumed it was more of a team thing at the start whereas I'm learning over time it's more of a group of individuals, contributing to a radio project to provide something for the mental health community etc. So yeah, the lack of structure really at the start. I know it's something we're building on isn't it but... With [facilitator] taking up a role and that kind of thing but, yeah... just at the start it would have been ... if we'd have outlined what... I guess it's just team building. At the start if we outlined what our ethics are and, like in football when we used to -

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the first thing we'd do is sit down when we were coaching. We'd outline as a team what our values are, and how we want to conduct ourselves and what as a team we... if we have a problem, or if we have... what we're going to say on air with things and about each other and that. If we'd have done that, I think... Yeah, that would have caused less stress. And, yes, that's the thing that has been... yeah, that's the most difficult thing, I think.

And which areas of the project did you find most useful? So that could be practically, your career or personal life, anything...?

Well obviously, you've been helping me with some technical problems which have fed into the music as well. So, yeah, the technological things you helped me with - *Audacity* and shown me a little bit how that works and then microphones a little bit and... so, yeah, definitely from a technological point of view that's been the most beneficial to me, yeah.

Okay, I know you've talked a little bit about this already but what were the biggest challenges you found?

Well, yeah, communication. Probably based on the foundations that we... for me, we did not lay down at the start so that's been the most kind of challenging, I think, and then just talking to people on the fly. You know what I mean, when you're in an interview and you know, you get someone who's barely saying anything, and you need to... you know you're only up to like seven minutes and you need to keep it going. And then you have run out of questions and... So, yeah just the sporadic nature of it, but that's also quite challenging which is nice. Yeah.

Okay. And so, you've worked several roles, lots of different ways now including in the studio, outside broadcast type things, working via the internet using Cleanfeed, editing at home - what was your preferred way of working?

I think definitely it was outside interviewing when we've... I've only done one with the *Newquay Bluetits*, but it was... It just felt like being in the environment was more... that was the most exciting thing to do and because we got the noises and the sounds and because you're in it, their enthusiasm rubs off on you. The girls. So, it kind of wakes you up a bit and you're not so focused on the pen and paper, you're more just feeding off of them, so yeah.

I know some of these questions might sound a bit repetitive, but I try to get different angles and maybe provoke you to say something different but if you feel like there's not much more you can add, please say. My next question is, is there anything that could have made the process or the creative process easier for you?

Yeah, it's the structural thing again. Obviously, I'm repeating myself because the questions are a bit the same, but that's quite a broad thing I know, but yeah, just... If we'd have laid out at the start, a little bit more of that because you don't want to put pressure on people, so you don't say well this is your role and that role which I get, but it is... Sometimes you're a little bit in the

dark about... I feel like I'm always asking questions about well, how long do you want this interview? You know what kind of interview do you want to do next or... and timeline things as well... when do you want to do things and it feels like I'm always asking those kind of questions and I think in the back of my mind that probably gets a little bit... That can be quite difficult so yes... had we have had at the start more of like a... values of the team, what we believe, how we want to conduct ourselves with each other, even if it's just a few lines and then just later on, in terms how we communicate with regards to doing the content sometimes you feel like you're fading out of it and then suddenly you're brought back in and you... it's the timing a little bit. Yeah.

Do you think you're more likely to be involved with Source FM or community radio in general because of taking part in this project?

I think so, yeah, just because I've enjoyed it, and it's... You guys are always giving me good feedback as well on what I'm doing so I don't know whether you have to say that and that's kind of your... I'm not calling you liars, but maybe you're just trying to be nice you know what I mean, but I'm always getting good feedback for what I'm doing so maybe it's someone I should try to look to stick with, even if it's just on a voluntary basis and just stay involved in whether it's *A Space to Speak Your Mind* or somewhere else or whatever, you know.

Yeah. This might be a harder question to answer. Do you think your participation in this project has affected your health or wellbeing in any way?

I mean, absolutely. From a negative point of view, there's been a lot of stress. There's been a lot of... in terms of communication with people and the way the structure has changed you know so when we've got... when X was producing for that brief week it felt very different the whole approach to the producing and deadlines and all this and then when you or [facilitator] do it's different again and that's been quite stressful for me so how that has kind of changed and you're not quite sure what's going to happen next, you know. So yeah, there's been a lot of stress with it. Not a hell of a lot but it's definitely been there... but also on a positive notice it's helped build some confidence and being able to kind of cope with that kind of thing that I've had issues with. So maybe that's a reflection on me as well. It's just, you know, maybe that's something that I need to work on and get better at myself as well for sure. That's something I've been working on as well - assertiveness on that. Yeah.

Yeah. Do you think your feelings have altered towards your community? As a result of this project and so community could mean the community of the radio that speak your mind team or the town you live in or community or anything, really.

Yeah, from a broader sense the outer community and because we talk to so many amazing people. And I'm always like... it feels like every time I'm interviewing someone and they finish talking I'm saying well that's fantastic and it genuinely is because we talk to so many

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people who are running voluntary projects and they're doing it voluntarily and they're not making any money out of it and they're just doing it out of the kindness of their own heart and it's just amazing to me so many people are doing great things out there because you just don't hear about them. At least I don't and just listening to mainstream radio or general TV... you don't see much of it on social media, so it's been... it's just amazing to see so many people raising money and helping people with mental health just off their own back and yeah... What was the question? Did you mean towards our team as well...

...towards what you ever you consider as a community, or it could be like you say the mental health community in Cornwall, it could be just the town you live in, you know, if it's changed your perception of the people that you interact with, I guess.

Yeah, it's been great to meet so many people but also sometimes it feels like when the projects and the people that we meet I wonder if they're really. I wonder if they're not targeting, some of the neediest people - I hate the word neediest - but neediest people in like where I live in B____. You see it feels like the mental health issues getting worse and worse and, and it you know I see so many incidents here where you think well that person doesn't seem very well mentally and that can be just down the street, it could be outside my house. And I just I wonder whether it's been great in one to have a lot of the projects are kind of geared towards the absolute neediest or it's, you know, maybe taken a different time go in that kind of thing, but...

If we were to run this project the same except up in Devon or somewhere, what advice would you give to someone interested in taking part?

Go and going get content or go and find content off your back, that you really want to do, and that you think would be really good for the show, because that's kind of the ethos I think you guys put on us is to go and find the content ourselves and to you know whatever direction you want to go in and just be really forward with things because so many of these projects and people that we talked to they benefit a lot by being on the air and getting that little bit of advertising, I guess, and they want to talk about the work that they're doing because I don't know if they're always getting the recognition. So, just be really out there and then go and because there's people doing everything there's so many projects going on just go and find what you want and, yeah, just kind of push it off your own bat and...

My last question really is there anything in particular about radio that's been useful in this project because it could you say you could have been a member of a creative writing group or an art group or something. Is there anything in particular about the radio aspect of the group that's been useful, or just interesting.

I think the fact that we're obviously doing radio so we're outward facing, and we involve ourselves with the community and we speak to people, loads of different people all the time... I think that's been

interesting because if it had been my creative writing group that would have been... that maybe would have been more insular and more kind of... you're just in a room kind of doing that. Just being involved in the mental health community's been more interesting and meeting different people and... Because you don't know what's going to happen. I mean, [facilitator] did an interview yesterday that was just chaos. A little bit in terms of the technological problems but right in terms of the sporadic nature of it and I think that's really good for mental health because you can get quiet, you can isolate yourself. I think a lot of people do with their mental health so I think that's been really key for the project in terms of building confidence.

Yeah. So, what my final question is, is there anything else you'd like to say or anything else. Any other comments you'd like to make... it's just if you had anything else you'd like to say that you've had an opportunity to really.

Oh no, not that I can think of... no, it's been good being involved and it's definitely going to help me with my mental health moving forward so I guess that's the point of it.

Participant TY

Interview conducted Sep 14, 2020

So, first question: why did you choose to take part in the project?

Basically I used to work in radio and a friend of mine who lives in Cornwall as well, who used to work in radio the same as me in the Midlands, got involved in the project and I kept saying to him "I'd like to have a go at radio but I don't know if I want to work like we used to in commercial radio where it was really sort of bitchy and pressurised and stuff." So, he suggested that I get on board with it and then I started off by doing a news bulletin and was quite nervous about it just because it's been quite a long time since I've done it. And then it kind of developed from there and I've just absolutely loved being a part of it and I don't... I used to have these dreams every night about getting back into radio and stuff and since I've been doing it the dreams have stopped so it was obviously subconsciously trying to tell me I needed to do something radio again.

That's nice. Why did you not get involved in community radio before was it something you didn't know about what was it?

To be honest, I didn't know about it, no I didn't, and I mean I think in the Midlands we didn't really have... Well, I don't know we might have had some, but I didn't know about them, I think it was just because I was involved in commercial radio and the BBC and stuff that I wasn't that aware of community radio but obviously I am now and I'm really glad that things like that are about because there are lots of people... I know we joked the other day about people having a bit of a midlife crisis and just wanting to play

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their favourite songs on the radio but there's nothing wrong with that.

Definitely not.

I've just been listening to 80s music and writing it down. It's my favourite music and I'm going to be playing it on Saturday. So, I think it's great, and if people enjoy it and it's a community thing, then yeah, I'm all for it.

So, can I ask you what you liked most about the project.

Well, I just love interviewing people. I love editing. I love using my imagination and my brain so, for me, with anxiety and depression and stuff... The worst thing for me to do is to sit at home thinking, you know, because that's what causes all the problems, is your thoughts. So yeah, to be busy and to be sort of knowing that I'm doing something good so other people that might be suffering, could listen to what I'm saying or whoever I'm interviewing and think "Oh yeah. I feel like that and it's okay to feel that because it's a very common thing." So that's why I feel like *A Space to Speak Your Mind* is so incredibly important and needs to be on a much bigger scale, really, because there's nothing like it that I'm aware of, and I'm sure that if more people were aware of it, it would become a much bigger thing and, just... Because I often refer people to it. They say, "Oh I'm not feeling very well", and I say "Well, listen to this programme. Listen to this podcast" and they're like "Oh wow! I'm going to listen to it every month now." They didn't know it existed.

Well, the opposite of that is, what did you like least about the project?

I mean... so the thing with me like I've told you before, is because of my background in radio and stuff, I'm quite productive and I could probably do about 100 times the work that I do do for a month, at least. And so, I would like to... I know you can only really have one piece in the show but I don't want to take it over, but I could... if there was several shows that I could work on I'd love to do that because, as you can probably tell... I mean, my show isn't going to go out until Saturday, but I've already recorded an interview for it and I've already done the song playlist and I just... I've got other things to do, but I just love doing it so probably just the fact that I want to be doing more stuff on it.

Which areas of the project did you find most useful? Thinking a bit more practically is there anything that you found useful in your life?

Oh, it's been really good with my [diagnosis removed] so when I did... When I've done some interviews, I've had to kind of go out of my comfort zone and I mean like when I interviewed MH the other day, I was literally having a panic attack, but I didn't let that stop me. Because I wanted to get the audio, and hopefully my voice doesn't come through too shaky but, it's kind of helped me to push out of my comfort zone, with [diagnosis removed] just because I want

to get good quality audio, I don't want to just keep doing it over the phone. So, it has helped me in that way.

And what would be the biggest challenges being a part of it?

I don't think there are any challenges, really. I mean, sometimes, I do find it difficult. I remember, I think it was one of the first shows that I was involved with, and it was, I think it was suicide awareness or something like that. And I found that a little bit hard to listen to just because it was focusing on suicide and then that then made me feel a bit suicidal to be honest, Jerry. You know I'm always blatantly honest. So, I think it can be a little bit triggering in some respects, so it's kind of getting that balance between... I mean, it might have been Suicide Awareness Month, but then I think we could have broken up with some bits. You know, just so that people when they listen to it won't be like "suicide", you know. So, things like that and then I mean I don't really do the news bulletins at the moment but when I was researching stuff for the news - because I don't watch the news anymore because I find it thoroughly depressing - but it was hard to research any positive mental health news because it's all about people that have killed themselves and the suicide rate and really depressing things so... So that, yeah, that was the only sort of difficult thing really, I think. Just reminding myself of ways that I've felt in the past and still do sometimes feel like that. Yeah. Don't know if that makes any sense?

Complete sense yeah, I think, it's a tricky balancing act. So, you've worked quite a few different ways now. What's been your preferred way of working?

From home. I've just done another recording into Audacity with [co-presenter] catching up on her dating antics and it's funny to listen to hopefully, but I'm probably... Audacity is my favourite for recording and editing the interviews because I find it easier to edit the audio, you know, like quite fine-tuning kind of stuff. But in terms of putting together a programme Reaper is definitely... You know, I mean I haven't tried doing it on Audacity, but Reaper is really easy because you've just got the blocks and you can shift the blocks around and there's nothing... it's not too technical. I mean I looked at it and I was like, "Oh my god, I don't know where to start" and when you explained it to me I was thinking "I don't know if I'm going to be able to do this" but I did, and I love the editing so I'm a bit of a geek like that I could probably do that all day, really. Yeah, like sometimes if I've got some audio, and I've gone to bed and I haven't edited it, I wake up, because obviously I wake up really early and I'm like, "I've got that audio I can do. I can do some editing!" before I have my breakfast and stuff.

Now I know that I'll send you lots of things to edit. I didn't realise...

No, that's fine. No, honestly. I'm really lacking things to edit actually. I love it.

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I'll bear that in mind. Is there anything that could have made the process - the creative process or just the process in general - easier for you?

No, not really. I mean, in terms of me on my own doing it, you mean?

I mean the whole experience is there anything in the whole experience of your involvement in A Space to Speak Your Mind that could have made it easier for you? It could be a technology, it could be a way of communicating, it could be anything you can think of...

No, I think it's been really great, and it's really gone quickly actually. It was about a year ago, wasn't it that we...

Yeah, it was just over a year ago that we first spoke.

...and you've been really supportive and, obviously it's been a long time since I've been involved in radio, but I remember I had to be the person that would train the work experience people, or the new people that joined the radio stations with doing the editing and stuff and... So, I knew that editing software like the back of my hand, but you've just been really supportive and... No, it's been great. I'm aware that I message you quite a lot, but I don't mean to be a pest. It's just because I like to be good. I am quite good at communicating and I don't want to... Because you see, now I've got quite a few things on. I'm quite busy. I like to get things out of the way early so that I'm not leaving it to the last minute going "Oh God!", you know. "Got to have that done by then". That's just the kind of person I am. I like to get things done.

Actually, I appreciate being contacted much rather than the other way around, and you just...

Yeah, where you don't have a clue what's going on. Yeah.

This next question I kind of already know the answer because you have got a show on the Source now, but do you think you're more likely to be involved with Source FM or community radio in the future as a result of being a part of A Space to Speak Your Mind?

Yeah. So, I mean, I remember... because I still haven't presented live yet, which I remember we were going to do that, weren't we? And it didn't happen, which I was actually secretly glad about. That was because of the lockdown. So yeah, I mean I'm really pleased to have my own show, and I've got quite a few listeners. Well, I hope so. And people that tell me they listen, anyway. One of the things that sort of worries, or not worries me but because obviously it's mainly coming out of the radio station in pre-Covid times. So, I don't really want to lose having a show when it gets back to normal just because I can't go to Falmouth at the moment.

One of the things that [the board have] said to me is that what the lockdown has shown to them is that they need to think about having more shows that are pre-recorded or people doing them from home because it has given more variety to the content on air.

Yeah, and I think like, from speaking to [board member] as well about stuff with Coronavirus, he said a lot of people are going to be more scared to leave home and stuff now, so I think that is a barrier for a lot of people that maybe weren't agoraphobic before, and especially as we approach winter, we don't know what's going to happen. Do we? So... It's just one of those things but, yeah.

Yeah. So, next question. Do you think your participation in this project has affected your health, or wellbeing or mental health or mental wellbeing in any sort of way?

Yeah, massively, in a really good way. Because I was doing a few little bits and bobs, things to keep busy but to get back involved in radio again... Like I said before, it was like a nigglng thing, it was... And I feel like that was probably the best job that I've ever had and the most enjoyable job even though it's extremely stressful. So that gave me a sense of pride and identity, and that was kind of who I was, when people would say "what do you do for a job" and I'd be like, "Oh, I work at wherever" and they'd be like, "Oh my god that's amazing." But, now I'm able to say - even though I'm not getting paid, obviously - but I'm able to say that I'm working in radio and I don't need them to know whether I'm getting paid or not. It's none of their business, but I feel proud to say that and I'm a church organist and a radio presenter slash little bit of producing and... so it's given me again that kind of sense of feeling proud of myself, whereas before I was feeling like I was absolutely no use to anybody and there was no point in me being alive. I know that sounds a bit extreme, but I was thinking "what is the point of my life if I carry on like this?" Not that you should be defined by what job you do but, it's really good for me to have that routine of knowing that I've got that deadline to work to and I don't feel any pressure and I think to do that. I mean the only way affected my mental health in a bad way like is, you know, when I had that incident with that person on the WhatsApp group, and I was in a bit of a state, but I didn't feel like I was going to kill myself. I just had a really bad panic attack.

Yeah, that was unfortunate, and I think... I don't want to minimise it, but I don't think it's to do with mental health as such, just human beings occasionally yeah obnoxious and rude. Sorry about that.

That's why I prefer cats.

Yeah, exactly. Me too. So, do you think your feelings have altered towards your community as well, as a result of this project? By community - I know you're not in Falmouth - but it could be Cornwall, it could be your friends or family...

Yeah, my family and my friends. Because they used to know me before I was [diagnosis removed] and stuff so I think even though I'm still [diagnosis removed] they're proud that I've kind of... and I had a message the other day from somebody I hadn't spoken to for probably about 15 years and he said, "Oh wow, TY! You've gone blonde again, and you're working in radio. It's like back when we used to know each other" and I thought "Oh yeah" and I said, "It's come full

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circle in a way, hasn't it?" My parents always want me to send them the show every week, and the mental health show [A Space to Speak Your Mind] and some of my friends do as well and I've managed to get quite a few people that I know involved in the show just by interviewing them and stuff like that, so... I mean hopefully people have got an outlet as well, and somebody contacted me about being on the show for my own show, because they'd heard about it and they said, "Could I be on it?" but the subject matter wasn't really suitable so I said, "I'm sure it's a newsworthy story, but it wouldn't really fit on that kind of show", so I did have to decline them.

What advice would you give to someone who is interested in taking part? It may be this one or maybe if we run it somewhere else, a completely different place in the country.

I would say definitely go for it. You never know until you try something, whether you're going to like it or not and it's like... life's too short to pass up on opportunities. So, I think... I mean because when I first started, I thought I would... I didn't know if I want to be involved in something talking about mental health when most of my life seems to be consumed by mental health already, but actually it makes me feel better to know that... because it does make you feel like you're not on your own. And it makes me feel better to know that I'm not. I'm not strange. I'm not the only person in the world suffering like this and especially when I met you and you opened up about your past problems, it was... It's just normal to be up and down and have emotions and anxiety. It's one of those things so it's... I just think that they need to bear in mind that they would not only be helping themselves, but other people and they don't know what it could lead to. There's always possibilities. You don't know who's listening. So, there's possibilities of... it could go somewhere else, and maybe in the future I might put together a demo or something and send it to - when I've got the confidence, maybe. Whenever that happens - the BBC or something.

I've got one more question then. Well, or two more questions. Okay, you're a big radio person, so do you think there's something particular about radio in this project that is helpful. I mean, it could have been a creative writing project or some other creative project. What is it about radio in particular, do you think that was good or different about this project?

Well, I mean, I've read all the books there are to read on anxiety and [diagnosis removed] and everything, which has made me quite knowledgeable about everything to do with it. But I think with radio when you hear people explaining how they feel and actually talking about it is more effective actually than watching the TV because you're not using your eyes. You're honing in on just your one sense of your ears and actually, that makes you listen more, which is why in radio you need to be quite descriptive in describing things and so I think it's good, it's really good, that it's a radio thing because at the end of the day, it's individual people's voices. Lots of different, different types of voices, different genders, sexualities, ages... And so, in that way, it's really effective because I think if it is creative writing... when I've done creative

writing courses around mental health and I just come out of it thinking "Oh I feel even more depressed than I went in". Yeah, and you can articulate yourself on the radio and you've got to... I mean, in creative writing you can just be quite free flowing for example, whereas in radio have got to think a little bit about what you say because you don't want to say anything, you know, so... For me, I just love all the work that goes into it, and I don't think people realise quite how much work it is, but I love doing it.

I've got one more question which is basically, is there anything else you'd like to say or anything else you think I should know?

Oh, I'm just really glad that you've given me the opportunity to be involved and you've recognised my talents from the past and you've kind of scratched an itch that's been niggling away at me for years and years, and you've given me a sense of purpose again in my life because I was just like floundering around like a lost little puppy and thinking "What the hell am I doing in Cornwall? What the hell am I doing with my life?" And now I've got some things in place that help me to have a routine and help me to feel some sort of identity, which is really important and is probably better than any kind of treatment or anything that I've had through the community mental health team or Pentreath or whatever. And better than any sort of medication that I've ever been on because I think it's a long learning process when it comes to dealing with your mental health problems but I think this is, for me... you know, this is a way that I can deal with stuff, because it's something that I love doing, and something that takes some time and I have to think about.

Yeah, thank you that's really nice to hear. And thanks for your time and talking to me.

Participant MD

Interview conducted Sep 14, 2020

Why did you choose to take part in the project?

Good question. Basically because of my illness, and my disability I wasn't doing a lot in terms of things to keep my brain occupied. I just sat down and doing very little. Watching TV all day and then my wife via Carrick Mind turned up with this leaflet saying, "A Space to Speak Your Mind - get involved". I thought "Yeah, good idea". I came to see these examples of what I could do in terms of getting involved in production, presenting, all kinds of different things and that's what decided me to get involved, because it was something I was interested in and like a multiple action by getting involved I would be not only occupying my brain, but my time and doing things as well.

Thank you. Can I ask why you haven't taken part in community radio before any reasons?

How far back do you want me to go?

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Well, just, you know, community radio hasn't existed that long, so...

When I was working, I obviously didn't have time. I was working for Cornwall Council in highway design which kept me occupied a lot of my free time as well, then when I retired in 2015 Parkinson's hadn't really got hold of me yet, but it was beginning to and I was still able to lead a fairly active life and do things but it wasn't until the last few years that I've been really affected and it just didn't cross my mind to get involved in community radio until this came along.

Yeah. Okay. Can I ask you if you can think about what you liked most about the project?

What I liked most the was the fact that it brought together a complete cross-section of people with varying mental problems. I don't know on what part of the spectrum I fit but there are certainly people involved which aren't affected in the same way that I am. Some that have more problems than I do, and I liked the way that we were all able to get together and produce something cognitive in its thinking.

Yeah. Okay. And can I so can I flip that question and ask what you liked least about the project?

Possibly not having a safe, familiar place to meet all the time.

Right. You mean for the meetings rather than the radio shows?

Yeah. I think the meeting structure tends sometimes to be slightly random and maybe needs a bit more to be driven by yourself in terms of the agenda and what we stick to. I only say that because I think you... if you give people too much free choice, they become confused and not focussed. If you steer them a little bit, narrow it down, cut away the stuff you don't want to hear and focus on what you do want...

Okay, thank you and next question: which areas of the project did you find most useful for yourself?

That's easy. It was the opportunity of the spin-off show, which cropped up when you asked if anybody had any ideas for any kind of show, because *Source* had lots of airtime booked out for the project but not filled. I said "yeah", I had an idea, nothing to do with the show. It was to do a music programme and I didn't have any thought at all of presenting it. I thought it would be a good idea for someone else to do. I suggested it and I remember that time when you said to me - I can almost quote it - "Why shouldn't you have a radio show? Just because you have Parkinson's and can't speak as clearly as some people?" I thought "Yeah. Why shouldn't I?" At that point I said I need a co-host, which you kindly offered to stand in and now we're seven months down the line and 15 successful shows under our belt.

Fifteen already? Wow! So again, I'm going to kind of flip that question and look for the next one and ask you what were your biggest challenges?

That's quite easy as well. My biggest challenge I had to get over and still do every time we do the show is coming to terms with the fact that I can't speak properly, and I have an electronic brain stimulator which calms down all the Parkinson's symptoms but makes my speech even worse. So, what I have to do is turn that off and I have to really, really concentrate on speaking clearly and slowly and that is a constant battle for me whether it's in the studio live or recording remotely. It's just very, very difficult.

That brings me on to my next question, actually, because my next question is, which was your preferred way of working. So, like you said, we've done live, we've done remote, we've done pre-recorded, we've done in the same room, and not in the same room. What was what was your preferred way of doing it?

I think... you mean specifically for the music show?

Yeah, well all of the things, because obviously for A Space to Speak Your Mind you've also done interviews and things on your own with very little input from me at all. But consider all of those things but just which is the way that you'd prefer to work if you could?

A Space to Speak Your Mind, the interviews and monologues I recorded, I'm quite happy to do... happier doing those remotely, not live. I have great difficulty in reading a piece of script and I lose sight of where I am. It's a concentration thing and I find that very difficult. Obviously when you're remote you don't have that problem because you just stop and start and edit it out. However, having said that, for the music show I prefer to do it live. I think that it's much better to be able to hear the music you're playing. Everything we say on that show is all ad-libbed and spontaneous. Not having to read it.

Is there anything that could have made the creative process or the process in general easier for you?

No, I genuinely don't think so, because I am naturally quite a creative person. And I don't have any trouble in facing a scenario or situation which I can put myself in and... I'm getting lost now...

You basically were saying "no" to that question. Is there anything you would change about the project if you could? I mean, this can be anything about the team, the way we meet but anything else that you would, to make it perfect, change?

That's quite a tricky one. Not really, but the one thing that does concern me minorly - very, very minorly - is that I don't want the project or the programme to become a slick professional show, because I think it is Community Radio and it involves a lot of local people with difficulties. I think their input is absolutely brilliant and key to the whole ethos of the show.

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Yeah. Okay. That's a good answer. Do you think you're more likely to be involved with the Source FM or Community Radio in the future as a result of taking part in the project? Well, I mean, you are now involved. Do you think your participation in this project has affected your health or wellbeing in any way?

Yeah, massively. It has made an unbelievable difference to where I'm able to basically wake up in the morning and then the day goes by, where I'm now making notes on the next show we're going to do. So, it's almost like having a job, but it's the best job in the world, because it's about something which I love, I've loved all my life. Talking about music now. And to be able to share it with other people is tremendous.

Do you feel that like your feelings towards your community have changed as a result of your participation in your radio show? I mean, community could be Budock, could be Falmouth could be people you hang out with, friends, family... Do you think that you feel different towards your community as a result of your show?

Yeah. I think I have a lot more empathy with people who on the face of things may not seem to have any mental health issues, but in actual fact, they have.

If we were going to run this project again from scratch somewhere else, what advice would you give to somebody who was thinking of taking part?

Not to worry too much about being... I would say to them not to be too concerned that the guidance is very loose. Follow your instincts and relate or create what comes from your heart, not from your brain, because generally any... it's like the question "What is Art?" It could be anything, absolutely anything. Watching an apple rot is actually a visual art, whereas an El Greco painting is also a visual art.

Would you advise someone to do it or not?

Yeah.

We're almost at the end, but not quite. One more. Two more. This is a difficult question this one, but could you say what you think maybe radio in particular... What about radio there's been beneficial as opposed to anything else. I mean, because this could be a, I don't know, a knitting group or a writing group or something. What is it about radio in particular that is unique about this project, do you think?

*I've always thought radio is an absolutely unique media because you're not distracted by one second clips of everything like you are on the television. When you're with the radio you have to concentrate on what you're listening to. That's part of my answer: radio is a great medium. Part two is that I'm absolutely gobsmacked at the amount of people in the community that have actually listened to my show and *A Space to Speak Your Mind*. So, I think the answer to your question is that it knits together a whole load of people which*

you never thought would have a common interest. It brings us together, almost like a family. There's absolutely nothing nicer than walking down the seafront and I pass someone I know, and they say "Hey! Great show on Saturday."

*My final question, is there anything else you'd like to say?
Anything else you think I should know about the project?*

Yeah. I think the way in which you handled the project and keeping people involved in it... You do it all with an immense amount of sensitivity and understanding.

Participant FT

Interview conducted Sep 10, 2020

Why did you not take part in community radio before?

I didn't have any introduction to it. I'd got no clue. I didn't know anything about it, and I had thought about getting involved with hospital radio but never actually done anything about it myself. So, I thought about it but never really taken it any further. So, this was taking it a step further because I had an actual contact. So, I had someone to speak to, and it was more formal so that once I'd made an approach, then I could actually decide whether or not to get involved or not. And it wasn't just a case of well ringing up and finding out whether they had any vacancies for presenters or what I needed to know to get involved. So, it was a case of just taking a step into the unknown but having a definite contact.

Yeah. What did you like the most about the whole project?

I just like the fact that we were a team. The fact that we... I mean you are a really good leader, Jerry, and you support everybody really well. And it was the fact that, it was so welcoming when I first started to get involved. I remember our first meeting was at the *Source FM* station. So, we all met up together which was really good. And obviously since then we've had a couple of meetings, but we've been more or less meeting online which is very different, and I hate it. I can't get involved, I just don't know why, but when I can't see people in person, I find it really hard to connect. So, for me that's been really difficult as time's gone on, but in the beginning, it was great, you know, to have a team and get to see people face to face, and get to know them as individuals, which is one thing you can't do online. You just don't get to know people as individuals. They're just faces on a screen. So, yeah, that was what I liked about it - the fact that it was a team, and that we had a good leader, and there was a strong sort of philosophy about where we were going to go with it, and it was a case of, well if you want to get involved, that's brilliant. If you don't, there's no problem. So, there was no pressure either and that was really good.

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And so, let me flip that around and say what did you like least about the project?

Least, I suppose, was maybe the fact that I didn't want to be too... didn't want to sort of be too pushy with it. I didn't want to sort of like push myself forward and say "Yeah, I'll do this I'll do that." So, I suppose, I didn't want to step on any toes I wanted to sort of more or less wait until I was invited. And I suppose maybe I just felt like, I want to use the word intimidated, but I don't mean that in a nasty way. It's just that because a lot of people knew what they were doing and I didn't, I felt like I more or less had to take a backseat to begin with. But then that really sort of changed when you gave me the confidence to start my own or have my own show. And so therefore I thought well I must be okay otherwise you wouldn't ask me and so I felt a bit more okay about coming forward about presenting and doing projects you know for the team. So, I suppose in the early stages perhaps it was a bit being overwhelmed with other people's experience and the fact that I've never been involved before radio.

Okay. So, this is kind of a similar question to the one I just asked but it's just a slightly different angle. So which areas of the project did you find most useful? That could be useful in terms of learning new things or in your daily life or anything really.

I think for me, because I've just become so disconnected from the world since I gave up work, which is years ago now, but even so. And recently, even more being aware that I needed to reconnect with people. It gave me a chance to become part of that team. And I felt like I had a bit of a reason for living. I mean I don't mean that so dramatically, but it just gave me something to aim for. And something to actually think "Yeah, I can contribute to this, and I'll be appreciated." And I was actually part of a group of people that were doing something that was going to help other people. So, for that reason that was really helpful for me. And then of course when the lockdown came, it really was a saviour because you could spend time doing bits and pieces for *A Space to Speak Your Mind* and it gave me something to focus on and do.

What were the biggest challenges you faced during the project?

Probably the biggest challenges I suppose really, not seeing people face to face, only doing things over the internet, or by phone, so that was difficult, or not difficult but harder. And I think also the fact that I probably wanted to be even more involved than I was. But, you know, trying to sort of keep my place in the line as it were, and not push myself too far forward because I'm a bit of a strong character, and sort of try and fit into the team and not, you know, become a pain in the bum, basically.

What about the technology, did you... was that a challenge, learning to use a studio at first and then the internet stuff?

Yeah, yeah. Well, the internet stuff came pretty easily really to be honest with you. That was pretty easy. I mean, *GarageBand* that I use is - once you get your head around it - it's very simple. So that

wasn't a problem. I'm not altogether sure because I didn't look at the other apps that I could have used though, because they didn't work with my Mac, but I looked at them briefly and thought "Crikey this looks complicated", so I'm not sure if I could have worked those in the same easy way. Maybe not. But the stuff in the studio, I think, if I'd have done it a few more times I would have been okay with it. Obviously, the first few times you think "Oh Blimey! I've forgotten which button does what", but I think that would have just come naturally after a while, really. But it was a good skill to learn, and it would be something for the future.

Yeah, definitely. What was your preferred way of working, you know, because you've done it a few different ways now so... studio, using GarageBand at home, doing it on your own, doing it with me, doing it with [facilitator], what's the way you preferred to do it?

I think... Yeah, because I remember we did one live show didn't we in the studio? I mean it was my first one and I was really, really nervous. So, it was good... I enjoyed it and it was good to know that was going out live. I don't really mind. I quite enjoy recording on my own at home, it's fine. I can do that okay. I'm pretty easy-going, really and as long as the end result is good, and up to a certain standard which I think it always has been for everybody. It's been a high standard of work. Yeah, I don't really mind actually, although I think face to face in the studio's better because you can chat perhaps a bit more naturally than just reading off a script. You know, you can always tell when someone's using a script even if you try and be natural. You can't help but make it sound a little bit like it's all written out in advance, so it's good to ad lib sometimes, I think.

You didn't have a preference of live over pre-recorded whether it was recording in the studio or at home?

Yeah, no, not really because as long as there's a reasonable sort of format to follow. I know what I'm going to say next, basically. Although, like I said, we can still ad lib. Now, that's fine. I mean that worked well.

Okay. Is there anything that would have made it easier for you the whole process, you know, it could be the creative side of it, it could be the social it could be the technical side. Is there anything that would make it easier?

Probably... not on the technical side because I think that's just that, you know, that's just how it is. I think maybe getting to know people better perhaps having a bit more of a social side to it whereby we knew each other better as individuals, perhaps might have been better. And I know we have... To begin with we had monthly meetups, and I can't say I went to every one, so, it's partly my fault but, sometimes it's hard to communicate with certain people in the team and I don't know why that is, but obviously I find it easy to communicate with you, easy to communicate with [BW]. Really easy but there's a few other people that I found a little bit difficult. And maybe that's because I just don't know them well enough. So, I suppose knowing each other as individuals and knowing a bit more

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about each other and what we've done. Because I don't know anything about really anybody. Apart from [BW] and I have chatted as friends. So, I'd like to know more about people and what they've done in their life you know what they've achieved and what experience they've had and that would make it more of a cohesive sort of team rather than...

So, there could be more social meetings than just the once a month?

Yeah, I think so. And also, maybe a bit more support for each other as well, whereby someone could say "yeah you know you sounded really good" or whatever "I really liked that article", and we don't really cheer each other on that much I don't think. I think we're a little bit reticent in that area so we could be a bit more open about saying "yeah really well done". I think that would really help. I mean everyone gets nervous about what you do, and everyone wonders how it's received. So, to actually hear someone say "yeah that was good. I really enjoyed it". It's brilliant and I think that would help as well especially since some people have got mental health issues and, do feel a bit vulnerable perhaps it would make you feel a bit more secure in what you're doing.

Okay. This is kind of another similar question, but it is slightly different. Again, so it's if you could change anything about the project, what would you change? I'm trying to ask quite an open question so it could be something like "I'd rather it was television" or "I'd rather there was free cake", just anything that if you were going to do this project again, and you were going into it, what would you like to be different about it?

It's difficult because I've never really been involved in anything like this before so it's a bit hard to think how it could be different. I suppose one thing - and I think I know what the answer to this will be - people be a bit more open, generally about themselves, but I know what you're thinking, and I know why you think it because really, you don't want to go into people's personal histories or anything like that. I wouldn't expect them to. But it's almost as if by being more open about themselves, they're leaving themselves to be more vulnerable. And I think that's mainly because of the mental health connection. So, if this was a group, a book club or something, people might not feel reticent about talking about themselves, but because of the mental health issues that lie behind it - and I don't know what they are for everybody, I've got no idea. So, I might say something and really, really trigger somebody off. But at the moment because I don't know them well enough, I would do that innocently. So, I suppose to be more open, but I'm not sure how you can do that without treading on toes and making people feel uncomfortable, so it's a difficult area and I think that is what makes *A Space to Speak Your Mind* difficult. It's because of the mental health issues that are raised, and they can set people off in certain directions and I wouldn't necessarily know how I'm affecting other people only if I knew them better.

Yeah. Okay, this next question has already answered itself, because it's, do you think you're more likely to be involved with the Source FM or community radio in the future as a result of taking part?

Well, you've got your own show now so could you talk about that? Do you think that being involved in A Space to Speak Your Mind made it easier for you to get your own show?

Oh yeah, I would never done it, ever. I really wouldn't have done it because I wouldn't have... I suppose I wouldn't have taken that step into actually going to *Source FM* and saying, "oh look, I really fancy doing a show or being a presenter". I probably wouldn't have had the confidence to have done that. And it was really, when you encouraged me to do it, that's how I took that further step. So, no, without *A Space to Speak Your Mind* I definitely wouldn't have done it, and it's really, really made a difference to my... it sounds dramatic, but it has made a difference to my life because I really get a kick out of doing it. I just wish that I could be more open about what I say, and you know what I'm talking about here. But I can't, so I have to keep my mouth shut. It is quite difficult that I just play music and just chat. But I mean, if that's all it can be then that's all it can be and at least it's some way of being creative, which is something that I really appreciate, and I haven't got any other outlet for that.

Yeah, that's Ofcom guidelines, really.

Yes, it's not your fault. I realise that.

You talked a little bit about how it affected you. Do you think your participation in A Space to Speak Your Mind has affected your health or your mental health or your wellbeing in any sort of way?

Yeah, definitely. I think it has. I think that it's just given me something to really focus on and when I felt unmotivated, and I thought "I can't do it this week. I just can't do it". I thought "No! I'm going to do it". I'm actually going to put myself in that position where perhaps I'm a little bit out of my comfort zone because I'm not in the mood. And by the time I've found the music and started putting the thing together, I've completely changed my mood. So, I would say, yeah, definitely it's given me a much more positive attitude towards being involved and also, it's pushed me beyond my comfort zone, I suppose, where I've... I would normally have walked away and said "I can't do it this week. I'm just not feeling up to it". I thought "No I'm going to do it" and prove to myself that I can still produce something even if I'm not in the best place. So yeah, definitely positive effect on my mental health most certainly.

Great. That's good to hear. Have your feelings altered towards your community as a result of this project? So, community could mean Falmouth and Penryn, it could mean the team, it could mean the place where you live. The reason I ask this is because obviously having your own radio show and having people listen to it, it might give you more of a sense of connection to the wider community.

I think it would if I knew people were listening. I mean I'm hoping and praying there might be a few people who do listen, but I mean it would be lovely having someone feedback, like someone say "Oh that sounds really good. I'll listen again". So, I suppose I feel a bit

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isolated in terms of... well there's not much, there isn't any feedback. So, I mean, in that respect, I'm not feeling connected, but I think it's really lovely, turn the radio on and think there's people locally that can turn it on and hear me. So, in that respect I do feel connected, yeah, and I feel really proud to be involved with it.

Maybe that'll come when you get your first person recognising your voice in the supermarket or something.

Maybe. "Oh. I recognise your voice".

It does happen. What advice would you give to someone interested in taking part in A Space to Speak Your Mind? If we run it in Penzance, what would you say to someone who's thinking of getting involved?

Oh, most definitely get involved because it's a great opportunity, one to be involved with a really good team of people who produce really good articles and have a real interest in helping other people. And two, it's a good introduction to local radio as well if you're interested in that, on the other side, and the two can run in tandem as they have done for me. So, yeah, no, I'd say definitely get involved, and it doesn't matter that you're in Penzance because things can be done remotely and we've proved that over this lockdown business. So, yeah, I would say most hundred percent get involved and who knows where it will lead.

And this is sort of my last question. Is there anything you think that radio in particular gives you from this project that you wouldn't have got say if this was, like you say, a book club or art group or something?

Well, I think for me it's the creative side of it. The fact that I'm having to use my brain to... well, I suppose, try and work the technology, to find the music, think of what to say. And also, the fact that if I put an article together for *A Space to Speak Your Mind*. I've got to research it, and I've got to think how I'm going to write it, so it's more of a doing thing, a creative thing rather than just a reading or a listening thing. So, I think for me... I mean, I'm quite a creative person but I've never really had an outlet for that. So, for me it's the creative side of it and the fact that I can actually do something and see a result.

It's interesting you saying that because when you say it like that there's quite a few different processes isn't there? There's the research and reading, writing it, recording it, editing it. So there are many unique aspects to what you do for the show.

Yeah, no, I really, I really do believe - and I think that's why I find it so satisfying - if it was just listening or reading a book and then just sending our thoughts, "it was really good" or writing something saying I thought it was okay... It's actually producing something that's come from me. So, it's almost like I'm giving something of myself through the radio.

And is there anything else you think I should know any other comments you'd like to make about the project.

No, I mean only just I just hope it doesn't change too much. I just hope that that doesn't take away the informality, plus the formality of course which you have to have, but the informality that we've got with it so far. And I just hope it doesn't make it too formal so that we lose the personal touch.

Participant HW

Interview conducted Oct 19, 2020

Why did you choose to take part in the project?

I chose to take part in the project because I'm a volunteer with Cornwall Mind, and I really, really enjoy being able to help other people. So, by me being involved with *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, I thought I could bring any knowledge that I've got with regards to mental health and helping other people. And also, it was a good way for me to learn and I love learning, as well. And being on the radio and working in the studio is something I've never done before. And even though I'm really, really not good with technology at all, I really wanted to still do it, and obviously I'm still learning now. And it makes me feel good because I know, even if something I do for the show just helps one person, then I feel like I'm doing a good job. And it's lovely as well to be working with other people who have got mental health backgrounds. And we're really supportive of each other so it's nice to be part of a team and feel like you belong.

So, why haven't you been involved in community radio or radio before?

To be honest, I didn't really hear about. I kind of was a little bit involved with radio, as I did some marketing for *Pirate FM*, at Royal Cornwall Showground and stuff like that. And I love doing any kind of work like that. That's why I mentioned to you when we was going to do up Kimberley Park for the music event, *Parklive*, for us to do those... I thought I would have gone round with flyers and talking to people because I'm really good at... Well, I feel I'm really good at doing stuff like that. So that's the only thing I've done with radio is helping to market them, really. Other than that, I hadn't really heard about community radio before.

What did you like most about the project?

That's a tough one. I like being in the studio. Even though it's really, really like "adrenaline rush". I feel like it's amazing that you've got an audience out there. I love the fact what was like... we've got a nice team. And I love the fact what like... you're a part of it, even though sometimes you might contribute maybe a very little or a lot, or maybe nothing. You're still part of the team. And obviously, because it's a show for people with mental health issues, or people who've had it in the past there's allowances,

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whereas when, like a lot of jobs or groups or stuff like that, they might say to you "Oh, well, if you're not taking part for this many weeks or months or whatever it is, I'm sorry but you're going to have to go", whereas with this it's like, obviously, everybody's there for you and they're there... the group's there whenever you feel up to taking part again.

Yeah. So, can I flip that around and say, what did you like least about the project?

I don't know if there's something I liked least. I like it all. Even the stuff what I feel anxious about, because it's a weird anxiety because it's an excited anxiety. Like when I first met with you, I think in the studio. I was really, really anxious but it was an anxious... Because I've been suffering with anxiety, it was strange to feel that anxiety, but it was kind of like an anxiety of excitement as well.

Was that anxiety about technology or meeting me or just the whole thing?

Well, weirdly enough, I think I was fine on my first time on the air. And then when it started to get real, that's when... no, I was fine meeting you and everything. I think it was the second time when I was, when we started to go "Okay, this is your real one." But the first one, because you said it was a practice, but then it actually did go on air because you said it was really good and then the one when we did one, and you were like, "Okay, this is it." Then all of a sudden, I was like "Oh my God!" And you're like, "well, this is no different than the time before" and I was like... but still I was like, the adrenaline.... Yeah, I think it was an excited thing because it was something new, and it was difficult for me to differentiate between if this is anxiety or excitement because you said to me "maybe it's excitement." And I was like "Yeah, maybe it is." But it was so strong, like similar to being anxiety. I don't think there is anything I like least, because I like doing anything whether it be research or interviewing or going out on... through the streets and trying to approach people or being in the studio, or whatever it be.

So, looking at this in a different way which areas of the project did you find the most useful? So, it could be useful in terms of learning or skills or anything, really.

I really liked interviewing people. That's been interesting. I interviewed the chairman from Saint Petroc's. So that was all interesting to find out really what he actually does and what's involved with the charity. Again, interviewing different members from the *Women of the World*. One of the interviews what I did was finding out what that's all about and other things that were involved. And obviously, the main thing, learning how radio works really and how it all works in the studio and even trying to do things from home and things like that, throughout the times when we're not allowed in the studio at the moment.

What were the biggest challenges for you?

I think the biggest challenge is throughout this time since we haven't been able to go in the studio. Just trying to find somewhere quiet because in my house I haven't got anywhere where, you know... there's nowhere quiet. We've got building work going on in our next-door neighbour's, and other building work in the other neighbour's house. It's quite a small house with lots going on. There's the school nearby and when they come out at playtime it's all noisy. Trying to be fair to the other people in the house, just saying "can you stay away from this room?" and stuff like that and especially in the summertime when it was really, really hot... trying to shut myself in a room with the window closed.

I can guess from what you just said but my next question is, what was your preferred way of working? We've worked in several different ways now including up at the studio, wandering around town and interviewing people... What was your preferred way of doing it?

I did really enjoy when I was in Kimberley Park, just wandering around approaching people. That was quite fun and interesting as well, because people don't really have time to think but they do say things just off the top of their head, instead of a prewritten-out kind of thing. What they think you want to maybe hear. That's fun but I think obviously I love being in the studio. That's one of my concerns actually is that I'm going to forget when we go back... I'm really very... I have forgotten everything.

There will be more training. I'm sure everyone will need a bit. Is there anything that could have made the process and the creative process easier for you? That would have helped? Is there anything you'd change about the project or if you could have it perfect in your mind's eye?

No. I don't think so. I think whatever has happened throughout doing the show and getting it together and everything, even the things that maybe haven't worked so well which I can't remember off the top of my head, but I feel for all of us in the team, it's all a learning curve and it's not good to be perfect and it's good for us all to work through the things that maybe don't work out so well because it's all new to all of us. It's all about working through it and things, and let's gain knowledge and skills about how things work better one way or work better another way. And that's what all our meetings and get-togethers and just having our little general *WhatsApp* so we can just throw things back and forth and things like that, are great for. Yeah, don't think I'd want it perfect because no one's perfect, are they? And also, with regards to being in the studio and making mistakes and everything I think that's all part of the fun. I think it's funny when, like myself when I've been on the radio... well, you've been there all the time with me whenever I make mistakes, I just laugh through it and make a joke of it. I think that's where people listening would get appreciation for the fact that we're not professionals, we are just random people and we're just doing the best we can and that's what makes it so enjoyable to listen to, I think, because it is so laid back.

That's one of the things I love about it.

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Yeah.

So, I know the answer to this next question, but I'll ask it anyway. Do you think you're more likely to be involved with the Source FM, or community radio in general as a result of taking part in A Space to Speak Your Mind? Well, you've got your own show now.

Yeah, yeah, I'm really enjoying everything. Like I say, the only thing what's really difficult obviously at the moment is trying to meet people and do things, obviously because I haven't got the... I'm not really up to all the technology stuff and doing stuff from home with people and stuff like that, so it's kind of hindering me a little bit, but I'm trying to do what I can. But yeah...

So, this is quite a difficult question to answer, especially with everything that's been going on in our lives personally in this situation. Do you think that your participation in A Space to Speak Your Mind has affected your health or your wellbeing in any way at all?

Yeah, I think it's good for me. I think it's helped me a lot in the way what... one being, at some stages of my mental health when it was really bad. I felt like I didn't belong. Being part of A Space to Speak Your Mind, like I mentioned earlier, no matter what whether I'm taking part from month to month or not, I know that I still belong in the group. So that's a big factor which is really, really great, because I don't feel so much stress to be thinking "Oh my goodness I need to do something. They're going to think I'm not here anymore" or anything like that. So, it's helpful in that respect, because I know I still belong, and I haven't got to be rushing and doing things and I can do things as and when I feel. It's helped me in the fact where I am helping other people, which is a really good thing for me because I like to feel I've got a purpose. And so that's really great. Just like the other day when it was Mental Health Awareness Day, and there was two sections on the show which was read by me. I just felt really proud to... in that show there was two bits by me when me and my friend were listening to it while we were doing our art and then my friend was like, "Oh, that's you again!" It's really nice to know what you're being heard as well and you're having a little slot and being involved and things like that. Again, it gives me a focus. So, every week, there's always something I can focus on when I am in that right frame of mind. There will never be a time when I think "God, I've got nothing to do" because... I'm not that kind of person anyway, but there's always the show to work on whether I am speaking on it or just giving information to other people or in whatever way it is. I just think it's great overall helping in ways what probably I don't realise they help me myself.

Do you feel your feelings towards the community have changed at all as a result of the project? So, community could be the town, it could... you've talked about the team already, that's a community.

I think it has because it makes me feel more connected kind of thing. Because when we're doing the show, whether A Space to Speak

Your Mind or my own show, I know I'm having either the local listeners or whoever tuning in further afield. There's people listening. So, it's a nice feeling. You are speaking to the community. You don't see them or anything like that but you're hoping what they'll benefit from whatever we're doing, and just being out and about as well. like I have done and speaking to people. You're a representative for the community so if we're out and about everywhere with our shirts on, our *A Space to Speak Your Mind* shirts, then, hopefully they'll feel they can approach us because we will become hopefully a brand what people will be aware of and then could ask us questions and we could hopefully maybe be able to point them in the right direction because obviously we're not in the place to give advice but we could point them in the place where people can give advice so, yeah... It feels helpful in that respect. I can't think of the word, but a brand what people will know are friendly and welcoming and that kind of thing.

Open about mental health?

Yes. Yeah, absolutely.

So, what advice would you give to somebody, let's say we're setting up in another town, and they were thinking of getting involved in A Space to Speak Your Mind in a new town, is there any advice you'd give that person?

Just to try and be yourself. Quite often people might go into the studio and think "Oh no! What do you want me to be like?" The main thing is just be yourself. Just do what you want to do as long as it's like keeping within the rules and regulations, just do whatever you want. That's what it's all about. Trying to help your own mental health and helping other people who are there listening. So, just play what you want to play on the radio, whatever songs, do appropriate interviews and things like that and just have fun.

Yeah, you recommend them to do it?

Yes, absolutely.

This is quite a tricky question. Is there anything specifically about radio you think that's helpful in this project? Because you do quite a few different groups but specific to the radio part of it, that's helpful that you don't get from other things, whatever they might be?

With the radio, being a part of *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, of course there is so many aspects to it, like I say, even if you're not going to be having a piece that's actually in, even if you're not having a speaking part, certainly many things you can do behind the scenes, like finding out like whatever the topic is for whichever month. You can be a person who can find out the information or you can be the person who does the interview, and somebody else could maybe read it on the air, if you're not happy with doing it. There's always ways around it. *A Space to Speak Your Mind* wouldn't put you in a situation where you're uncomfortable but wants to make you feel that you're involved so it's like... For

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example, we've had poems read on the radio, and those members from Cornwall Mind writing group, they could have had the opportunity to record the piece and have it played or to have other people read it. So, there's always that way around different things, and if you're happy to be out on the street just randomly asking people things and not being in the studio or do any presenting or any kind of work like that because that opportunity... So there's much to do, if you don't want to be - and there's a lot of people who don't want to be - in a room, maybe you know in a studio kind of thing.

So, there's a lot of different roles that you can adapt to if you feel like it?

Yeah definitely. Even if, say for example, you want to be part of the team and you're on the team, and you really don't feel up to what you're ready to contribute anything but you're taking it all in. And then maybe at some point you might be ready because it got to that stage where you found out what it's all about. It's just all about giving people time, isn't it? And that's how people learn to feel a little bit of confidence and trust in other people, isn't it? It's okay for them to do as little or as much as they want to do.

Well, I've only got one more question for you. And it's basically, is there anything else that you haven't said that you'd like to say or any other comments you'd like to give on the project?

I think it's an amazing project. Probably one of the best things I've ever done. I'm going to get all emotional... I don't think, I'll ever have an opportunity like this ever again. It's amazing, what you've done. And being so patient and kind. Just a super super opportunity in giving me faith and trust and encouragement confidence in me to share what I really can do. Yeah, just to make me feel part of the community, part of the team. It's like being part of *A Space to Speak Your Mind*, so many people know me walking through Falmouth. I mean, obviously it's not happening at the moment because obviously it's been quieter on the streets and everything but before lockdown and everything. I'll be walking across the Moor and there'll be people from the library going to me, "HW! Can you give so-and-so a message in the art gallery, because they've known me through doing the Women of the World, things have come in early for the women of the world meeting with different members in the art gallery, in the library talking about different things, etc etc and so forth... So then they get to know me and then word of mouth, other people learn where you work. You feel like you're some tiny little mega star! I'm like, how does that person know me? And then I'm thinking I'm trying to rush to a workshop and I've got this person telling me to do a little errand for her. I don't ever want to let anybody down. So then I'm rushing around trying to this, this and this for this person and I'm like... but then they automatically think you're part of their little group because you know them and you've done work within their thing and it's just really, really strange to me... it gave me a little three minute glimpse of fame. Before lockdown everything was a bit like "Oh my God! I can't even walk down the street!" Yeah, like I say, really, really amazing to... got me involved with a lot more things by doing the interviews.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A Space to Speak Your Mind

Interview Schedule

Turn recorder on and state the time, date and name of interviewee.

Explain the interview process

I am interested in your personal experience – no right or wrong answers and I'm not here to judge you in any way.

Confidential interview, so be open and honest. This is your chance to give feedback about the project and you might also provide some useful knowledge for other people and community radio stations in the future.

Ask for consent

Opening

We will have 10 minutes to talk together.

Do you have any questions before I start?

Body

Why did you choose to take part in the project?

Why have you not taken part in community radio before?

What did you like most about the project?

What did you like least about the project?

Which areas of the project did you find most useful?

What were the biggest challenges?

What was your preferred way of working? (which technology/working process was the most useful?)

Is there anything that could have made the creative process easier for you?

Is there anything you would change about the project if you could?

Do you think you are more likely to be involved with the Source FM/community radio in the future as a result of taking part in the project?

Do you think your participation in this project affected your health/wellbeing in any way?

Have your feelings altered towards your community as a result of this project?

What advice would you give to someone interested in taking part in a similar project?

What do you think participating in a radio-based project gave you that another creative project couldn't?

Closing

Is there anything I haven't asked about that you think I should know?

Any other comments...?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX F: ETHICS PROTOCOL

Ethics Protocol: A Space to Speak Your Mind

This document represents the ethics protocol for the “A Space to Speak Your Mind” project, a collaboration between Source FM (Falmouth and Penryn Community Radio CIC) and Cornwall Mind.

- Any existing ethics procedures of Source FM and Cornwall Mind will be followed.
- No individuals unable to give informed consent will be involved in the project.
- Participants will be given the Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent forms to read and sign before they take part in the project. These will be stored securely by either Jerry Padfield, on behalf of Source FM, or Cornwall Mind.
- Participants will also be given the group guidelines which they will need to abide by and which also detail the level of support which Cornwall Mind will provide.
- Cornwall Mind will be able to alter the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) as they see fit to safeguard participants’ health and safety and wellbeing.
- Guidelines as per the PIS will be followed with regard to: right to anonymity, data storage and confidentiality, authorship and intellectual rights, participants’ right to withdraw at any point.
- There will be regular check-ins between group leader (currently Jerry Padfield) and Cornwall Mind to ensure that feedback can be given and any unexpected ethical issues can be discussed.
- There will be monthly meetings to which all group members will be invited as well as representatives of Cornwall Mind, during which any concerns can be raised.
- Cornwall Mind offers its services in safeguarding the mental health of all participants. Any members can contact Cornwall Mind at any time.
- During broadcast of the show there will be an extra person from Cornwall Mind or Source FM in attendance, and there will be a debriefing after the show, to allow people to talk about their mental health or any issues raised during the show.

This document can be altered and amended as necessary to ensure the health and safety of all participants. All parties have the right to withdraw from this agreement as and when they see fit.

A Space to Speak Your Mind Group Leader/Source FM
Jerry Padfield

Cornwall Mind CEO

Jon Gladstone

(Other documents: Participant Information Sheet, Informed Consent Form, Guidelines,
Constitution)

Version 1.0 September 2019

APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

Name of Project: **A Space to Speak Your Mind**

Name of Group Leader: **Jerry Padfield** (jerry@thesourcefm.co.uk)

Before completing this form, you should have read and understood the information sheet "A Space to Speak Your Mind." Please read the following statements and, if you agree, initial the corresponding box to confirm agreement:

☐ I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above project. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

Initials

☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

Initials

I consent to the processing of my personal information (provide information on what personal information specifically will be collected) for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with all applicable data protection legislation.

☐

Initials

I understand that my data will be treated confidentially and any publication resulting from this work will report only data that does not identify me.

☐

Initials

☐ I agree to having my voice/likeness digitally recorded.

Initials

☐ I agree to follow stated practices to minimise transmission of Coronavirus.

Initials

Signatures:

APPENDIX H: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Name of Project: **A Space to Speak Your Mind**

Name of Project Leader: **Jerry Padfield** (jerry@thesourcefm.co.uk)

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose of this project is to create broadcast content for a community radio show around the subject of mental health and offer ways for people with mental health diagnoses an easier route into participation in community radio.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw **at any time** without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Sign the attached consent form so that I know you are interested.

1. We will arrange a time to meet, which is convenient for you and in your own home if that is appropriate.
2. In this first meeting we will arrange a schedule and agree a method of working which suits us both and agree the process of collaboration.
3. There will then be a series of meetings over the course of several months where I will show you how to use some of the technology involved for creating radio content.
4. There will be meetings as a group to develop and perform a radio show which will be broadcast on the Source FM community radio station. This audio content will also be made available on a website as a podcast.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

You will need to give up some time to the project.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will learn new skills. You will create a radio show and broadcast on your local community radio station which you may find enjoyable. You will meet other people involved in the same project. You will be sharing information about mental health to your local community, which may help some people.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Your data will be confidential.

COVID-19 (Corona Virus)

This project will completely comply with guidelines to stop the spread of Corona virus.

These guidelines are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> and constitute maintaining social distancing and a rigorous hygiene regime.

Meetings will be conducted online where possible. In the event of physical meetings this will only be when government health guidelines allow and following current advice re: social distancing and hygiene practices. Any recordings of online video conversations will be with consent, carried out on a secure, encrypted application and stored on a secure, password-protected drive.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

Your personal data will be processed for the purposes outlined in this notice. The legal basis that would be used to process your personal data will be the provision of your consent. You can provide your consent for the use of your personal data in this project by completing the consent form that has been provided to you.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, please contact mike@thesourcefm.co.uk. If you remain unsatisfied, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Contact details, and details of data subject rights, are available on the ICO website at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/overview-of-the-gdpr/individuals-rights/>

Contact for further information

If you require any further information please contact:

Group Leader:

Jerry Padfield

E-mail: jerry@thesourcefm.co.uk

Source FM Station Manager:

Mike Hopwood

c/o Source FM, Tregenver Road, Falmouth

Tel: 01326 219020

Email: mike@thesourcefm.co.uk

Cornwall MIND:

Jon Gladstone

Tel: 01326 255775

Email: jon@cornwallmind.org

Thank you for taking part.

APPENDIX I: GUIDELINES

A Space to Speak Your Mind (ASTSYM) Guidelines

These are the guidelines for the group “A Space to Speak Your Mind”. Members of this group agree to abide by them. They can be changed or added to at any time by majority consent of the members.

BASIC CONDUCT

Members agree to:

- Treat each other with respect.
- Let the group leader/facilitator or Cornwall Mind know if they have any problems.

A SPACE TO SPEAK YOUR MIND “MAIN SHOW”

The first Thursday of the month will be the main show. This will be a magazine style show, reporting on mental health topics around Cornwall. The show will be presented by those who wish to do so according to the following guidelines:

- Presenters put their names down for the months ahead.
- No pressure. People can withdraw when they feel (this show is all about respecting mental health).
- Everybody is equal.
- The show will talk about mental health.
- The show will mention Cornwall Mind news and upcoming events.

In return Cornwall Mind, the group leader and/or facilitator will provide:

- Support: At least one extra person will be available at the time of transmission of the show to provide support. There will also be at least one meeting prior to the show to discuss the content of the show and talk about any potential issues the topics and content of the show may raise.
- Debrief. There will be a time for debriefing after the show to talk about any issues or feelings raised.
- Support from Mind as required.

OTHER “SPIN-OFF” SHOWS

If anyone should wish to do a show separate from the main show, they will be supported in this. They will have the option to do a regular Source FM show at another point in the schedule or an ASTSYM-affiliated show on one of the other Thursday slots currently taken by ASTSYM.

Shows under the ASTSYM banner:

Appendices

- Put name down in advance on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If you broadcast a show for more than 6 months in a row, consider doing a regular Source FM show.
- Mind will offer same support framework as the main show (extra person in attendance, debriefing opportunity, chance to contact Mind for mental health support if required). *A regular Source show will not offer support from Mind, although Source will support you in the transition to another slot.*

MEETINGS

There will be a meeting every month. Members will be informed about this in advance to give them the best chance to attend, although there is no obligation.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any issues whether it be with an individual or query about the show you can contact:

Jerry Padfield

Group Leader

jerry@thesourcefm.co.uk

Jon Gladstone

Cornwall Mind

jon@cornwallmind.org

APPENDIX J: CONSTITUTION

A Space to Speak Your Mind CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of the group shall be: “A Space to Speak Your Mind”

2. Objects

The objects of the group are:

1. To promote mental well-being of through the provision of a self-help group which will provide social, enjoyable and stimulating activities in a safe environment. Those activities will centre around the production of radio content and will include activities related to this including broadcasting and audio training.
2. To hold monthly meetings for support and to discuss the direction of the group and radio show.

3. Powers

In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise the group may exercise the following powers:

1. Power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising the group members shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;
2. Power to recruit and support volunteers as necessary to assist with the group’s objects;
3. Power to do all such lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

4. Members

The group shall consist of no less than *two* people interested in furthering the objects of the group:

Group LeaderJerry Padfield.....
Group FacilitatorXXXXXXXXX.....
Group Member/TreasurerXXXXXXXXX.....

5. Meetings

Meetings of the group will be held as required by the group. We will aim to hold meetings once a month.

6. Control of Funds and Finance

1. Will be the responsibility of the Treasurer/Group Member and Group Leader who will retain records of income and expenditure.
2. Income of the group shall be paid into a bank account. Currently Falmouth and Penryn Community Radio CIC are allowing us use of their bank account.
3. Withdrawals from the bank shall require the signature of at least two members of the group or the partner organisation bank account.
4. All monies received by and belonging to the group shall be spent or applied in accordance with the objects of the organisation.
5. Surplus funds from year to year shall be retained by the organisation for use as stated in 6.4 above)

7. Closure of the Group

Should the group decide to close, any remaining money shall be given to another group with similar objects to the objects of this group, or returned to the funder if applicable.

This constitution adopted at a meeting of the group held on.....18/1/2020.....

Signed.....Group Leader.....Treasurer/Group Member

APPENDIX K: WARWICK-EDINBURGH MENTAL WELLBEING SCALE (WEMWBS)

FORM

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.

Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks

STATEMENTS	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)
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