



Scottish Disability Equality Forum

Leading Disability Equality in Scotland

Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15 Phase 3 Advanced November 2014 to March 2015

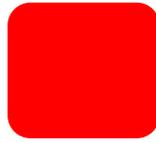
Summary Report

Background

As previously referred to in Phase 1 and 2 summary reports, a full audit of Access Panels (APs) in Scotland was carried out by the Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF), in 2012. This survey provided a summary analysis of Access Panel activity, engagement and needs as identified by the Access Panel members themselves at this time.

As a direct result of the findings of this audit, and in recognition of the action SDEF could take to support the growth and development of APs, SDEF sought to put in place a sustainability project for APs. This would enable the implementation of appropriate strategies to further support APs, and provide them with a suite of training to increase their knowledge and skills.

Funding was granted to SDEF by the Scottish Government, to employ a National Inclusion Officer (NIO) to manage the sustainability project.



As part of the sustainability project the NIO developed a national training programme, which would be delivered over a period of 12 months. The training would be held in three phases, introductory, intermediate and advanced. The programme considers a selection of the training needs as identified by APs, and a number of subject areas that would support their long term sustainability, i.e. membership, business models, funding options and measuring their outputs.

The training would also act as a two-way process of support and information of how the contribution, for and by, the Access Panels in local communities as volunteers, supports wider national policy directives, service delivery improvement and strategic thinking. For example, Independent Living, the UNCRPD & other legislation, as well as all local policy development and service improvement.

Summary reports to inform of the evaluation results of the Introductory Session and Intermediate sessions were produced in May and December 2014 respectively. This report outlines the findings of the evaluations from Phase 3 of the training programme, the final Phase – Advanced level.

How would the learning be achieved?

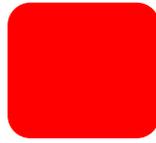
The learning was delivered through varying methods, including power-point presentation, workshops, activities and discussion.



Outcomes and Evaluation

The following information provides a summary of the training outcomes for phase three of the programme and the results of the evaluations completed by Access Panel members attending. It also reports on the results of the Phase 2 survey (see Appendix One), which was developed and sent to all delegates post the intermediate training. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain whether the relevant outcomes within the within the National Inclusion Officer Business Plan are being achieved, in other words the impact of the training as opposed to the learning from the specific training sessions.

Both the training evaluations and the survey results confirm the Sustainability Project had a positive impact. They also provide evidence of continual growth, in terms of activity, an increase in knowledge, skills and expertise, and in the positive outcomes being achieved by Access Panels across Scotland.



Training Sessions

Membership, Recruitment and Business Planning

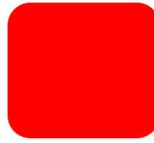
This training session was designed to provide follow-up learning from Phase 1 & 2 of the training programme on the above subjects, but would be delivered within the context of advanced business planning, and as such absorbed into the following three parts:

Session Summary

Part 1 - SWOT Analysis - Participants learned how to carry out a SWOT analysis. In teams, the delegates carried out a review of the strengths and weaknesses of their group, identifying potential opportunities and threats. The learning would be directly transferable to local Access Panels.

Training Content

- Presentation – What is and how to carry out a SWOT Analysis?
- Activity – Workshop & Discussion on SWOT Analysis
- Handouts – Template SWOT Analysis and Guidance



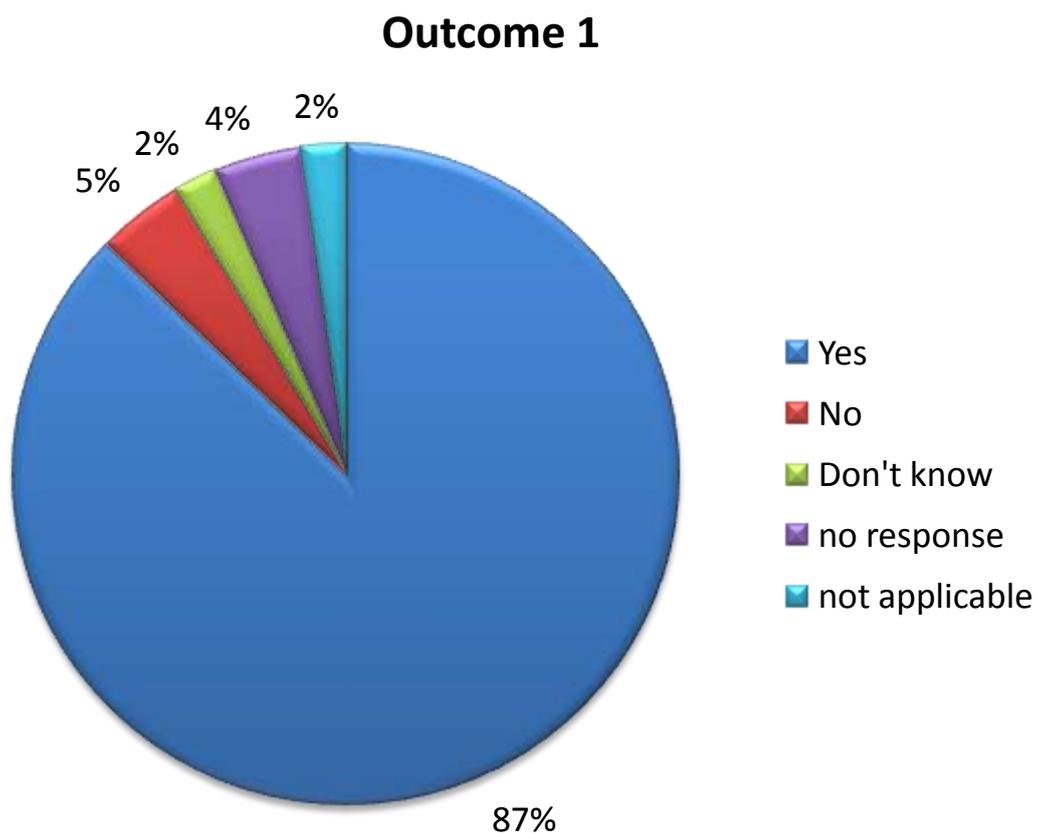
Learning Outcome

Participants will have increased their knowledge on SWOT Analysis and other methods to assess their current strengths and weaknesses and how to improve on the skills gap.

Results Analysis

The following questions were asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

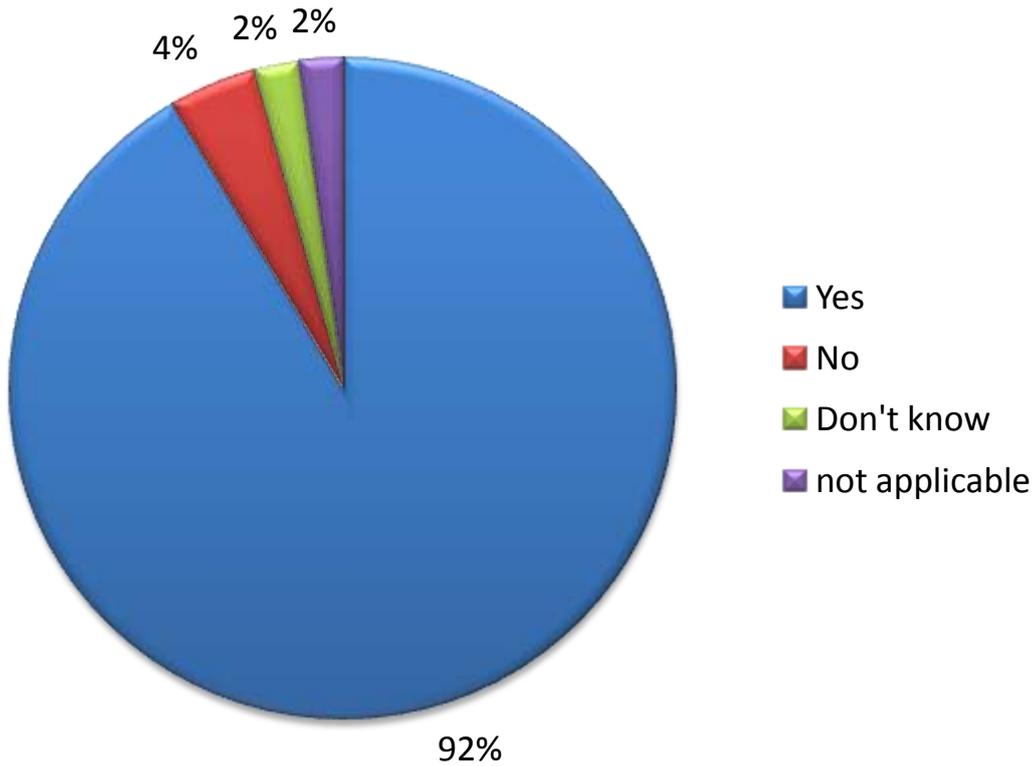
a) Do you more about SWOT analysis and how to do one?





b) 'Do you know more about your own strengths and weaknesses, and how to improve the skills gap?

Outcome 2





Project Management

Session Summary

Part 2 - Project Management: Using the SWOT analysis, delegates would translate their skills & knowledge to consider effective project management and business plans. The group were asked to develop a specialist project maximising their known abilities, including resource and financial implications

Training Content

- Presentation – How to translate a SWOT into action
- Activity – Completion of a Summary Project Plan relating to improvement to local Panels using the SWOT Analysis
- Handouts – Template Project Plan and Guidance

Learning Outcome

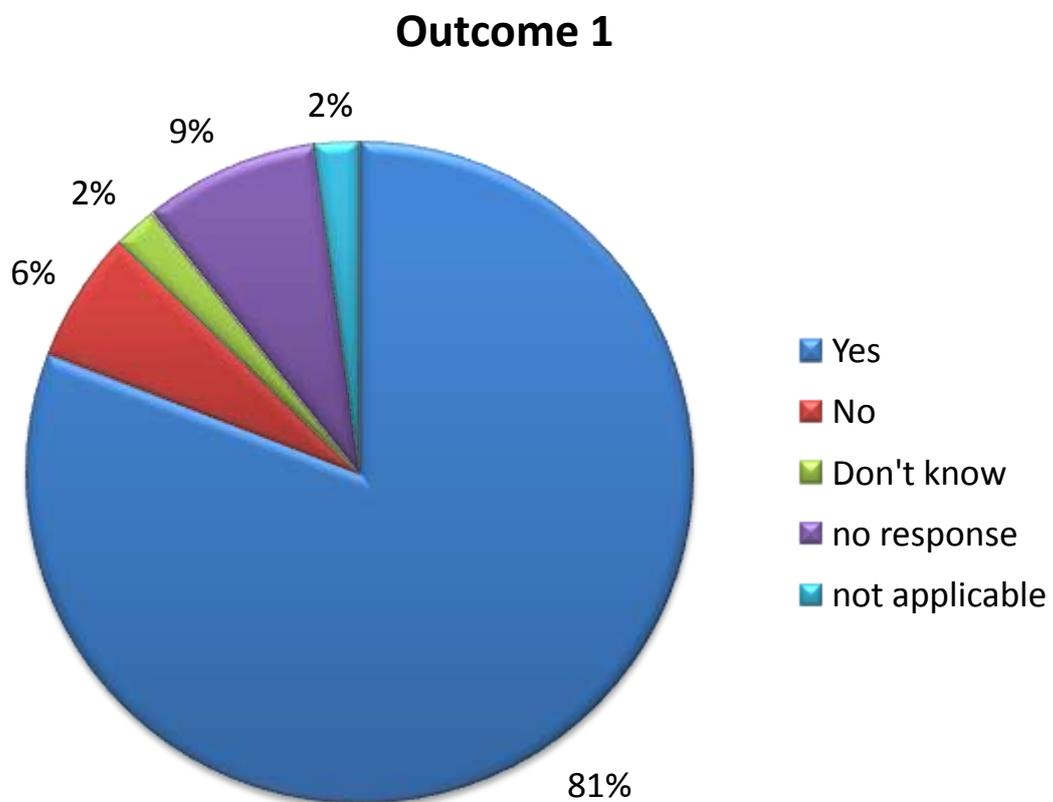
Participants will increase their ability to transfer known skills into effective project planning.

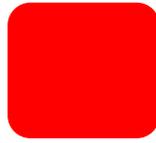


Results Analysis

The following question was asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

Do you know more about how to transfer a SWOT analysis into project planning?





Communications Skills

Session Summary

Part 3 - Communication: The groups would be asked to prepare a presentation on their project with timelines, budget and resources shown. The groups would need to consider what type and level of information needs to be presented. They would then present this to the “judges” who would decide on the best project based on preparation, content and delivery. This exercise will help delegates to understand the need for clear and succinct communication to potential funders, clients etc.

Training Content

- Activity – Presentation of project plan to delegates
- Discussion – How to improve project plans

Learning Outcome

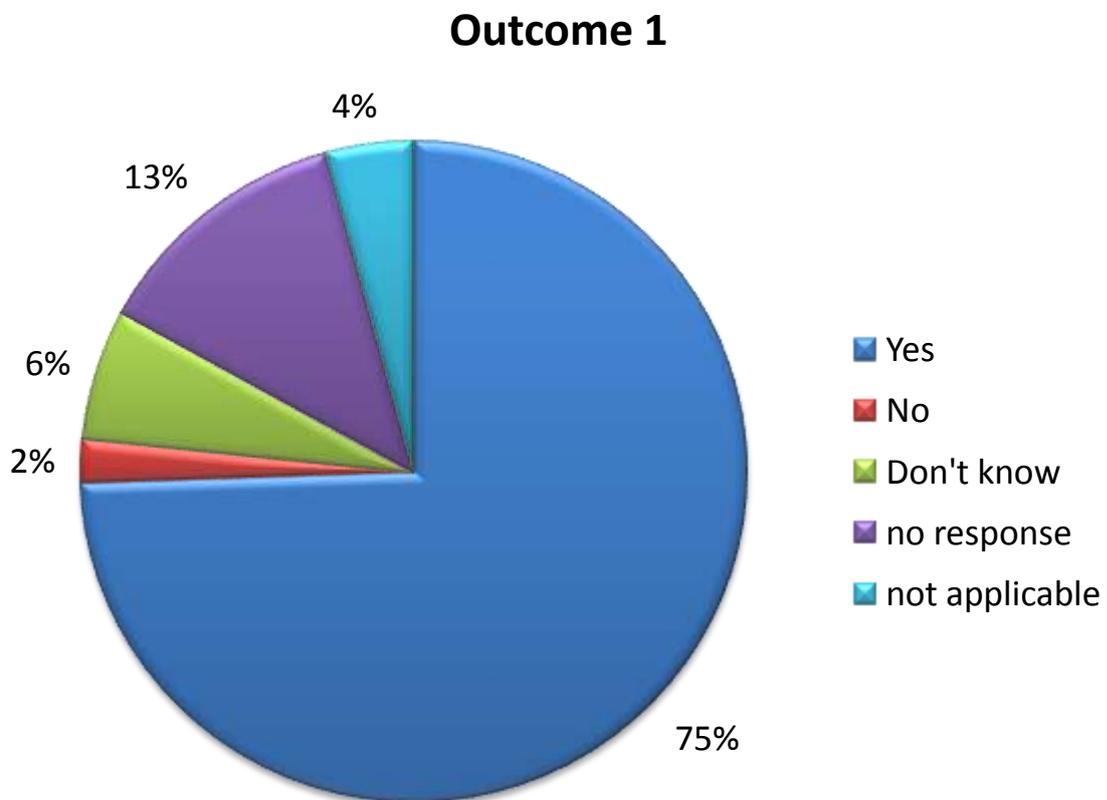
Participants will have increased their communication skills and have improved the articulation of priorities.



Results Analysis

The following question was asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

Do you know more about how to communicate the important elements of your work?





Monitoring & Evaluation

Session Summary

Access Panels currently deliver varying services to multiple providers in their local areas. It is imperative that Panels monitor, evaluate and report their output to ensure future sustainability and to maximise funding opportunities. Participants would receive training on effective methods and tools for this purpose.

Training Content

- Presentation – The How, Why, When, Where and What?
- Activity – Completion of a basic monitoring form
- Handouts :
 - Copy presentation
 - Template monitoring form
 - Top Tips
 - Guidance

Learning Outcomes

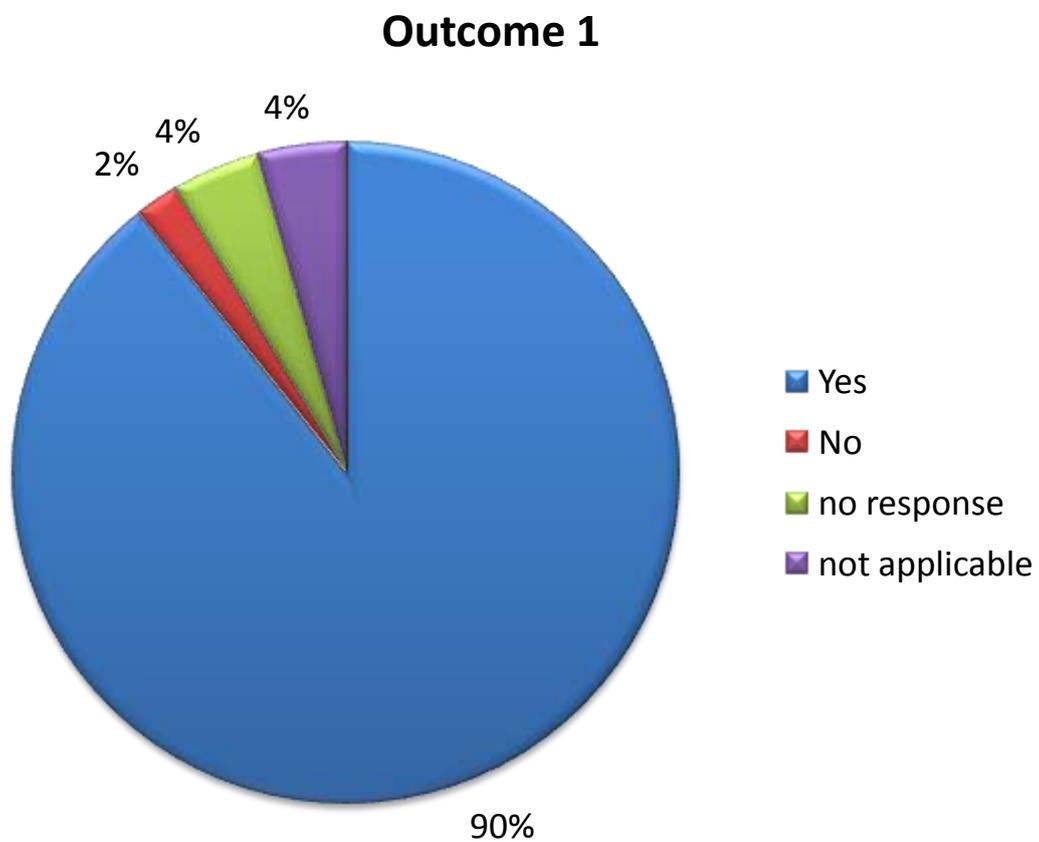
- a) Participants will have increased their knowledge and understanding of the importance of evaluation, recording & monitoring.
- b) Participants will be able to improve on future planning activity based on their findings by means of effective report writing.



Results Analysis

The following questions were asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

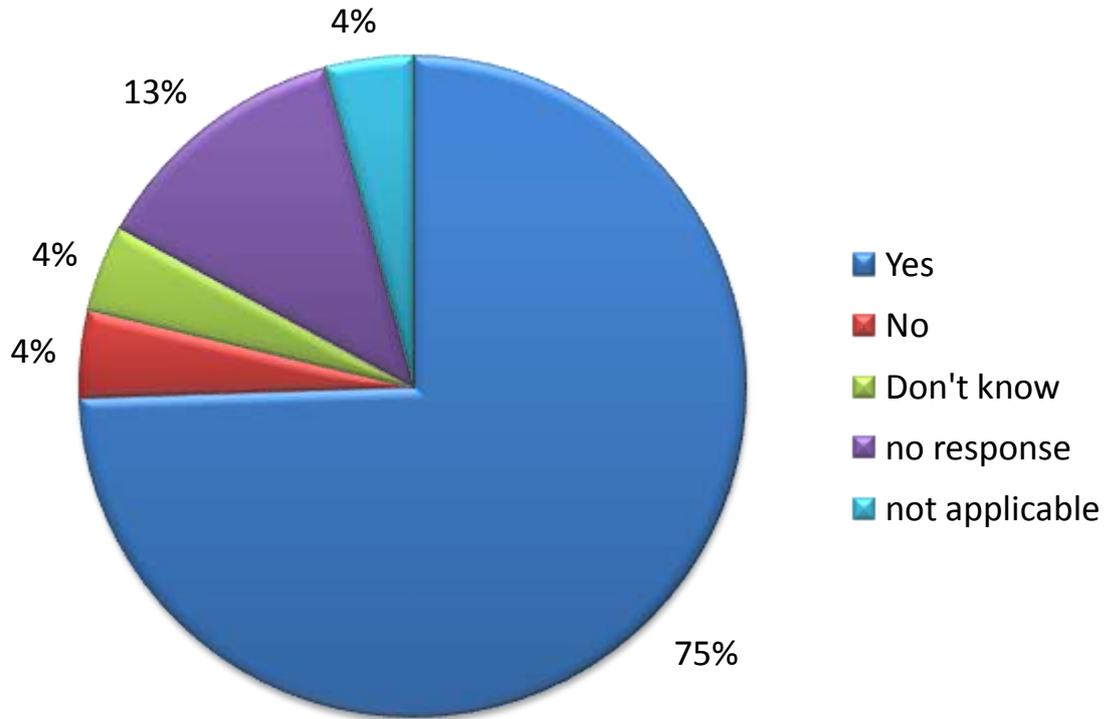
- a) Do you understand more about the importance of monitoring and reporting?

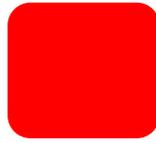




b) Do you know more about how to draft a report?

Outcome 2





Customer Protocols

Session Summary

It is of critical important that Panels manage their communications in a professional way to maintain mutual respect between the Panel and the service provider, or client, and that a two-way communication process is followed to ensure all parties needs, aspirations, business processes and outputs are fully understood and valued. Participants would be provided with good practice methods and examine case studies to explore areas for improvement.

Training Content

- Presentation – Good Practice
- Activity – Case Scenarios
- Handouts:
 - Presentation
 - Case Scenarios
 - Top Tips
 - Guidance

Learning Outcome

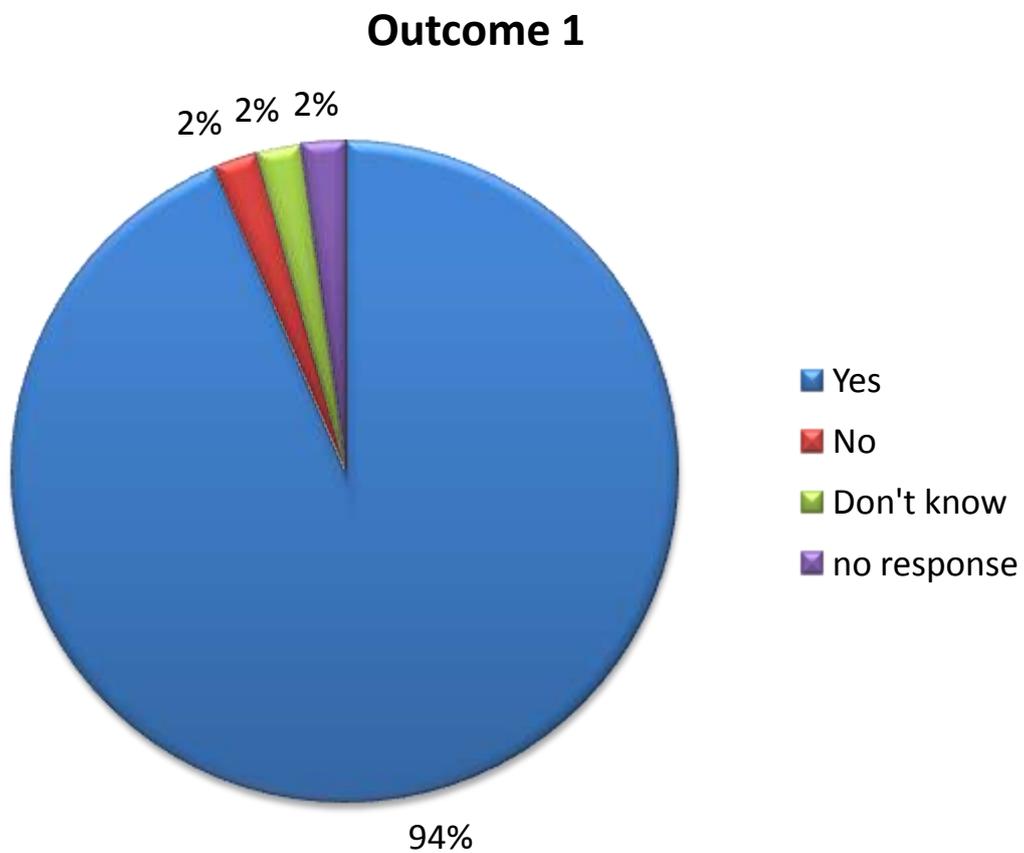
Participants will have increased their knowledge and understanding of effective communications to maximise relationships.

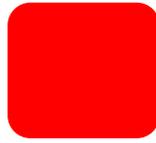


Results Analysis

The following question was asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

Do you know more about how to get the best out of your relationships?





Access Audit Reporting

Session Summary

This session was designed to further increase the knowledge and skills of access auditing by taking the participants to the final stage of this process, i.e. report writing. It would explore methods for reporting, structure and content, along with making appropriate recommendations.

Training Content

- Presentation – Summary of Access Auditing and Recommendations
- Discussion – Reflection on learning, good practice and the key elements of report writing

Learning Outcome

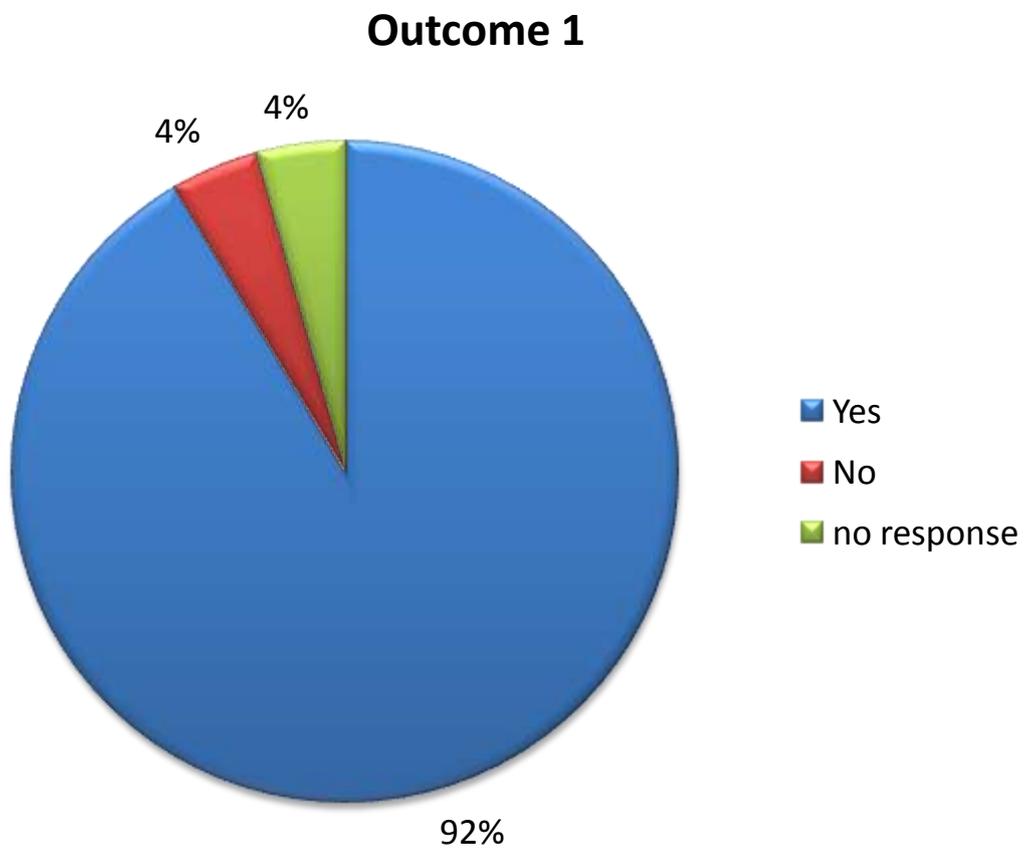
Participants will have increased their knowledge and understanding by discussing the requirements of the client, i.e. the necessary components of a report.

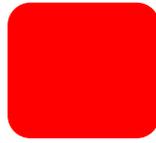


Results Analysis

The following question was asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

Do you know more about audit reporting?





Thinking Outside the Box

Session Summary

This session would focus on problem solving, exploring ideas around historic buildings and other complex environments, considering alternative recommendations and solutions. Participants were invited to consider varying actual audit scenarios and recommend solutions.

Training Content

- Presentation – Complex buildings (i.e. historic) and environments
- Photographs – Examples of challenging audit scenarios
- Discussion – Finding solutions

Learning Outcomes

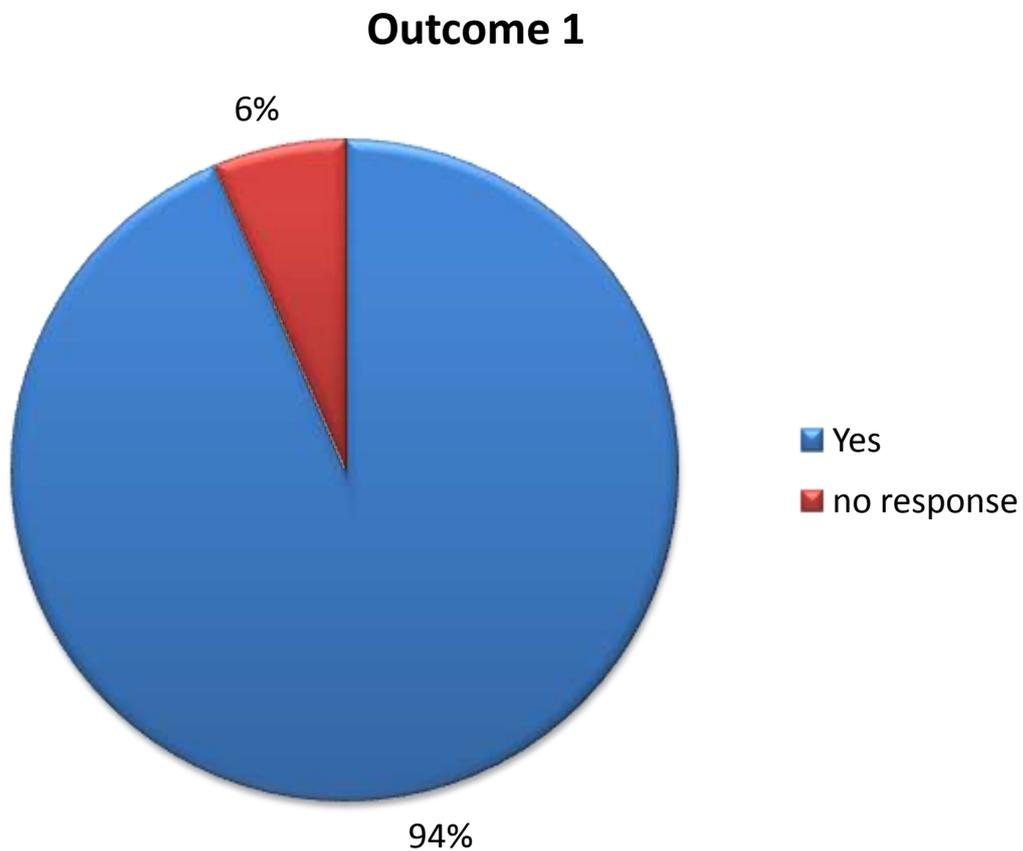
Participants will have increased their skills & knowledge by exploring the more challenging aspects of access audits and discussing solutions (i.e. historic buildings).



Results Analysis

The following question was asked of attending delegates to analyse outcome results:

Do you know more about how to seek solutions to problems when doing an Access Audit?





Findings

As previously reported in the Phase 2 summary report, the information available at the commencement of the Sustainability Project - obtained from the Access Panel Audit 2012 whilst of some value, was found to be an unreliable source. The evidence of this was heard from feedback and discussion at the training, and the early evaluations completed as part of the events.

There remains a variation amongst the Panels across Scotland in terms of member numbers, skills and activity; however with more robust and reliable evidence gathered throughout the training programme and other SDEF evaluative work, it is clear there has been substantial growth in their level of participation and output across the vast majority of Panels.

Despite the variation amongst Panels, the vast majority are extremely active, with the main challenge being the 'weight' put upon a small number of members.

Whether large or small, active across all service delivery areas or few, Panels will require to continue to 'reflect and review' their membership on a regular basis. This will enable continual growth to replace retiring members, provide the resource to carry out the desired activities, provide continual learning and ensure a diverse approach.

It was also found throughout the training that networking between Access Panels is hugely beneficial in terms of learning and sharing. Panels should ensure they are actively involved with other stakeholders



in their local community to provide unity in strength, continue to learn from others, and achieve common goals.

A large majority of panels have also developed or are linked to the SDEF PanelTown website. This will enable continued sharing of information and dialogue, along with other mechanisms used by SDEF to assist with communication on a national basis.

Summary Conclusion

There was a slight overall decrease in the number of Access Panels attending the advanced training sessions (Phase 3). It was attended by 28 Access Panels in Scotland, representing 60% of Panels in Scotland. This decrease was due to health and other personal reasons as most delegates had consistently registered for all 3 phases.

Those attending the training continued to value the opportunity to meet with other Panel members from across Scotland. Many advised their confidence had grown enormously, and they were now embarking in work that they would not have been able to do before the training.

The evaluation results show an increase in activity across many service areas including, Community Planning Partnerships, Health, Self-Directed Support, Community Councils, Third Sector and more. One panel member said 'Our relationship with the Community Planning Partnership is the best it has ever been'. Another advised that Greater Glasgow Council have asked the Panel to replace their Better Access to Health Group.



In terms of the specific training sessions, Panel members advised their skills, knowledge and expertise had increased as follows:

Carrying out a SWOT Analysis	87%
Understanding individual strengths and weaknesses, and filling the skills gap	81%
Transferring SWOT Analysis to Project Planning	81%
Communication Skills	75%
Monitoring and Evaluation Skills	90%
Report Writing	75%
Customer Protocols	94%
Access Auditing	92%
Finding solutions to complex audits	94%

An equally outstanding increase is demonstrated in activity and engagement:

Understanding and use of the Equality Act 2010, UNCRPD and Independent Living	80%
Engagement with others	59%
Influencing change	65%
Development of Business Plans	41%
Access Auditing	50%
Design Appraisals	29%
Third Party Reporting Centre's	50%
Provision of support to other organisations	74%

It should be noted this is a welcoming increase given that many Panels in Scotland were highly active prior to the training programme. However,



many of those who said they were active in some, or all of the above areas, have noted an advance in their learning and confidence, enabling a more focussed approach to all business matters.

Examples of improvement in working relations in many geographical areas is also apparent, with Panels reporting an increase in requests from local authorities to be involved in Equality Impact Assessments, access auditing of their public buildings and invitations to join more working groups.

A large number of participants (94%) noted an increase in confidence, with some members becoming newly appointed Office Bearers at their local Panel, and who are keen to bring about further change to their Panels to ensure sustainability into the future.

Recommendations

As previously mentioned in this report (and included in the Phase 2 report), Access Panels would benefit enormously from concentrating on membership growth and exploring opportunities to obtain business management services, for example secretarial and financial support. Although there has been some increase in Panel membership throughout the year, this has been sporadic. An increase in membership would reduce the burden on those who are currently taking the pressure of work, and provide an additional resource which would allow an increase in activity. Some panels have had to reject proposals to participate as their current resource has no capacity.



Although the priorities have shifted slightly as the learning and expertise has grown, the following recommendations remain for consideration:

Panel Membership

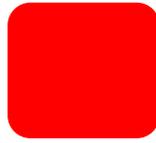
An increase in the promotion of the Panel and number of active members, including diversity of membership (particularly young people) would greatly benefit Panels. Each Panel could consider allocating this specific task to one existing member to enable a concentrated effort.

Professional Support for Panels

Panels could consider additional professional support or professional advisors, to assist with business planning and contribution to local policy and service improvement. These members could be recruited on an 'arms-length basis' meaning their support is sought for specific issues and on an ad-hoc basis, with no requirement to attend all Panel meetings. This would encourage sustained involvement.

Business Support

Panels should explore methods and opportunities to increase the level of business support. This could be secretarial, business planning, financial or other, enabling the provision of reports to inform of their achievements, successful outcomes and the wealth of support they provide to individuals and services in their local communities. This would allow the 'doers' to concentrate on the 'doing' and participate on the local activity which is helping to deliver positive change for disabled people.



Stakeholder Engagement

Further development of working relations with key partners in local area may also assist with the sustainability of Panels in terms of shared priorities, goals and workload

This would also encourage a collaborative and united approach which would further increase the voice of disabled people. This is suggested in recognition that a generic approach can, sometimes, dilute the strength or focus on a particular issue, and a balance is therefore required.

Equally, it is not always easy for local communities to understand the benefits to be derived from collaborative working in the same way that those operating on a national basis will. Some Panels would benefit from further support to explore good practice in this area.

Access to Funding

The majority of Access Panels would benefit from exploring new or additional funding resource. Some Panels receive funding from their local authority, as well as other local funding sources, however few acquire substantial funding from external sources, and some are under threat of losing the funding they currently receive.

Panels would benefit from prioritising this action within their business planning to secure their future sustainability, enabling growth and the ability to carry out tasks and activities which they do not either have the capacity in terms of membership or resource to fund.



Support from SDEF

It is recommended that SDEF provide support in the coming year to assist Panels with the areas outlined above, particularly around membership growth, business support and access to funding. This could be done through a managed programme of bespoke training, in collaboration with others within the Third Sector, Local CVOs for example, and other supported local and national events; a process where SDEF could further increase the knowledge and skills of Panels, whilst assisting with promotional events to recruit new members, seek solutions for potential support for Panels and explore effective stakeholder engagement.

SDEF have made further changes to the Access Panel Grant funding since the completion of the Phase 2 report, and it is recommended these changes are continually monitored and further change is effected as required to ensure monies received are spent efficiently and maximise opportunity.

Finally, and in addition to the above priorities, of which the majority are contained within the Phase 2 report, it is recommended that SDEF promote the development of suitable geographical alliances of regional Access Panels. This would enable the more developed and larger Panels to provide support and advice to the smaller, less developed Panels, as well as an environment for Panels to continue to share their skills and expertise.



What Next?

The Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15 is now complete. The results provided in the Phase 1, 2 & 3 reports, provide evidence that the training programme has been an enormous success, and provides evidence that Panels have increased their knowledge, skills and expertise, as well as an increase in their local activity, joint working and outcomes, across all service provision.

SDEF and the National Inclusion Officer will consider the results of the evaluations and surveys of the training programme, along with the Access Panel Audit Survey carried out early in 2015. We will consider any outstanding skills gaps or Panel support requirements, filling this gap with bespoke training sessions, one-to-one support provided by the NIO in partnership with the Disability Access Officer and other SDEF national events - subject to SDEF policy and service delivery priorities and available funding.



Appendix One

National Inclusion Officer Business Plan – Phase 2 Survey

Background

On completion of the Phase 2 Intermediate training sessions, a survey was carried out (as with Phase 1) to ascertain whether the training programme is achieving the outcomes contained within the National Inclusion Officer Business Plan. This survey would tell us whether the training provided to the Access Panels was having a positive impact and making a difference.

The outcomes - which form part of the Sustainability project, would seek to increase the knowledge and skills of individual Access Panel members, whilst increasing the activity and output of Panels, which would, in turn, seek to improve local policy and service delivery, therefore creating an overall impact which would deliver positive change.

The Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15 was developed in such a way that it will enable progressive growth over a period of time. It was delivered in three phases, introductory, intermediate and advanced; the programme is now complete, and the information gathered through the evaluation and surveys as part of this exercise, provides the evidence that the outcomes were achieved.



Evaluation of the Outcomes

The Sustainability Project training reports, Phase 1, 2 and 3 provide a summary of the increased learning of Access Panel members in a practical sense, which contribute to Outcome 2 below.

This appendix provides evidence of the change that has been effected as a result of that learning.

National Inclusion Officer Business Plan 2013-15 (in part)

Outcome 2 - Developing Access Panels

Improve the knowledge, skills and assets of the local Access Panels to enable them to become self-sufficient, competent in capacity building, and effective within their communities.

Outcome 4 – Access Panel Model

Develop a model for Access Panels for the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and assessment of progress to ensure continual improvement and demonstrate an increase in local assets

Outcome 5 - Independent Living and the Equality Act 2010

Create exemplar models of inclusion and develop the Access Panels to improve their knowledge of inclusion and independent living, to maximise the participation and contribution of all ages, and promote independent living to ensure equality for all disabled people.

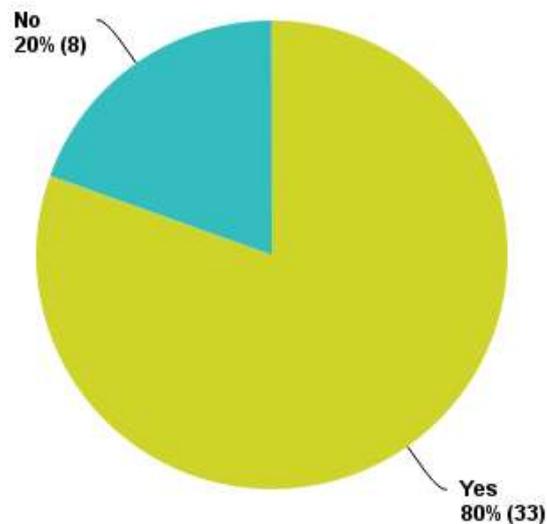


The following provides the results of the Access Panel members survey (Note this is not a survey of all Access Panel members, but of those attending the training programme only)

Disability Equality and Independent Living

Q1 Has learning about the Equality Act 2010 (Phase 1), United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (Phase 2), and Independent Living helped you?

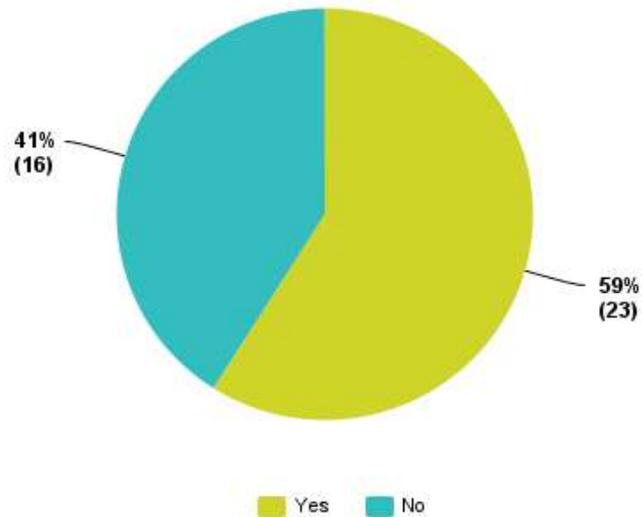
Answered: 41 Skipped: 3





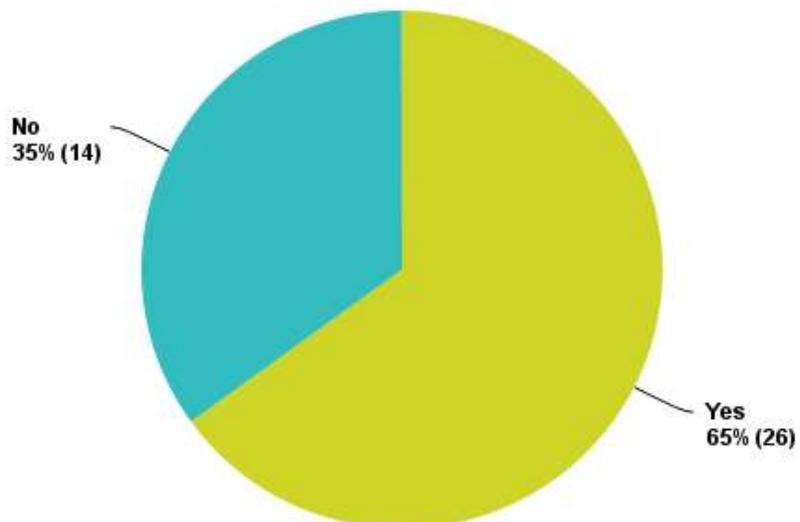
Q2 Has your engagement with Public bodies or other organisations increased since you started the training?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 5



Q3 Have you been able to influence any change or improvement for disabled people?

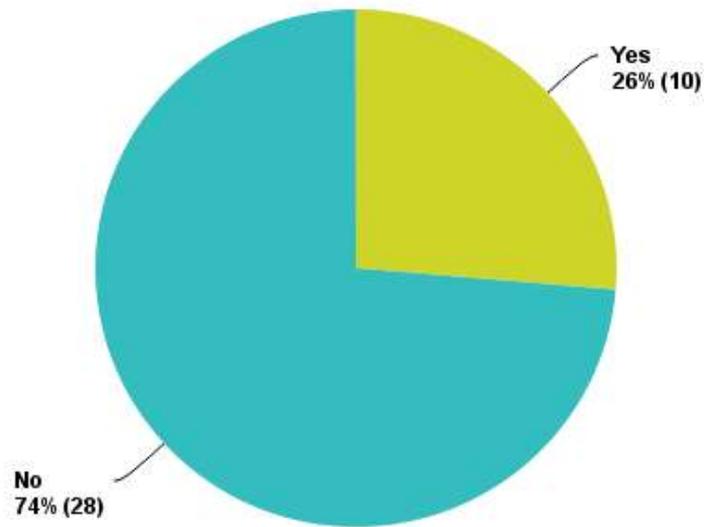
Answered: 40 Skipped: 4





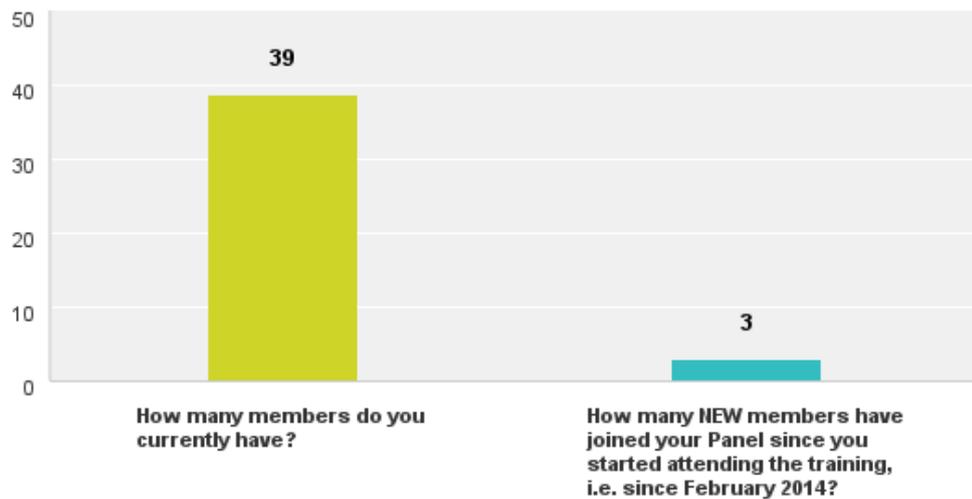
Q4 Has the training helped you to increase your membership?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 6



Q5 Please tell us....

Answered: 37 Skipped: 7



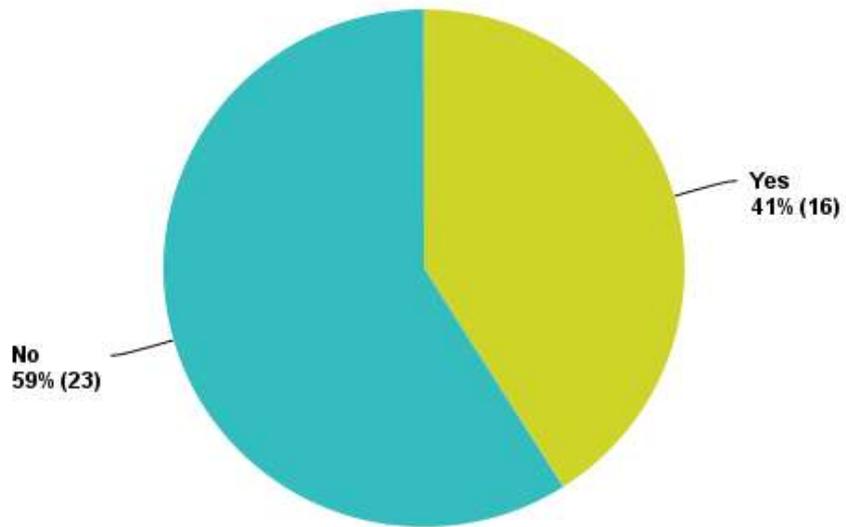


**Access
Panels**



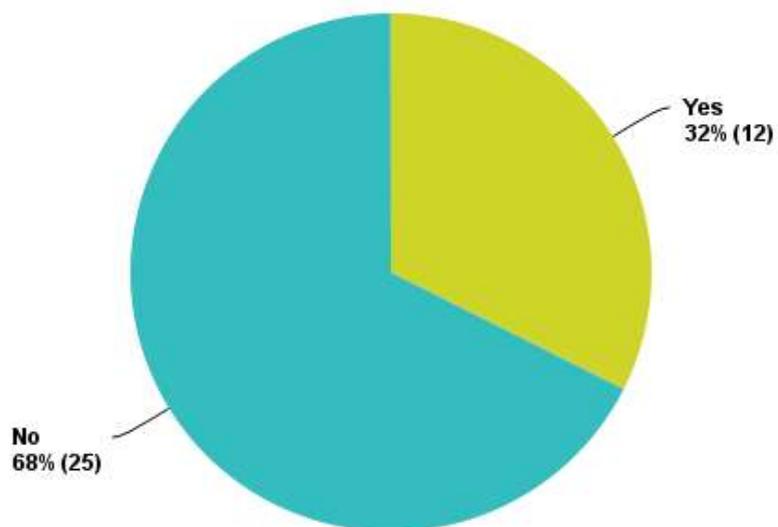
Q7 Have you or are you in the process of developing a Business Plan for your Panel?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 5



Q8 Can we give you more help with business planning?

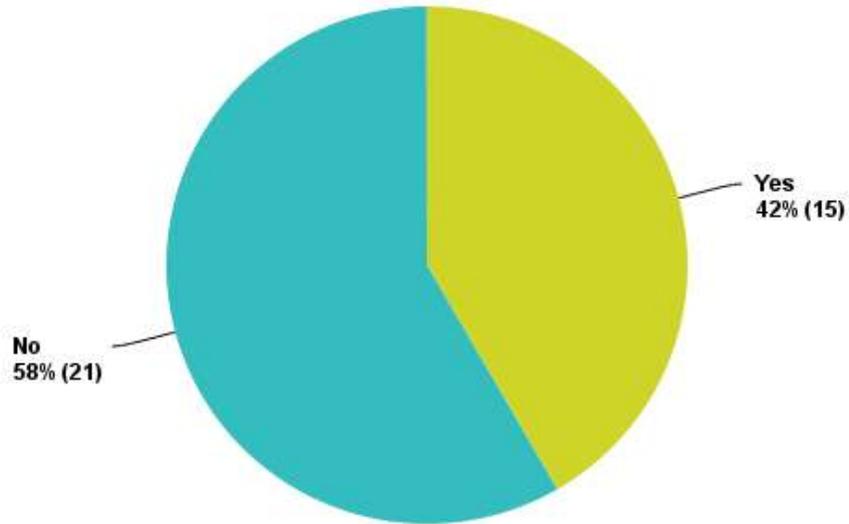
Answered: 37 Skipped: 7





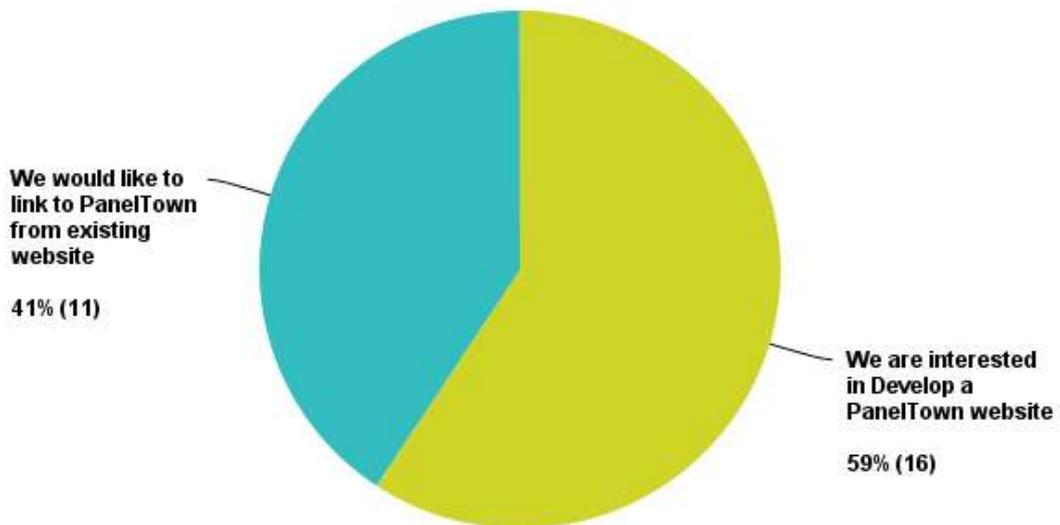
Q9 Is your Panel using the PanelTown website template?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 8



Q10 Are you interested in developing a PanelTown website or linking this to your existing website?

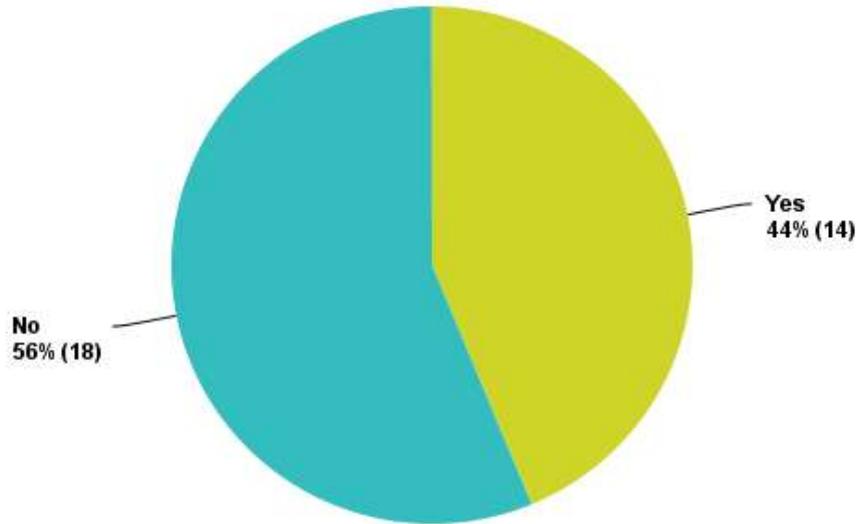
Answered: 27 Skipped: 17





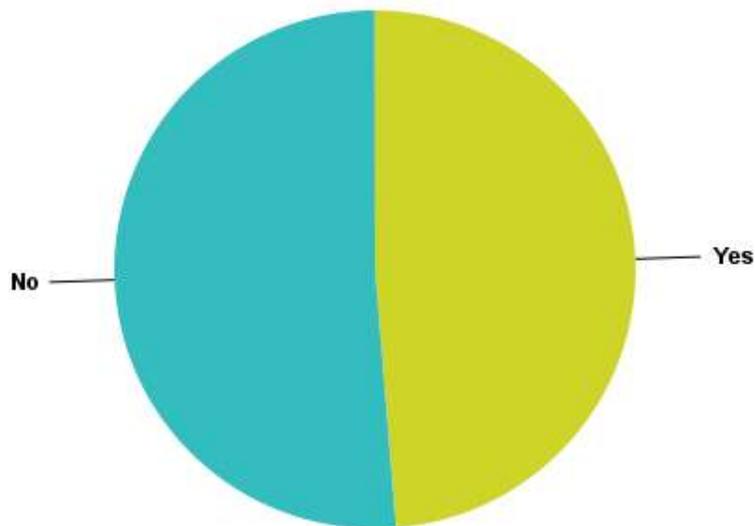
Q11 Can we give you more help with website development?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 12



Q12 Have you carried out more Access Audits since you started the training?

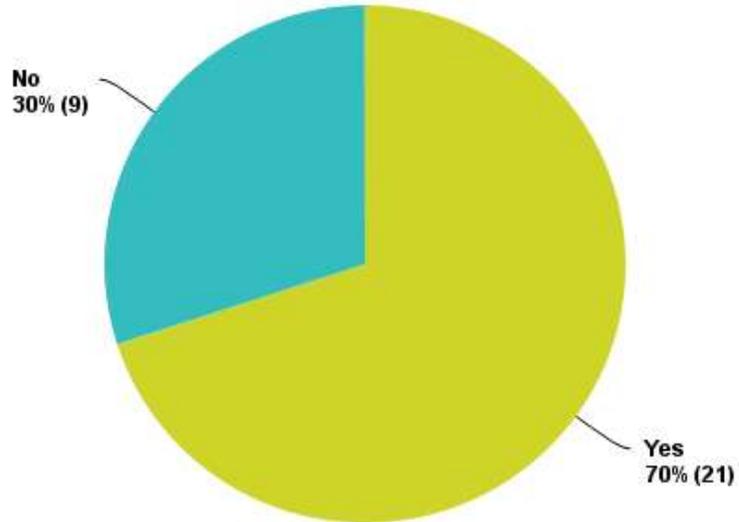
Answered: 39 Skipped: 5





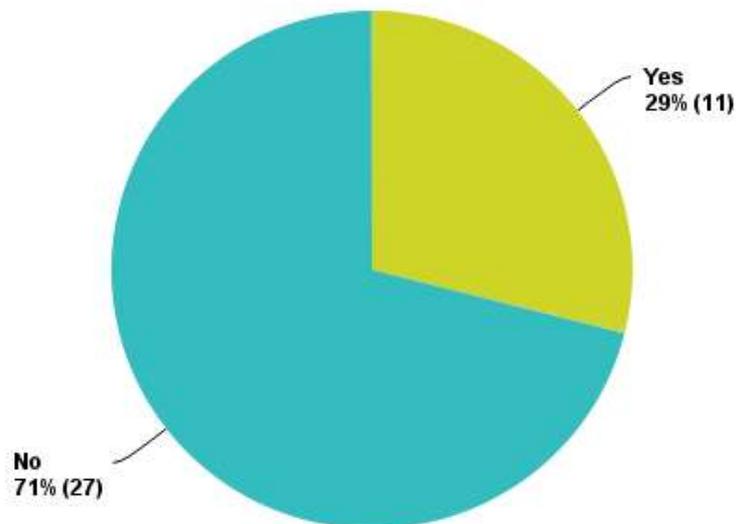
Q13 Did the training help you to do this?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 14



Q14 Have you carried out any Design Appraisals since you did the Phase 2 training?

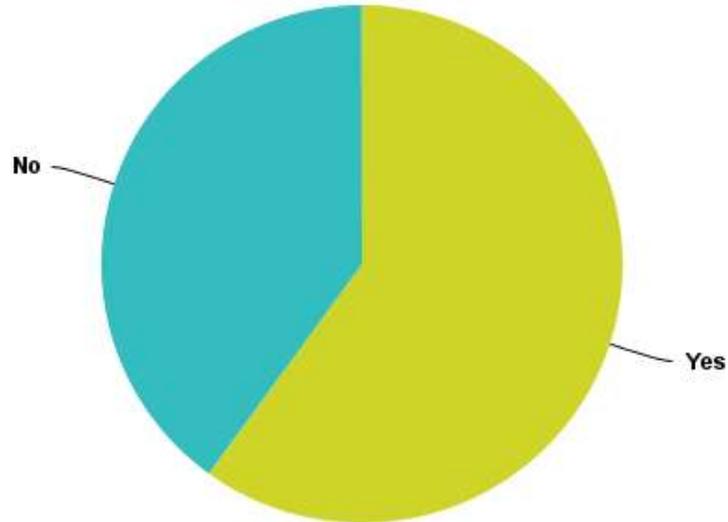
Answered: 38 Skipped: 6





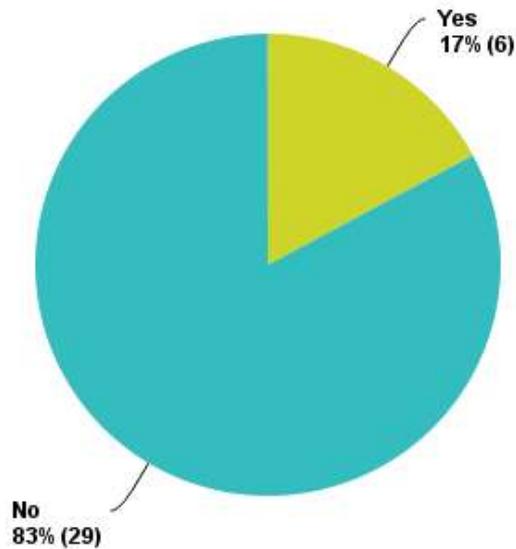
Q15 Did the training help you to do this?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 24



Q16 Have you used any of the information on the Living Streets website or any other supportive information for the purposes of access auditing?

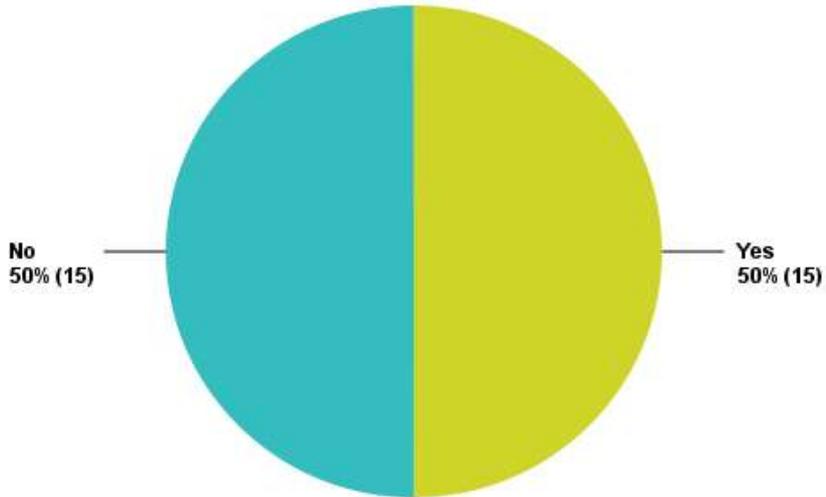
Answered: 35 Skipped: 9





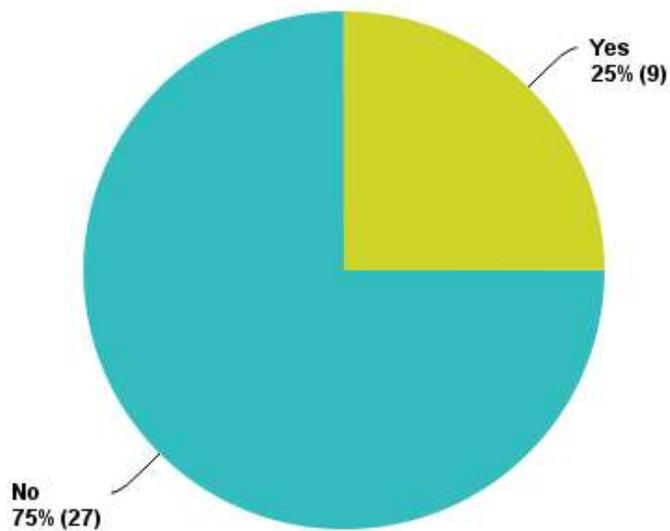
Q17 If you are not already, would your Panel like to become a Third Party Reporting Centre to help with the reporting of hate crime?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 14



Q18 Have you added any information to Euan's guide?

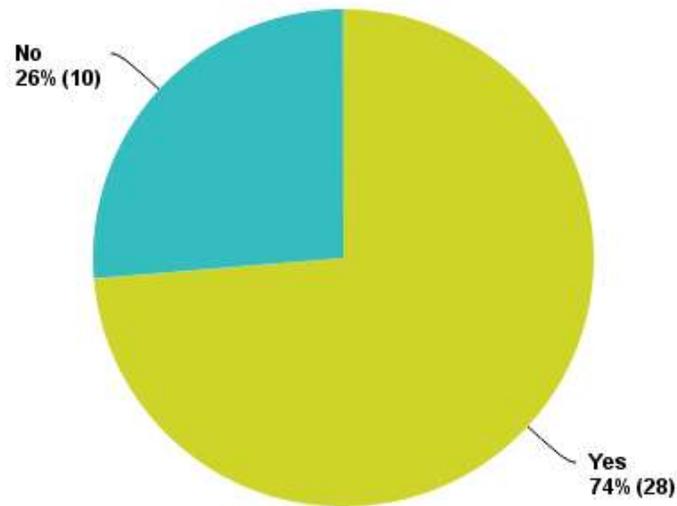
Answered: 36 Skipped: 8





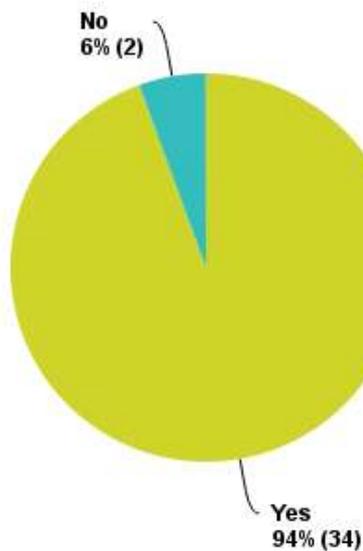
Q19 Have you provided any support, advice or assistance to any other organisation since the training?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 6



Q20 Do you feel that the training has helped to give you confidence to further promote your Panel and to do more activities?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 8





Summary report provided by:

Yvonne Wemyss, National Inclusion Officer

Working in Partnership with SDEF

April 2015



SDEF
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