



**WELLBEING
ECONOMY
ALLIANCE**



Community Digital Integration – user research



CoTech

WAO

Executive Summary

High-level recommendations

- **Create digital integration strategy** — our research clearly indicates that your next step should be the creation of a robust digital strategy to provide a foundation for future choices around technology platforms and workflows.
- **Sunset Hivebrite** — the first part of a digital integration strategy would be to work on communicating with Citizens and Members around the retirement of the Hivebrite platform during Q1 2023. This will give breathing space to work on the digital strategy.
- **Roll out integrated technology strategy** — this would involve onboarding staff and community members onto new technology platforms as well as creating resources to help.



Context



WΔO

Why (did we do this)?

The Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) went out to tender for a new community digital integration project. This aims to knit together the various digital spaces and entry points that constitute WEAll's current digital presence.

As WEAll seeks to expand the movement to new parts of the world and simultaneously deepen existing connections to catalyse greater action, there is a need to re-imagine the digital architecture and create a unified digital platform for Members, Citizens, member organisations, Hubs and other member initiatives.



Why (did we do this)?

This User Research component aims to answer the key question:

How can WEAll facilitate digital collaboration within and between the multiple different stakeholder groups (AMP, Members, Citizens and Hubs)?

What (did we do)? Who (did we talk to)?

We carried out user research interviews to come up with a series of recommendations which will help to knit together the various digital spaces and entry points that constitute WEAll's current digital presence.

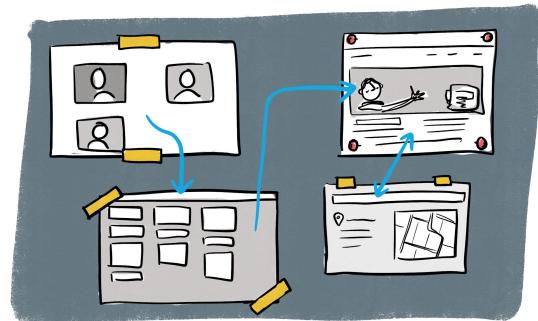
- Interview WEAll staff (4)
- Interview Members (5)
- Interview Citizens (3)
- Interview WEAll Youth (1)
- WEAll Staff workshops
- Survey Citizens
- Digital anthropology
- Technology/platform research



How and where (did we do this)?

We used one-hour or 30mins videoconferencing slots, ensuring the following:

- User research subjects have explicitly given consent for their data to be processed by WAO (and partners) and understand the context of this project
- We make reasonable adjustments for accessibility needs
- Supplemented by a survey and observing activity on current platforms



wao

When (did we do this)?

- **Early September** — agreement on key question for user research to answer, interviews with team members
- **Late September / Early October** — user research interviews with other stakeholders
- **Late October** — synthesis of research carried with stakeholder groups
- **Early November** — recommendations made about next steps



Findings from staff

Themes



- **Knowledge Management** — ideas and information are held in multiple different locations
- **Onboarding workflow** — time-consuming for staff and still somewhat confusing for Members
- **Localisation/Languages** — need for multi-lingual resources and meetings, but running into capacity issues
- **Technology** — current Hivebrite platform holding back what's possible with community engagement/interaction
- **Capacity** — the size of the WEAll team, coupled with workflow and tech issues means staff are over-burdened

Knowledge Management

- Flat organisations are great, but come with both challenges and opportunities. “I always feel like I’m playing catch up, that I’m going to miss things”
- Each Hub has their own way of doing things (including platforms) which makes it difficult to provide a consistent experience.
- Ideas shared tend to be scattered in multiple places: Slack, email, etc. meaning they are difficult to re-find.



Onboarding workflow

- Newly-onboarded Members and Citizens don't see much happening within the community
- "I didn't really understand what I was signing up to"
- Finite capacity for high touch onboarding
- Some lack of clarity around Citizens vs Members and Member Organisations vs workers in Member Organisations vs Individual Members

EASY
ONBOARDING...



Localisation/Languages

- People engaging in other ways because the ‘main’ way isn’t working for them
 - This demonstrates enthusiasm and interest in the community, but highlights challenges in current platforms and workflows.
- Member calls - “some people listening but not contributing because they’re not confident in speaking English”
- “super-important that WEAll staff aren’t a bottleneck”



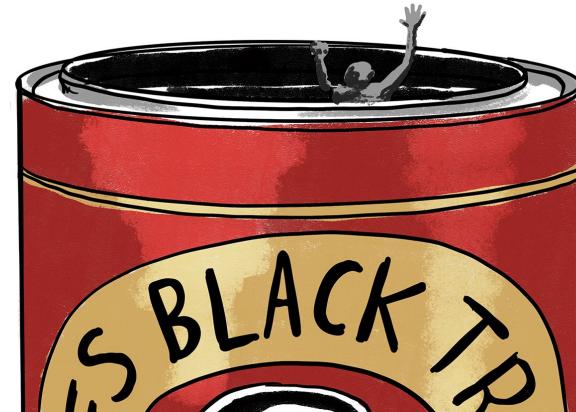
Technology

- No user research when implementing current Hivebrite platform, just chose it because it seemed reasonable
- Fragmentation of communities — which tool does what?
 - Limitation of Hivebrite platform in terms of who can join and create groups
- Don't have a seamless digital process, so a lot of manual work in the back end
- Very challenging to meet all needs with one platform.
 - Especially taking into account regional and cultural differences



Capacity

- Difficult to plan in advance (e.g. for Climate Week) because there's always things to do right now
- People are posting in Slack channels, but limited conversations
- “super-important that WEAll staff aren’t a bottleneck”
- All very common things for distributed organisations with a small core staff



Findings from community

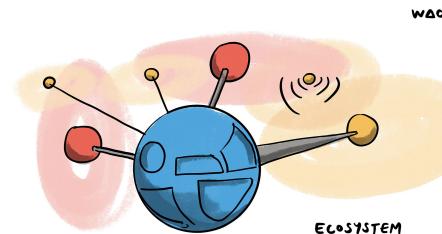
Themes

- **Technology** — onboarding is worthwhile, but no-one is really using the Citizens platform (however Members value Slack and the email list)
- **Collaboration** — community members are motivated to find and recruit allies, and some are managing to do so on Slack (but isn't used universally)
- **Localisation/Languages** — a significant barrier for existing members, in terms of text-based communication and/or synchronous communication



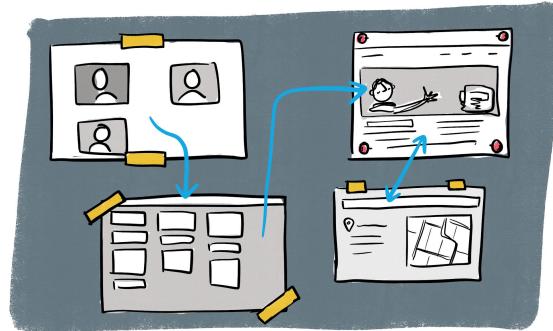
Technology

- Citizens platform is hardly used.
 - A couple of interviewees recall enthusiastically messaging people when they first joined but not getting any replies.
- Active users speak highly of Slack but some not engaging there at all (“too many channels!”)
- The distinction between ‘Member’ and ‘Citizen’ is unclear to participants in the community, with not enough people using the Citizens platform to make the difference



Collaboration

- Participants understand and appreciate WEAll's role as a “network of networks”
- Younger community participants comment that events are sometimes very specialised in terms of needing knowledge of niche language.
- Timezone/scheduling was a recurrent theme in barriers to participation in synchronous events
- Hubs are valued gathering places for deeper collaboration but overhead of running one is viewed (probably correctly) as significant
- Relationship between Hubs and WEAll global not always clear



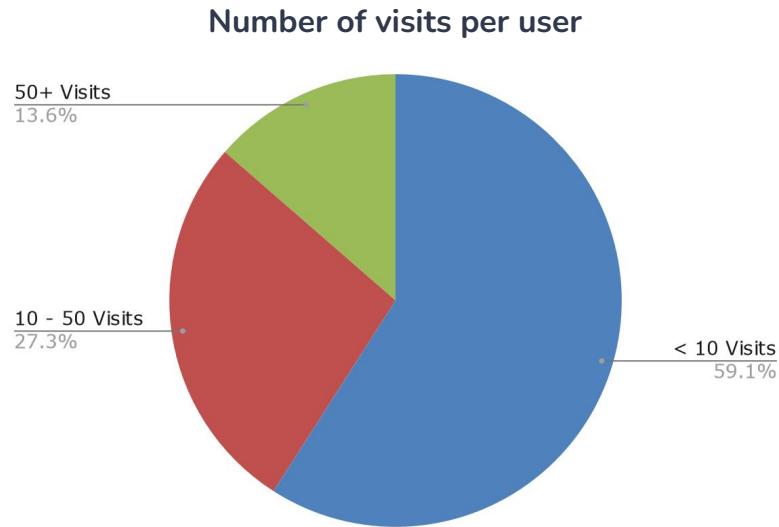
Localisation/Languages

- Clear that this is a significant barrier for some participants
- Further barrier to reaching out beyond academia/policy circles
- Word for “wellbeing economy” doesn’t exist in some languages, which presents a barrier to discussion.
- The Dutch Hub demonstrates that Hubs don’t need to be geographical to be valuable (most members are overseas)



Hivebrite Usage

- Review of Hivebrite engagement scoring export:
 - Total number of users: **2741**
 - Users with posts: **116** (4%)
 - Users with comments: **292** (10%)
 - Users with likes: **302** (11%)
- Based on review of platform as a user:
 - Number of posts in last 3 months:
approx. 20 (mainly from WEAll staff)



Hivebrite UX Observations

- We approached Hivebrite “naively” as if a recently onboarded person
- Model is similar to LinkedIn approach - a professional network
- Onboarding very confusing and unclear how it related to WeAll - but landing page nice



Hivebrite UX Observations

- The basic things you'd want to do here are:
 - Find an interesting person to connect to
 - Join a discussion relevant to my interests
 - Feel a general sense of a thriving community
- All these use cases were difficult - required multiple clicks, complex interactions - a bit of a downer
- Here Slack is already better for doing the same things

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Hivebrite Community Observations

- It is cool to see how many people are in the directory
- However, actually interacting with them or in the community groups - felt far harder than it should be
- Doesn't feel like a community
- General impression that aligns with the statistics:
 - A bit of a ghost town - last discussion “4 years ago”
 - Doesn't feel exciting, uplifting or empowering
 - This is despite very solid efforts by the team to document what it was about and interact - which points to the tool being at issue
- As a piece of tech it *feels* slow. ~10 seconds to change view



Hivebrite is a ghost town

Results (25)

Sort by: Updated Recently ▾



#WEAllLearn to be Anti-Oppressive - help us!

2 years ago



Looking for support

...



Alternative / New Economic thinking in policy

23 days ago



Looking for support

...



Results (25)

Sort by: Most Popular



How do you explain a wellbeing economy to people that have never heard of it before?

4 years ago



Looking for support



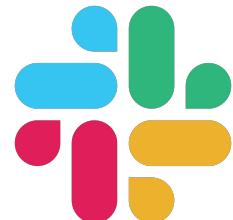
[19 replies](#)

...



Slack Usage

- Review of Slack usage based on 30-day analytics:
 - Total number of members: **739**
 - Increase of members over 30 day period: **+17**
 - Average weekly active members: **81** (31 who posted messages)
 - Average number of daily messages posted: **71**
 - 3 in public channels
 - 12 in private channels
 - 57 in DMs
- Better than Hivebrite where this is ~ 20 posts for whole month



Slack Community Observations

- Compared to Hivebrite a fair bit more active
- People use the Upcoming Events channel to promote things quite actively
- There are lot of “unclosed interactions”
 - Someone excitedly posts ‘does anyone know about this thing?’ and then is left hanging
 - This is disempowering
- It is nice to see people are often enthusiastically greeted on joining the Slack, but this is often their last message



Messages on Slack don't always get answered

Does anyone know of someone who can create a graphic icon and font for an initiative to help address wellbeing with universities and business schools? There is no budget as it is philanthropy based (I don't even have a Zoom business account 😢) But the contributor can be cited in whatever way they wish. Timing is critical as an initial launch would be Jan/Feb 2023. Anyone interested can be sent a design brief. (edited)

Thanks so much 🤝

Hello all! I am wondering if anyone can share an example with me of a UK initiative to reduce car dependency that's been relatively successful.

I'm aware of the Walthamstow example, but unfortunately the business feedback on this scheme was not very positive.

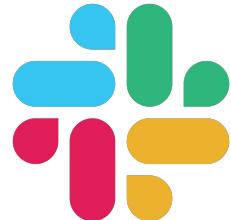
Does anyone know of another place in the UK this has been implemented more successfully?

Thanks!



Slack Community Observations

- If we look at the daily message statistics
 - There is not that much going on
 - But what is happening is going on “below the surface”
 - 3 in public channels
 - **12 in private channels**
 - **57 in DMs**
- It seems that people are communicating peer to peer - which is good
- But because there is so little publicly, people not likely to stick around to do this



Slack Overall

- Better than Hivebrite
- Still not really buzzing with activity
- DM activity shows
 - People aren't quite clear how to use public channels - what goes here?
 - But there is a desire to use something like this
- Common journey
 - Initial enthusiastic post
 - Never posts again





Survey

WAO

Introduction

Survey was aimed at Citizens primarily, but also had questions for members and those who engage in other ways.

Survey was **not optimised for quantitative data**, as our current level of user understanding means that open ended questions reduced risk of bias. In particular we looked for how respondents understood the role and value of existing digital community platforms and indications of where the biggest opportunities for improvements.

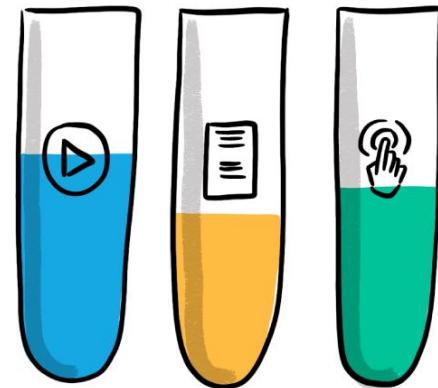
There are a few responses in languages other than English, which we were not able to translate for this analysis.



Response

Views	Starts	Submissions	Completion rate	Time to complete
548	452	247	54.6%	03.05

This level of response is pretty good and is enough to give indicative conclusions



Key Conclusions

- There is very strong connection to the WEAll's mission and values
- There is desire for more interaction and collaboration, than is currently happening on the Citizens Platform
- The email list is most used/valued¹ by Citizens
- There is significant confusion between "Citizens" and "Members"
- These issues came across stronger than any specific technology/platform functionality feedback
- It can be overwhelming to have "yet another login"
- There is considerable variation of different needs from the community (including culture, language and topic interests)



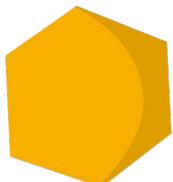
¹ NB: some bias here as email is main way the survey link was shared



Recommendations

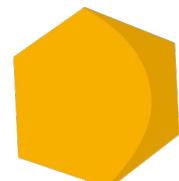
Recommendations #1

- Provide a way for Hubs to be part of the global WEAll digital community
- Create workflows for repetitive tasks such as onboarding, sending out newsletters, and sharing information internally. Automate this as much as possible.
- Collect baseline qualitative and quantitative data on community interaction and engagement and create a strategy for increasing key metrics.
- Make it super-clear what new Citizens and Members are signing up to by setting out benefits and expectations.
- End 1:1 onboarding meetings and instead run ‘New Member Induction’ sessions by region on a regular basis.



Recommendations #2

- Create areas of the forum which are explicitly non-English speaking. Ensure there are moderators (including community moderators) who can speak that language and have been trained to facilitate and defuse any conflicts.
- Establish a rota for staff to respond to community comments, questions, and updates. Ensure there is no message left unanswered.
- Create a calendar of upcoming events (e.g. Climate Week) with which WEAll wants to create content/messaging around. Give access to the community and ask for their suggestions/additions.
- Write content about the community to lift up and foreground the work of members and citizens. Treat the community as a local newspaper
- Grow an ‘insider group’ of particularly-active community members who represent the overall community. Ask for their feedback regularly and to work on projects with staff.



Recommendations #3

- We reviewed 21 community platforms and compared key features, integration & localization options and pricing
 - Few tick all the boxes, so expect to make some compromises
 - Three styles of platforms:
 - Member/group post feeds (i.e. similar to LinkedIn and current Hivebrite)
 - Discussion forum (i.e. classic message boards with categories & topics)
 - Discussion channels (i.e. short messages and threads, like Slack)
- Shortlist:
 - Discourse - most flexible and customizable
 - Hylo - fits the ethos of WEAll
 - Open Social - free core feature set with the option to expand

