Scottish Disability Equality Forum

Leading Disability Equality in Scotland

Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15 Phase 2 Intermediate – July to August 2014

Summary Report

Background

In 2012 a full audit of Access Panels (APs) in Scotland was carried out by the Scottish Disability Equality Forum. 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.

A summary report to inform of the evaluation results of the Introductory Sessions was produced in May 2015. This report outlines the findings of the evaluations from Phase 2 of the training programme – Intermediate 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 two of the programme and the results of the evaluations completed by Access Panel members attending. It also reports on the results of the Phase 1 survey (see Appendix One), which was developed

and sent to all delegates post the introductory 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 is having a positive impact, and provides evidence of continual growth - in many aspects of activity, as well as an increase in knowledge and skills, across the Access Panels across Scotland.

Training Sessions

Policy & Practice

Session Summary

A training session to increase the knowledge of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and Rights to Reality: A framework of action for Independent Living 2012-15.

The training was designed to help participants understand the differences and synergies between the work they do in communities and the policy work of local and central government, specifically in regard to the UNCRPD and the Independent Living policy framework.

Training Content

- Presentation on UNCRPD and Rights to Reality: A Framework of Action for Independent Living 2012-15

- Activity – Top priorities for disabled people as set out within the Independent Living Framework, explored and discussed

- Handouts:

    o EHRC Guidance – UNCRPD

    o ILiS Guidance - UNCRPD

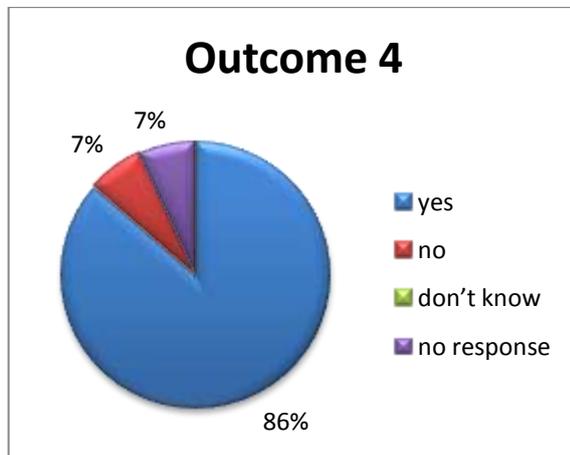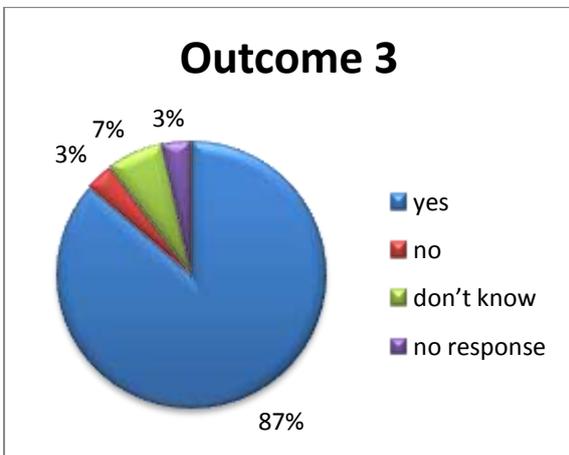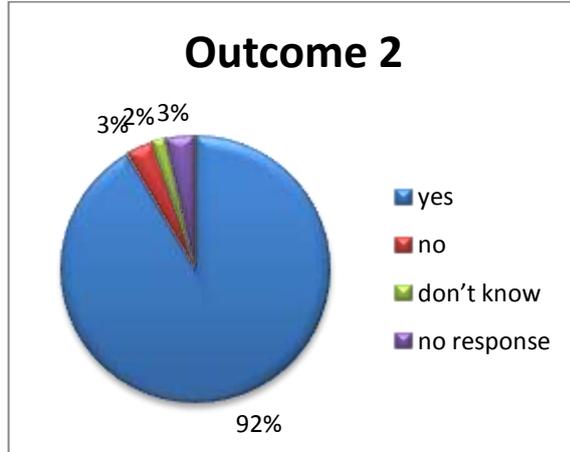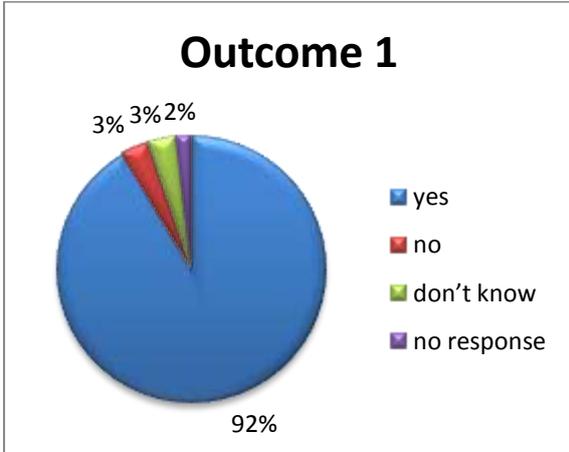   o Rights to Reality – Summary Outcomes Paper

Learning Outcomes

- **The UNCRPD and other legislation**: Increase the knowledge and understanding of the UNCRPD – help the participants understand the differences and synergies between the practical work they do in communities and the policy work of local and central government; and the importance of recording the activity & outputs within local communities to help the Scottish Government inform data and fulfill their obligations at a national and European level; and how this can translate into further support for communities

- **Rights to Reality**: A Framework for Independent Living 2013-2015 - Increase the knowledge and understanding of the IL Framework, how this was developed, what it means and how it is supportive to communities at a local level and vice versa

Results Analysis

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

- Do you know more about the principles of the UNCRPD?

- Do you know more about Rights to Reality: A framework of action for independent living?

- Do you know more about the 'Rights to Reality' Outcomes?

- Do you understand more about how the activities of Government and local communities connect?

Outcome 1

Pie chart:
- yes: 92%
- no: 3%
- don't know: 3%
- no response: 2%

Outcome 2

Pie chart:
- yes: 92%
- no: 3%
- don't know: 2%
- no response: 3%

Outcome 3

Pie chart:
- yes: 87%
- no: 3%
- don't know: 7%
- no response: 3%

Outcome 4

Pie chart:
- yes: 86%
- no: 7%
- no response: 7%

Membership, Recruitment and Business Planning

Session Summary

The training was designed to improve and increase the knowledge and skills of members by addressing the need for business planning, how to go about it, and the resources and funding attributed to business planning – including promotion and marketing to increase membership to meet the business needs of Access Panels, and methods for monitoring and evaluation.

Training Content

- Presentation – Business & Project Planning

- Activities – Completion of template business plan, development of a project plan, and discussion on monitoring and evaluation, including:

  - considering resources

  - maximising Panel membership

  - access to funding

  - gap analysis

- Handouts – Full pack with templates and guidance

Learning Outcomes

The session served to:

- **Business and Project Plans-** Improve knowledge and skills by providing an understanding of the need for a business plan and developing an action plan to achieve successful outcomes

- **Development of a business plan using a template and referring to guidance document -** Improve knowledge and understanding of local business needs, transfer this to a business plan and link to local/national priorities

- **Resources –** Increase knowledge and skills on membership and capacity by considering existing resources and gap analysis, i.e. staff, volunteers, equipment, buildings, including:

 - allocation of tasks and decision makers

- applying for and allocation of funds and other resources

- setting goals, objectives and outcomes – linking to the business plan and action plan

- understanding priorities, resources and having the right people involved

Results Analysis

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

Membership

- Do you know more about how to assess and build the capacity of your membership?

- Do you know more about making the best of your available resources?
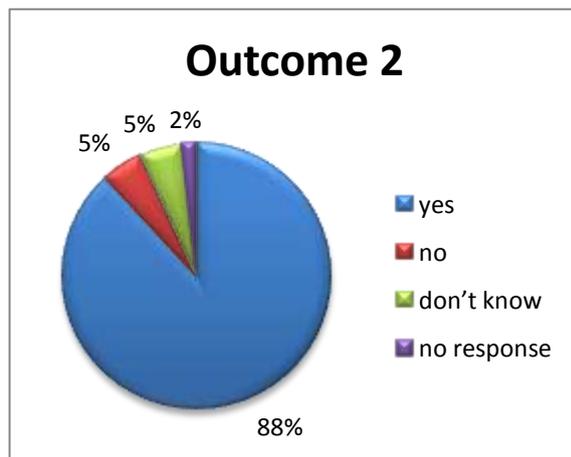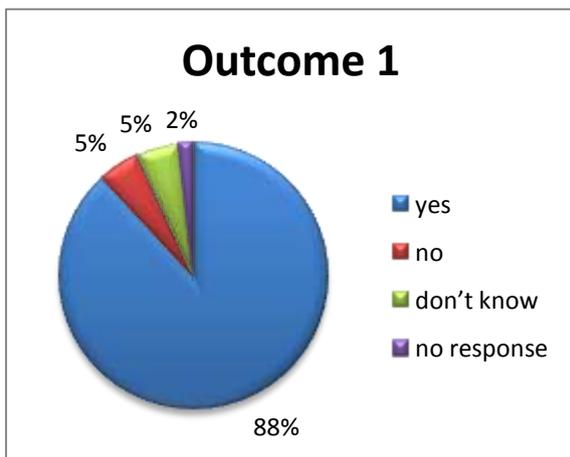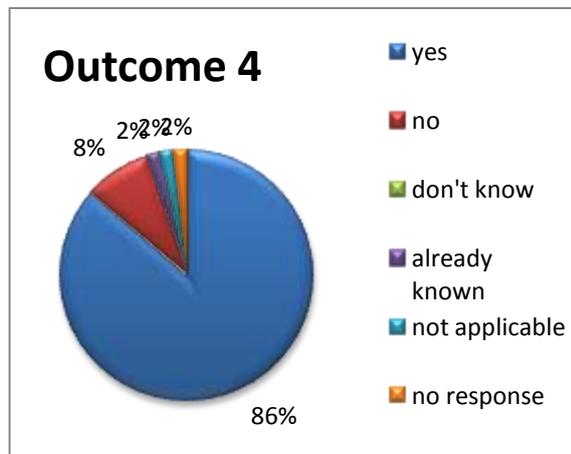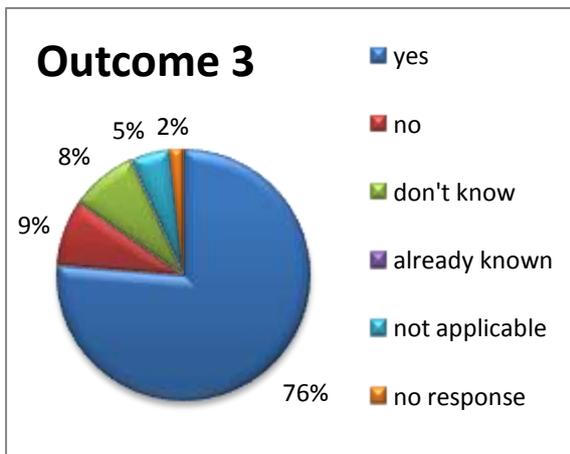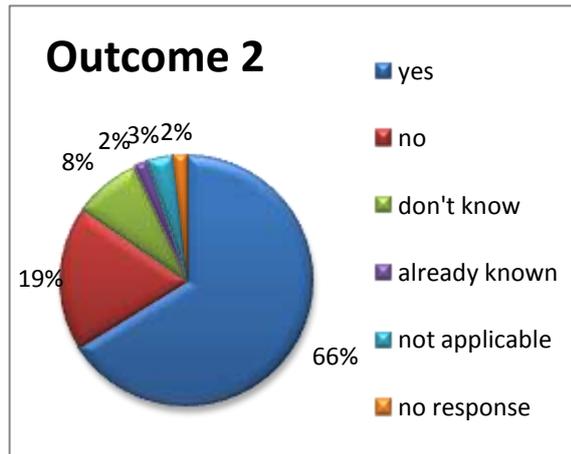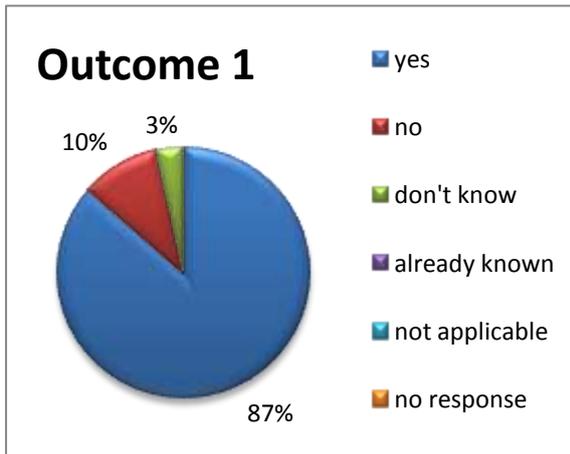

Business Planning

- Do you know more about the need for a business plan and how to develop one?

- Do you know more about how to apply for funds?

- Do you know how to make best use of funds you receive?

- Do you know more about monitoring and evaluation?

Architectural Drawings and Plans

Session Summary

This training was designed to further increase the knowledge and skills of participants by expanding on the learning in Phase 1, through the investigation and exploration of 'real life' architectural drawings. Participants performed a design appraisal of an architectural design.

Training Content

- Presentation – Design Appraisals

- Activity – Design appraisal management , assessment and recommendation

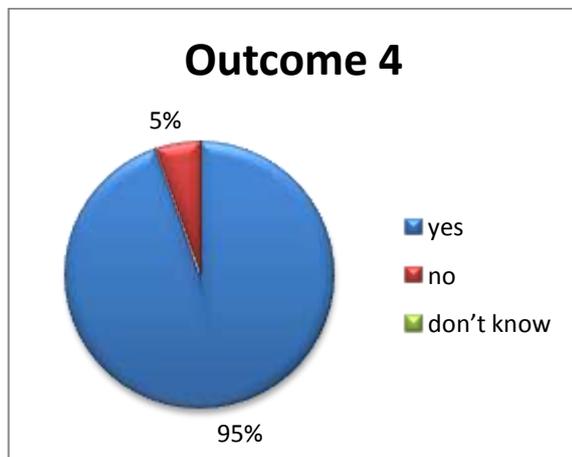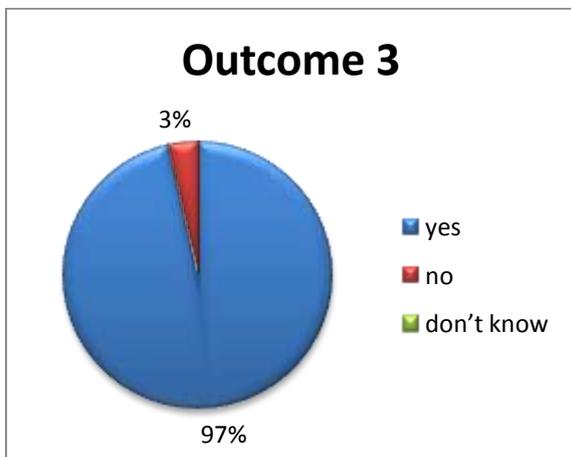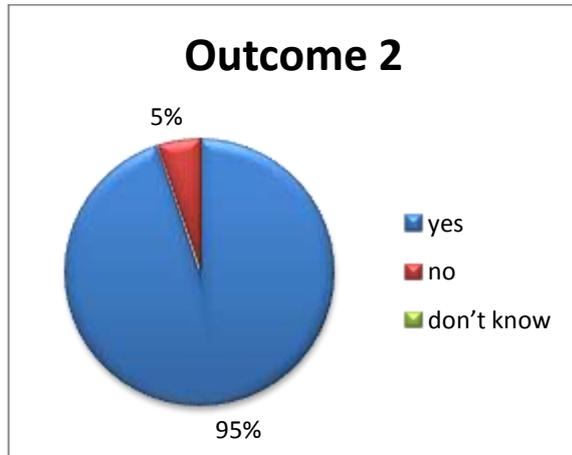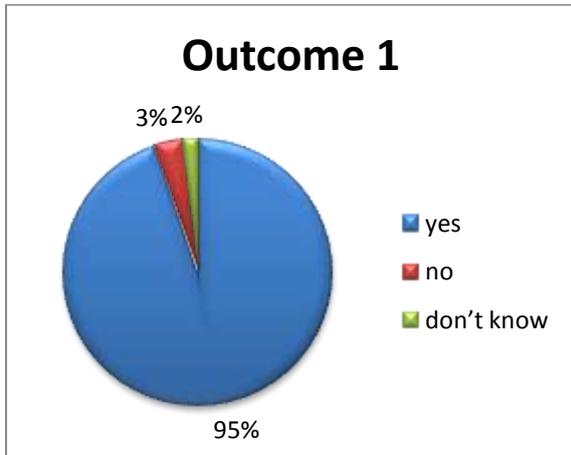- Handout – Architectural drawing

Learning Outcomes

This session served to:

- Increase the knowledge and understanding of full scale architectural drawings

- Increase participant skills through the design appraisal of an architectural drawing (in part)

Results Analysis

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

- Do you know more about reading plans and drawings?

- Did you feel more confident to read plans and drawings?

- Do you know more about design appraisal of plans and drawings?

- Do you feel more confident to appraise the design elements of plans and drawings?

Outcome 1

Pie chart: yes 95%, no 3%, don't know 2%
Legend: ■ yes ■ no ■ don't know

Outcome 2

Pie chart: yes 95%, no 5%
Legend: ■ yes ■ no ■ don't know

Outcome 3

Pie chart: yes 97%, no 3%
Legend: ■ yes ■ no ■ don't know

Outcome 4

Pie chart: yes 95%, no 5%
Legend: ■ yes ■ no ■ don't know

Access Audits

Session Summary

This session was designed to further increase the knowledge and skills of participants by carrying out an actual 'mini' audit of the training venue and providing recommendations for improvement.

Training Content

- Presentation – Access audits

- Activity – Mini audit

- Handouts – Template audit form
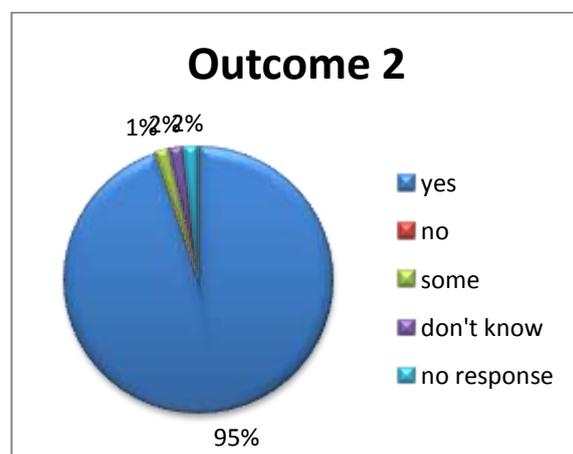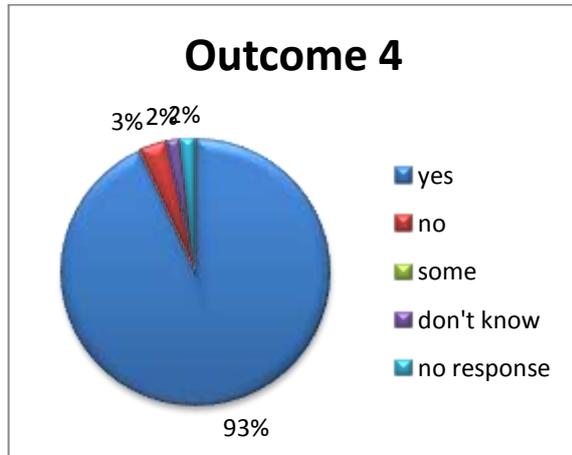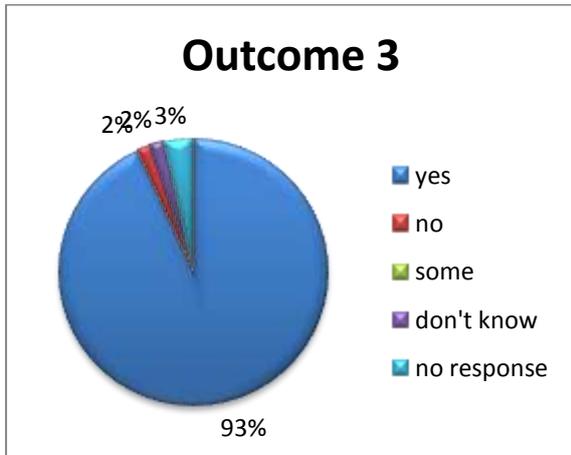
Learning Outcomes

The session served to:

- Increase the knowledge and skills of participants via the task of performing an actual 'mini' audit

- Improve the knowledge and skills of participants via verbal reporting on the audit and making recommendation for improvement (group feedback)

Results Analysis

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

- Do you know more about how to do a brief audits?

- Do you feel your knowledge has increased?

- Do you feel your skills have increased?

- Do you feel more confident about carrying out a brief audit?

Outcome 1

2% 2%

96%

- yes
- no
- some
- don't know
- no response

Outcome 2

1% 2% 2%

95%

- yes
- no
- some
- don't know
- no response

Outcome 3

- yes
- no
- some
- don't know
- no response

2% 2% 3%

93%

Outcome 4

- yes
- no
- some
- don't know
- no response

3% 2% 2%

93%

Findings

Information available at the commencement of the Sustainability Project and the National Inclusion Officer post – available from the Access Panel Audit 2012, indicated that the majority of Panels were in a strong position to move towards becoming independent and self-sustaining. It was anticipated this would be achieved with targeted support provided through the Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15. The training would address the gap analysis derived from the audit.

However, the audit completed in 2012 was the first of its kind and Access Panels had not been asked to provide information at this level prior to this comprehensive audit. In some case assumptions had been made, as opposed to fact, and this information, although informative in its own right, is now considered as an unreliable source of evidence.

The evaluation of activities which form part of the Sustainability Project , and other evaluation undertaken by SDEF since the completion of this survey has resulted in a more informative and robust evidence. This has therefore provided a more accurate baseline on which to plan for further progress in the short, medium and long term. Such planning and delivery

will be provided by SDEF through core business, the Disability Access Officer and the National Inclusion Officer (subject to approved funding).

Continued support will seek to further increase the capacity, knowledge and skills of Access Panel members to help them establish a strong foundation from which they can build upon to ensure sustainability into the future.

Summary Conclusion and Recommendations

There was an increase in attending Access Panels to the Intermediate training session (Phase 2). It was attended by 62 members from 33 Access Panels in Scotland, representing 70% of the existing 47 Panels in Scotland at this time.

In addition to the evidence contained within this report, delegates provided general feedback stating that they found the training informative, useful and learned much from it. More importantly, they continued to value the opportunity to meet with Panel members from other areas of Scotland, where they can share their experiences, discuss local issues and learn from each other. This is particularly valuable in the consideration of diverse need across disability, and the geographical dynamics of Scotland, with rural and urban needs differing greatly.

Many have said that it has given them the confidence to engage in larger projects with a higher profile, for example, Hate Crime projects within schools, delivering disability awareness training, and becoming Third Party Reporting Centres with Police Scotland. There has also been a

number of Access Audits completed by Panels, with some Panels developing local Access Guides, thus promoting inclusion and accessibility in their local communities.

The intention of the programme is to provide training for a number of Panel members, who will then disseminate this information to other volunteers actively involved at a local level, therefore achieving organic growth in the skills and knowledge of all Access Panels members over a period of time. Delegates are confirming they are sharing their increased skills and knowledge and that this is having a marked impact on the activity within their local communities.

It is clear from the discussions and knowledge shared at the training events, that the majority of Access Panels are extremely active in their local areas, participating and contributing to diverse policy and service delivery issues. However, much of this activity remains unreported. Level 3 of the training programme (Nov – Mar) contains a session which addresses the importance of evaluation, recording and monitoring, it is anticipated that reporting will increase as a result of this, and therefore more robust evidence of change will be forthcoming in the future.

It has also become apparent that many Panels have individual members who are contributing an excessive numbers of hours on an unpaid voluntary basis, a position which is largely unknown and currently not obtaining due credit in terms of its valuable contribution.

Similarly, many Panels have a large number of members, but a low level of 'active' members and this has an impact on their ability to be involved in many of the opportunities that are offered to them. Whilst it is the

intention of the Sustainability Programme is to encourage growth and capacity building within Panels, many individuals currently supporting the Panels are already providing the maximum time available to them. This is also limiting their ability to carry out essential activities, such as promoting themselves, developing effective business plans, financial management and reporting, all of which would support and secure a sustainable future.

Access Panels would benefit enormously from concentrating on membership growth and exploring opportunities to obtain business management services, for example secretarial and financial support.

An increase in numbers and more diverse membership, with tasks allocated, would reduce the burden on existing members. It would also encourage activity across a wider remit, encouraging some members to take a more active role. Further to this, business management support would enable increased and more effective business planning, which would provide more robust evidence for funding applications. To this end, the following is suggested to assist Panel growth and sustainability:

- Panel Membership - An increase in the promotion of the Panel and number of active members, including diversity of membership (particularly young people). 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, 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. Panels would benefit from further support to explore good practice in this area.

However, as aforementioned, the current capacity issues within Access Panels is preventing the completion of some critical tasks and therefore potential access to the support and funding which would ensure their sustainability.

It should be stressed this is not a capability issue, but a capacity issue. The Panels are demonstrating that they are healthy, active, positive contributors to their community; however survival will be an issue if these matters are not addressed.

It is recommended that SDEF provide support in the coming year to assist Panels with the areas outlined above. This could be done through a managed programme of training 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 may also wish to consider alternative methods and criteria in relation to Access Panel Grant Funding, as the umbrella organisation, to enable the gaps to be addressed, and to provide solutions which best suit the needs of the Access Panels and the volunteers who support them. This recommendation is made in the knowledge that negotiation would be required with the Scottish Government who provide the funding for Access Panels.

What Next?

Phase 3 of the training programme is underway and will conclude in March 2015. The trainers, content and materials used in this programme have also been evaluated as part of the process. Continual improvement is sought across these areas as required to ensure the best possible output and results.

A full summary report, outlining the full content and results of the training programme will be provided on the completion of Phase 3 in March 2015.

Appendix One

National Inclusion Officer Business Plan – Phase 1 Survey

Background

On completion of the Phase 1 Introductory training sessions, a survey was developed 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 is having a positive impact and making a difference.

The outcomes would be achieved by means of a Sustainability Project, which, in part, would seek the growth of Access Panels in terms of capacity, membership, skills & knowledge.

The Access Panel Training Programme 2014-15 has been developed in such a way that it will enable progressive growth over a period of time. It is being delivered in three phases, introductory, intermediate and advanced; the programme is due for completion in March 2015. As such this appendix provides a summary of evidence gathered from a survey completed at the end of phase 1 of the training programme.

Evaluation of the Outcomes

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

This appendix confirms that learning, but also begins to explore the impact of the learning and whether it is making a difference at a local level. It is worth noting that it was anticipated the level of impact at the end of phase 1 of the training programme would be low, but that this would increase throughout the period of the programme as skills, knowledge and confidence would grow as part of the learning process.

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 5

Independent Living and the Equality Act - 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

Has the learning about the Equality Act, other legislation and Independent Living helped you?

Q1

No
13%

Yes
87%
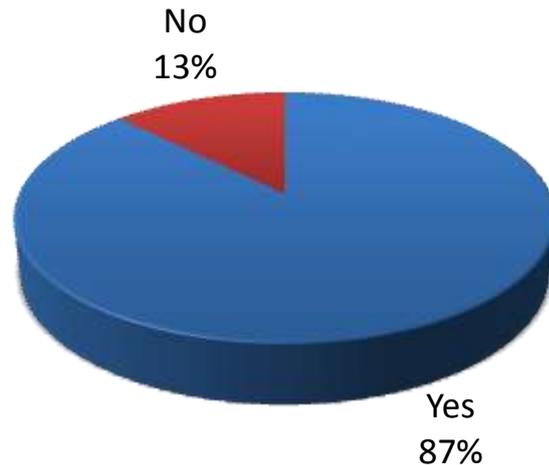
Q2 Open ended questions – results included on pages 32-36

Working with others

Has your engagement with Public bodies or other organisations increased since you did the training?
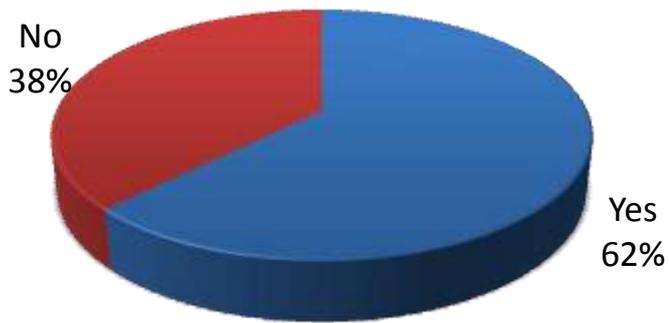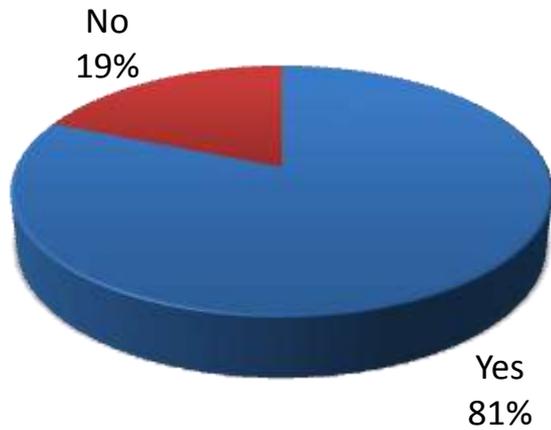
Q3

No
50%

Yes
50%
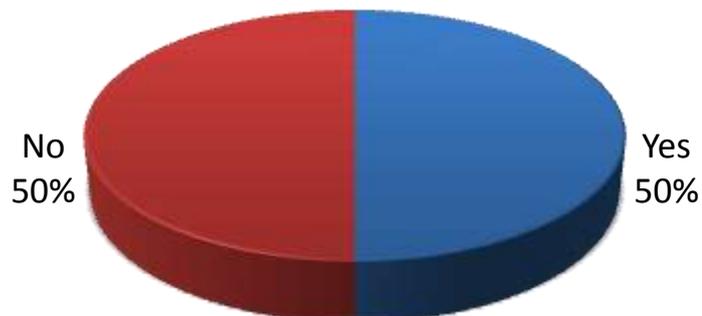
Have you been able to influence any change or improvement for disabled people?

Q4

No 38%

Yes 62%

Do you feel the training will enable you to increase your membership?

Q5

No 19%

Yes 81%

Access Panels

How many members do you currently have?

Q6

- ■ Less than 25
- ■ 25-50
- ■ 51-100
- ■ More than 100
- ■ Don't know
- ■ No Response
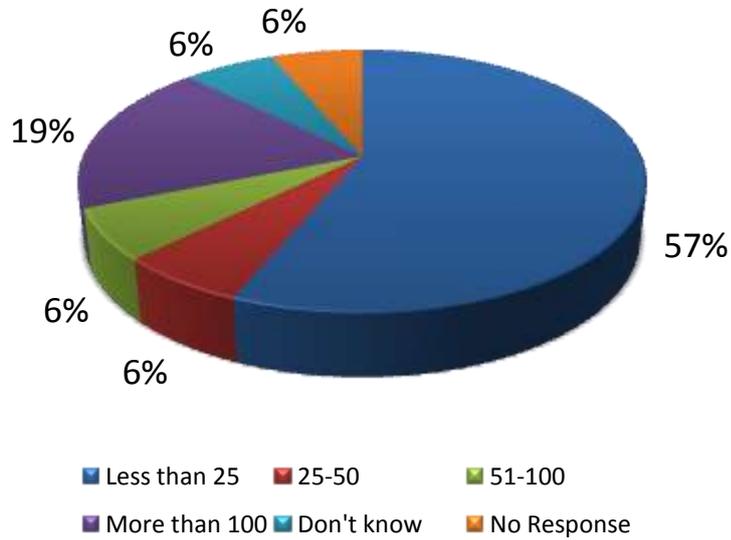
How many NEW members have joined since you attended the Phase 1 training event?

Q7

Has your Panel membership changed? For example, do you have any older, younger or members from an ethnic minority joining your Panel since the training?

Q8

No response 12%

Yes 19%

No 69%
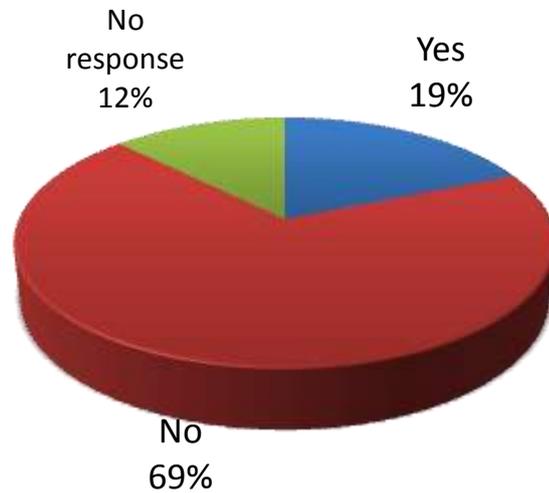
Business Planning

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

Q9

No response 6%

Not yet 6%

No 31%

Yes 57%
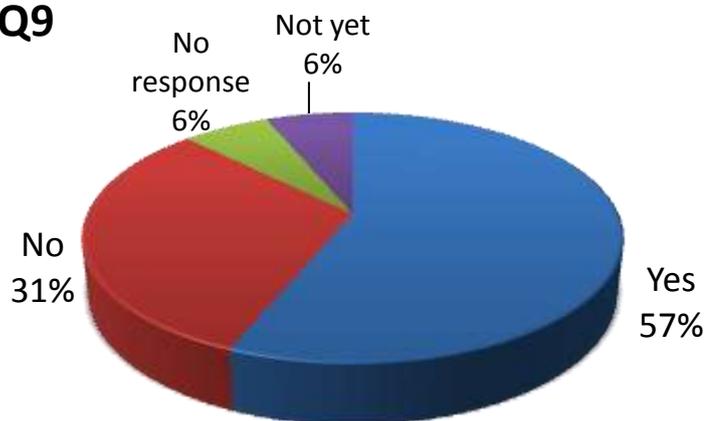
Can we give you more help with business planning?

Q10

No response 6%

Don't know 6%

Yes 38%

No 50%
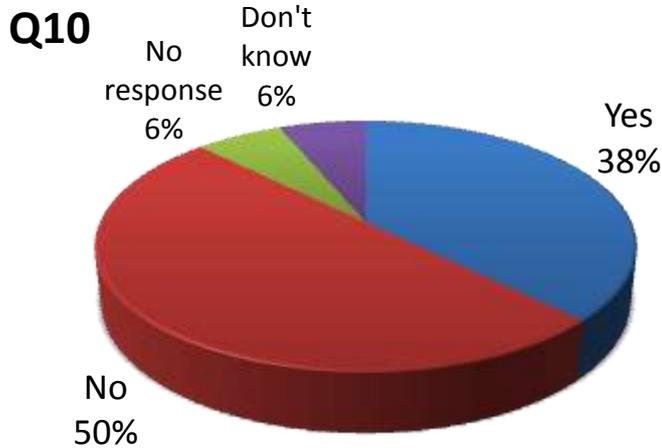
Information Technology and other media

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

Q11

- Develop a PanelTown website
- Link to PanelTown from existing website
- Both/Either
- Have not studied this aspic yet
- Under discussion
- Don't know
- No response

40%

10%

10%

10%

10%

10%

10%
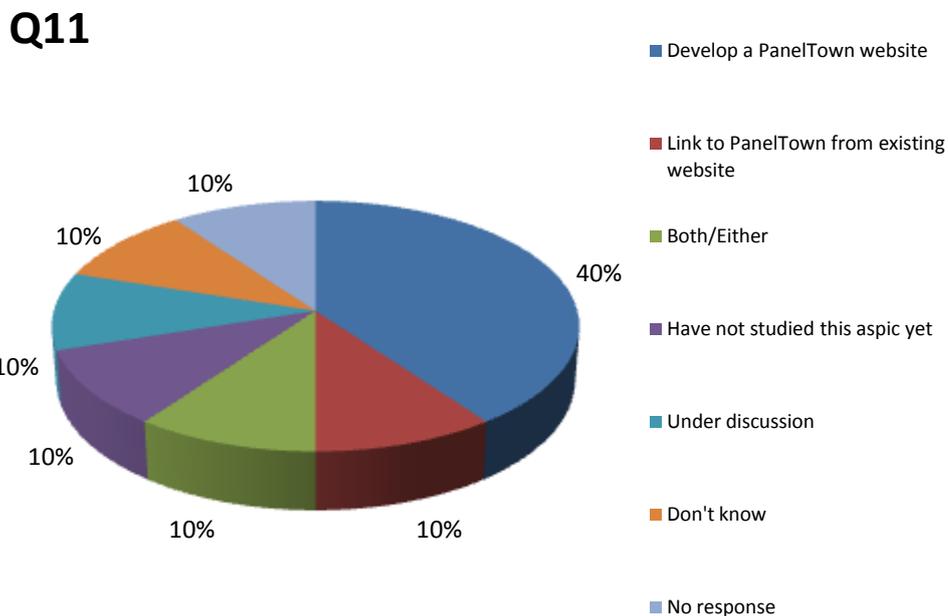
Can we give you more help with website development?

Q12

Unknown 6%
No response 19%
Yes 44%
No 31%
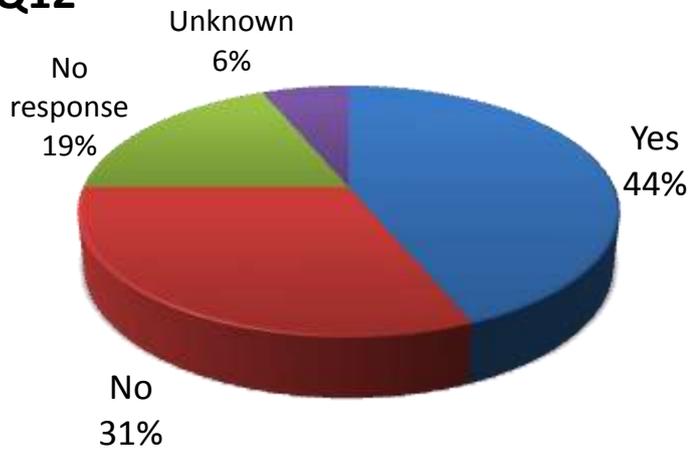
Access Audits

Have you carried out more access audits since you did the training?
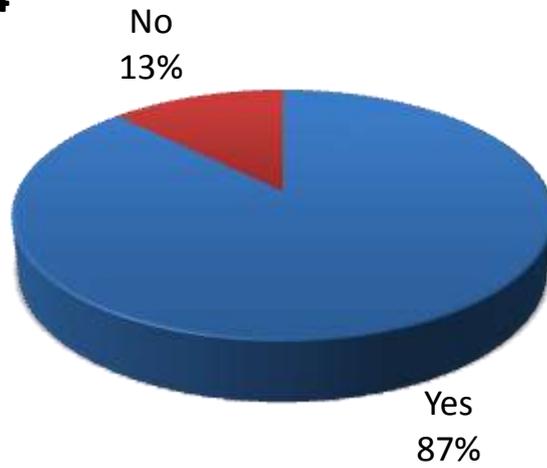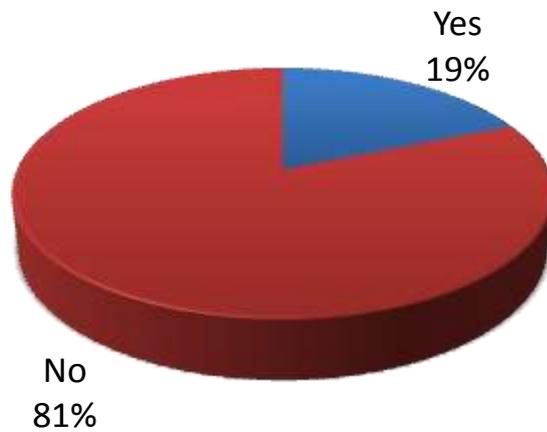
Q13

No 50%
Yes 50%
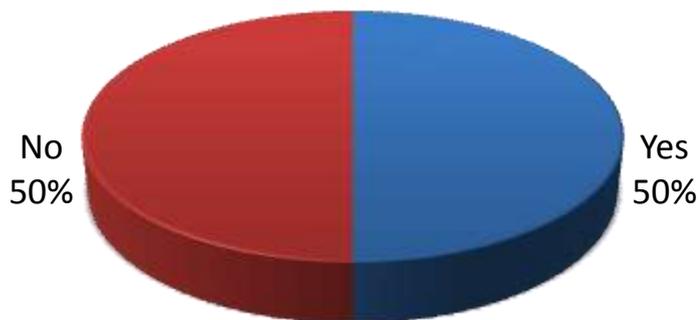
Did the training help you to do this?

Q14

Have you used any of the information on the Living Streets website or other information for the purposes of access auditing?
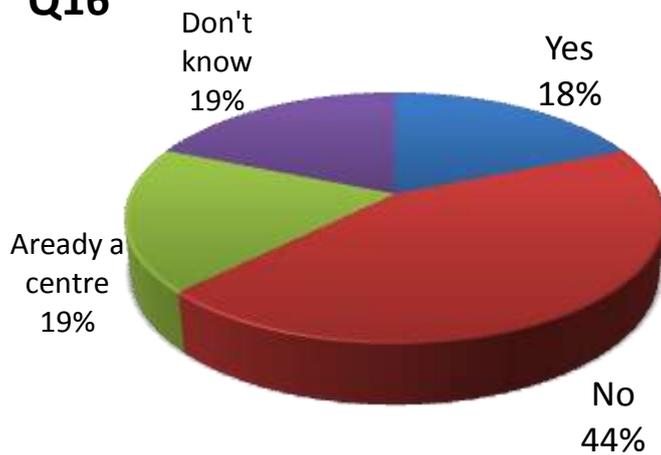
Q15

Third Party Reporting

If you are not already, would your Panel like to become a Third Party Reporting Centre to help with the reporting of hate crime?
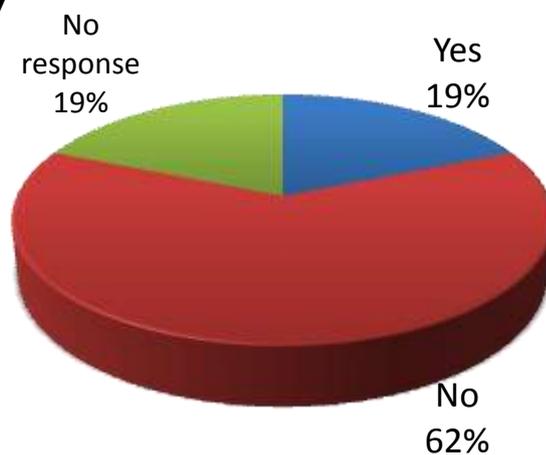
Q16

Don't know 19%

Yes 18%

Aready a centre 19%

No 44%

Promotion and Marketing

Have you added any information to Euan's guide (Accessible venue website)?

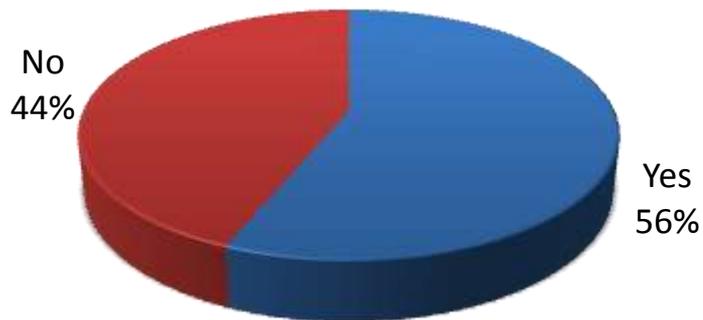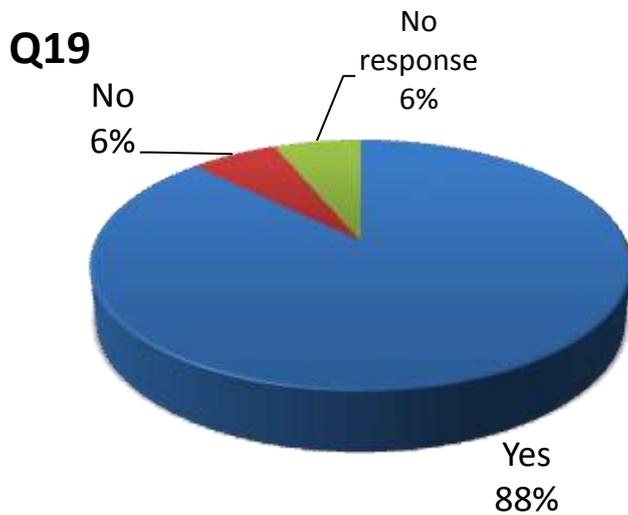**Q17**

No response 19%

Yes 19%

No 62%

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

Q18

No
44%

Yes
56%

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

Q19

No
response
6%

No
6%

Yes
88%

Summary report provided by:

Yvonne Wemyss, National Inclusion Officer

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