

IMPACT REPORT

TONIC: SINGING FOR HEALTH AT LEISTON LIBRARY

JULY 2026

**A PARTNERSHIP PROJECT IN
COLLABORATION WITH COHERE ARTS &
SUFFOLK COMMUNITY LIBRARIES**

CONTENTS



01

Executive summary

02

Tonic: Singing for Health

03

Evaluation Approach

04

ABC Framework

06

Case Study One

07

Case Study Two

08

Successes & Thoughts for the future

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

01

Tonic: Singing for Health at Leiston Library was a series of 30 group singing workshops delivered between October 2025 and July 2026 by Cohere Arts in partnership with Suffolk Community Libraries.

The project was made possible by the Sizewell C Community Fund, with additional enrichment activities supported by Suffolk's advice, guidance & emotional support service (SAGES).

41 people from the Leiston area took part in weekly 90 minute seated singing sessions and social time led by a trained singing for health practitioner.

On average, over the course of the project, participants reported a 11.5% improvement in self-perceived health and wellbeing, seeing the activity as welcomed respite from the continuing disruption of the Sizewell C development.

Tonic: Singing for Health

Leiston Library
Wednesdays 10.30am - 12pm
29 April - 8 July

Join singing leader and composer Francis Goodhand at these friendly and accessible singing workshops - for all abilities!



Our free sessions offer:

- Breathing exercises and vocal warm ups
- Feel-good singalongs
- A chance to meet new people
- Tea, coffee and biscuits!



TONIC: SINGING FOR HEALTH

Project overview

- Tonic: Singing for Health at Leiston Library was a series of 30 group singing workshops delivered by Cohere Arts in partnership with Suffolk Community Libraries.
- The project was made possible with funding from Sizewell C Community fund, with additional support from Suffolk's advice, guidance and emotional support service (SAGES).
- Participants attended weekly 90-minute sessions on Wednesday mornings from 29th Oct 2025 - 8th July 2026, at no charge.
- The activity was led by Cohere Arts' Creative Associate, singing leader Francis Goodhand and supported by the Creative Health Producer at Suffolk Community Libraries.
- Activities were designed to suit the needs of people living with a variety of health and mobility challenges
- Each session included 60 mins seated singing activity (vocal/breathing exercises and songs in a range of styles) followed by 30 mins social time with free tea, coffee and biscuits.
- The sessions were supported by two volunteers who currently volunteer for Suffolk Community Libraries.
- Programme enrichment activities included 2 taster sessions at Woodbridge Library, workshops at First Light & Boundless Creativity Festivals & a collaboration with Sizewell Creative concluding with a group trip to King Arthur Reimagined at Snape Maltings.

Engagement

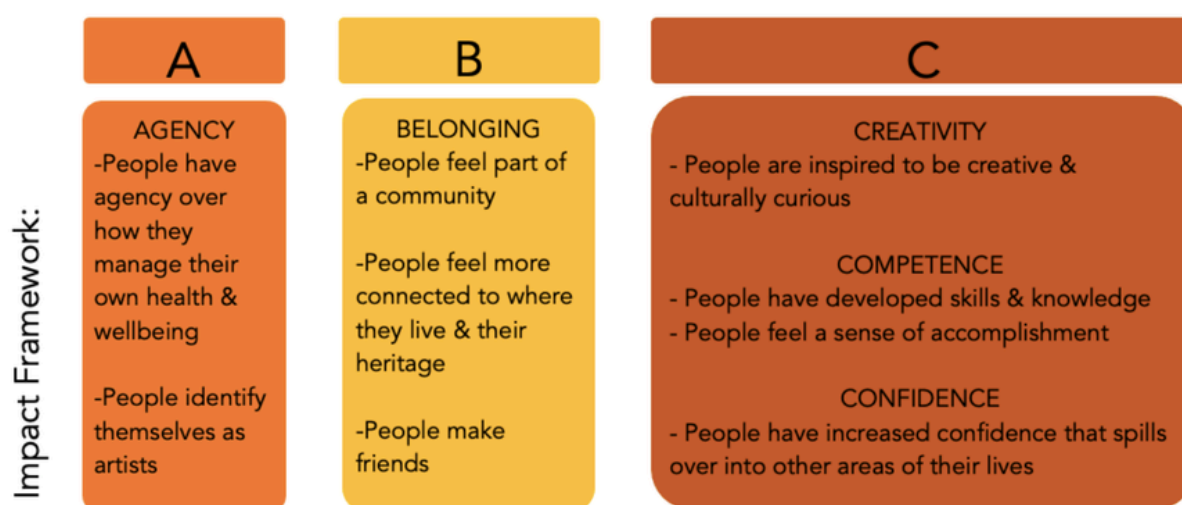
- Total number of regular participants over the 30 weeks: 41
- Average number of participants per session: 25
- Average age of participants: 69
- M/F ratio: 1:6
- The majority of participants live in Leiston and nearby villages
- Participants live with a range of health challenges including Parkinson's, Osteoporosis, Connective Tissue Disease, Bereavement, Heart Disease, Depression, Anxiety, Hearing loss and Fibromyalgia

**Average
number of
participants
per session**

25

EVALUATION APPROACH

Cohere Arts' ABC Impact Framework was used as a methodology to measure impact. This examines the impact of taking part on five aspects: Agency, Belonging, Creativity, Competence and Confidence.



20 participants completed health and wellbeing questionnaires both pre and post project, rating 5 aspects of their health/wellbeing: Physical health, Mood, Connection, Empowerment and Accomplishment. Qualitative evidence was gathered through 4 interviews and 22 feedback cards.

Health data headlines

- 80% of respondents reported improvements in overall health/wellbeing, 10% stayed the same, 10% reported lower post-course ratings
- On average, improvements in subjective health and wellbeing were seen across all 5 aspects, with the most impact seen in uplifts in mood, connectedness and feelings of accomplishment
- A 11.5% increase in overall average scores was reported

"I was delighted when I heard about this group. I have made new friends, and it has been very good for me. It is enjoyable and fun but good for my health as well. "

ABC FRAMEWORK

AGENCY

- Participants use the sessions as a way of pro-actively managing their own health and well-being.
- Weekly workshops are seen as an 'oasis' within the disruption caused by the Sizewell C development.
- Individuals push through lack of motivation because they know they will benefit from attending, actively choosing to participate despite local external stresses.

“Coming to Tonic is just that; ‘a tonic.’ It lifts my mood and I really enjoy being a part of something and meeting other people in a non-judgemental environment.”

“I know I'm going to get these endorphins at the end of it, and how it's going to make me feel so much better for the rest of the day - and the rest of the week.”

BELONGING

- Participants feel part of a friendly, welcoming and inclusive community - they look forward to attending, with many calling it the 'highlight of their week'.
- The group helps combat isolation for those living alone, improving social connection and nurturing friendships.
- Attendees experience a ripple effect of connection, with some taking songs home to share and sing together with their family members.

CREATIVITY

- Participants are inspired to be creative, engaging deeply with music that takes them to a different place and brings joy, laughter and hope.
- Members are inspired by hearing about musicians, songwriters and the background of the music alongside learning the songs.

“I enjoy hearing about the background of the music and Francis’ anecdotes. Tonic is the best thing I have done since moving here.”



“I’d only ever sung in the car before so I was a little bit apprehensive. But it’s got easier - more relaxing.”

CONFIDENCE

- Participants expressed that under Francis’ leadership they are feeling more confident in their singing abilities and in general.
- One group member said that attending is helping them cope with spousal bereavement - with Tonic being ‘a huge benefit to my mind, soul & mood.’

COMPETENCE

- Participants have enjoyed being able to develop their musical and vocal skills in a stress-free environment with no pressure to perform, with some having found more formal choirs to be intimidating.
- Individuals feel a sense of accomplishment, whether through finding their voice again after years or successfully learning new pieces of music.

“I had lost my voice but finding it again after only 3 sessions is a joy and confidence-boost. It’s also a very lovely, fun and happy thing to do! Laughter is very easy to find here”

CASE STUDY ONE

Mrs R, 69, was a keen singer but gradual hearing loss meant that she was finding attending her usual choir very difficult. “It was becoming more and more stressful to know what page we were on, which language we were singing in, whatever. I was a little bereft just to where I was going to go.”

She also became ill with long covid causing her to have to give up work, and more recently has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia. “I’m so glad I found Tonic: Singing for Health. It’s a really vibrant group, it’s a very friendly group, led by Francis, who’s amazing. We sing sitting down, so I know it won’t make my pain worse.”

Mrs R makes a short car journey to be able to attend each Wednesday morning, which she says has definitely been affected by the Sizewell C development. “There are more cars on that road now, and the destruction of part of the countryside in order to put Sizewell in there has been enormous. I make the journey because I know coming does make me feel a lot better. Things like this are sort of a moment of relief in all that mess.”

Away from the group Mrs R has also experienced wider positive impacts of attending; for example she has found joy in using the songs she has learned at Tonic as a way to connect with her grandchildren; “I teach them the songs, and we’d all be singing together, then later I would notice them just quietly humming away and singing.”

Finding a way to continue the activity she loves has enabled her to feel confident in her own singing voice, bringing confidence and self-esteem.

“The other day I was singing in church and a lady sat behind me tapped me on the shoulder and told me I had a lovely voice. That really made me feel good, and that this is a worthwhile thing to do.”

CASE STUDY TWO

Mr C, 65, moved to Leiston recently and lives alone. He found out about Tonic: Singing for Health from a friend who attends. "I decided to come along because I really needed to get out of the house and try to socialise."

Having no previous singing experience he was quite apprehensive about coming at first. Having never been a user of Leiston Library, through attending weekly sessions on a Wednesday Mr C has been able to access other services that the library has to offer, as well as meet new people and make friends. "The social side of it has been great, I've actually started to talk to people and people see me in the street now and they say hello. So, I'm getting used to the area as well."

Living directly on a road used by Sizewell C traffic, he has found the disruption very difficult. "I had only been here a couple of months when it all began. Traffic, noise, dust. I've actually slept in the back of the house rather than the front of the house because the road noise is just unbearable. I suppose the biggest thing is it's curtailed my enthusiasm to go out away from Leiston because you feel hemmed in. Especially at weekends when they close the roads - it's almost that they're imprisoning you."

Mr C says he feels coming to the group has helped to improve his mental health and he feels proud of himself for taking the first step to join in. "It lifts a Wednesday. That's lovely. You should have that on a t-shirt."



SUCCESSSES & THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

Successes

- Tonic: Singing for Health at Leiston Library is firmly established as an inclusive activity supporting the wellbeing of Leiston residents, particularly as they experience disruption and challenge as a result of the Sizewell C development.
- Singing regularly with the group has shown a measurable improvement in perceived health and wellbeing of participants.
- Engagement remains strong, with an average attendance of 25 people and new participants from the Leiston area attending each week.
- Additional funding from SAGES has enabled two outreach workshops for Tonic: Singing for Health, with Francis Goodhand leading successful workshops at the popular First Light Festival in June 2026, and a taster session as part of the Boundless Creativity Festival at Stonham Barns in July 2027
- A fruitful collaboration with Sizewell Creative saw members of Tonic: Singing for Health learning repertoire from their production King Arthur Reimagined: Voicing the Land. Tonic members attended a performance of the work at Snape Maltings on 8th July, joining in with participation aspects.

Thoughts for the future

- Cohere Arts is due to close by the end of 2026. Francis Goodhand has established Tonic: Singing for Health CIC with the intention to continue provision in partnership with Suffolk Community Libraries, however this will be dependent on funding.
- Leiston Library is an appropriate and accessible venue with supportive staff, however if Tonic numbers increase, additional sessions or more moveable furniture should be considered.
- Two pilot sessions in Woodbridge Library funded through SAGES were well attended, indicating that there is great potential for Tonic: Singing for Health to benefit communities in other areas including those directly affected by, and adjacent to Sizewell C.

**For more information about this project
please contact:**

Amy Mallett, Cohere Arts
amy@coherearts.org

Chrissie Meikle, Suffolk Libraries
chrissie.meikle@suffolklibraries.co.uk

Francis Goodhand, Tonic Singing for Health
tonicsinging@icloud.com