

Somerset Access and Inclusion Network Membership Evaluation Report April 2009



Information in blue indicates the results of the 2008 survey for comparison.

688 (777) Membership Evaluation Questionnaires were sent to all individual members in the relevant format (Large print, Braille, Tape etc) those with a visual impairment were invited to complete the exercise by phone.

1 (4) forms have been returned as the member is now deceased and 3 (2) that the user has moved away from the area.

242 (31.1%) (287) (37%) completed questionnaires have been returned.

Of those returned.

Involvement

59 (24%) 69 (24%) had participated in a consultation in the past 12 months

Of those who had not participated the following reasons were given:-

58 (24%) 71 (27%) stated that the date/timings of the event were not suitable

12 (5%) 18 (6%) stated that the subjects were not of interest

53 (22%) 57 (20%) Felt the venue was too far/not accessible

4 (2%) 13 (5%) were not aware that there had been any consultation events

Other reasons given included ill health, too busy, lack of transport, working and only recently joined

General Membership

86 (36%) 93 (32%) wished to be involved in future consultation events (18 of whom have not been involved in the past twelve months)

33 (14%) 29 (10%) wish to be involved in representation

213 (88%) 249 (87%) wish to receive information (I.e. Newsletters)

105 (43%) 113 (39%) wish to attend information events

Are you happy with the amount of involvement you have had with the organisation?

From the questionnaires returned 47 (16%) did not answer this question.

185 (76%) 209 (87%) of those that answered are happy with their amount of involvement

Of the 22 (9%) 31 (13%) who did not say that they were happy some of the following comments were made;

“Have not socialised due to living in a remote area.”

“I will try & make it to meetings/events & get a feel for what goes on.”

“I would like to do more - but work, timing of events & distance to travel have made it difficult.”

“I don't really feel I have anything to offer.”

“I feel I fill this question but you do not listen”

“Unable to get to venues.”

4 comments were made about the organisation focusing on the Taunton area.

Do you feel you have been discriminated against when using any of our services/facilities?

6 (2%) 10 (3%) members felt they have been discriminated against when using any of our services/facilities.

Of the 2% who did feel they had been discriminated against whilst using our services/facilities only one person left a comment;

“Just because I don't know where to go! In the beginning I attended meetings in the centre of Taunton.”

This comment received does not directly constitute discrimination.

Contacting the organisation

69 (29%) 90 (31%) members had made contact with the office in the past 12 months

Of these

52 (75%) 65 (83%) made contact by phone, 16 (7%) 21 (24%) in writing and 13 (5%) 17 (19%) by email. A further 12 (5%) 13 (14%) had contacted the office in person.

59 (86%) 63 (70%) of those contacting the office found it easy to find the contact details.

8 12 said that they did not find it easy to find the telephone contact details.

For those making contact by phone;

Of the 62 people that answered this question;

59 (95%) 69 (88%) state that the phone was answered quickly and efficiently. For those who did not think the phone was answered quickly and efficiently, no comments were left.

In response to the question “Were you happy with the manner in which you were dealt with” 0 (0%) 1 (1%) people have stated that they were not happy. The remaining 62 (100%) 68 (99%) were happy.

Of the 63 people that answered this question;

61 (97%) 64 (82%) felt that SAIN were able to answer their query. 62 (98%) 68 (87%) were happy with the quality of information they were given. No comments were left for those who had not answered “yes”. 0 (0%) 33 (11%) members stated that we had signposted them to someone who was able to help when we had not been able to.

Newsletter

From the questionnaires returned 17 (31) failed to answer this question.

220 (98%) 246 (96%) of those that answered felt that the Networker is a useful publication.
211 (96%) 240 (94%) liked the layout and appearance of the newsletter.

Do you feel it is published frequently enough?

27 (11%) 36 (12.5%) members failed to answer this question. 207 (96%) 237 (94%) of those that did answer feel it is published frequently enough.

1 (6) members feel it should be published at least monthly and 1 (2) member feels it is published too frequently

Other comments relating to the newsletter included;

"I love reading it."

"Because some of the items get a bit outdated by the time it's received."

"Not enough info on gardening - such as is there a voluntary organisation to help with gardening."

143 (59%) 170 (59%) would like to see more articles on members experiences

137 (57%) 166 (58%) would like to see details on events and what's on

85 (35%) 102 (36%) would like space for classified adverts

123 (51%) 140 (49%) would like to see more reader's comments and letters

Comments connected to the content of the Networker included

"Information on Drug Abuse & Serious Mental Health Issues"

"Something to advertise about mobility equipment etc. as have a scooter wish I had never bought, places that are disability friendly etc."

"Print ink is strong for those with chemical sensitivities. Offer to make contact to those that have conditions/illness disabilities to be highlighted - send/ring a rep to assist."

"Anything about brain injury associated with vision problems"

"Advert for live wire and maybe they could advertise the networker."

"Crosswords + Word search"

"Advertise things taking place in Crewkerne area as most things take place in Taunton."

"Details of services/equipment"

"It is a good newsletter"

"Problems page with Q&A needs to be done before publication."

"It would be helpful to know about events in advance - often offers info after events are over."

“For sale would be useful - i.e. special needs articles/equipment.”

Website

33 (14%) 27 (9%) respondents have used the SAIN website. Of those 25 (76%) 27 (100%) found the information they were looking for.

5 (2%) 21 (7%) respondents had no access to the internet or a computer.

52 (21%) 50 (17%) respondents felt that there should be more local information

34 (14%) 39 (14%) would like to see more national information

41 (17%) 39 (14%) would like to see information on holidays

30 (12%) 25 (9%) respondents felt a chat forum for members was a good idea

Other comments relating to the internet included

Information on blue badge for large scooter parking before pedestrians' access to shop - i.e. partial disablement.

More help/advice for carers' in coping - especially for someone suddenly disabled as the results of a road crash, sudden illness etc.

Has just got a computer and will start using sight from now onwards.

How to get answers - not recorded messages. More efficiency from the authorities & paid people instead of expecting everything from the volunteer section.

More info on those obscure benefits which we seldom hear about.

More information on how we can find paid employment. I have not had much luck.

Many commented that they had 'no computer'

Other Areas

Areas that members would like to see us concentrate on the future and general comments include

Monitoring Information

Out of our strategic priorities for the next five years; the following results were given as how we prioritise our activities on in the next year;

80 (33%) would like to see Web based reporting system for issues relating to disabled people (e.g. highways, access, and health services) be given priority

86 (36%) would like to see Employment training for disabled people be given priority

46 (19%) would like to see resources and training to support disabled people in setting up & running their own business be given priority

20 (8%) would like to see training to become a representative of others views be given priority

152 (63%) would like to see Information and advice services be given a priority

53 (22%) would like to see the reporting of hate crimes against disabled people addressed

118 (49%) would like to see work on a regional and national level to promote the needs of disabled people given priority

34 (14%) would like to see Volunteering Opportunities given priority

To the question “what are the three main concerns that affect your daily living as a disabled person”, these were the key responses given;

Access

Discrimination

Employment

Exercise

Fear

Getting to places/Socialising

Highways Issues

Isolation

Lack of independence (feeling a burden to others)

Lack of parking

Loneliness

Not knowing where to get support

Mobility

Money Concerns (Cost of living, keeping bills paid for, and heating in winter)

Quality of life

Time consuming just to carry out typical tasks

Transport

Monitoring Information

Age

6 (2%) 3 (1%) members are between 16 – 29 years old

7 (3%) 9 (3%) members are between 30 – 39 years old

23 (10%) 24 (8%) members are between 40 – 49 years old

29 (12%) 56 (20%) members are between 50 – 59 years old

42 (17%) 42 (15%) members are between 60 – 65 years old

114 (47%) 135 (47%) members are over 65 years old

21 (9%) 13 (5%) members failed to answer this question

Where do you live?

28 (12%) 50 (17%) members live in the Mendip area

61 (25%) 60 (21%) members live in Sedgemoor area

59 (24%) 65 (23%) members live in South Somerset

50 (21%) 59 (21%) members live in Taunton Deane

21 (9%) 29 (10%) members live in West Somerset

23 (10%) 18 (6.2%) members failed to answer this question

Do you consider yourself disabled?

40 (17%) 40 (14%) members said they were not disabled or have left this question blank
 202 (83%) 247 (86%) members said they do consider themselves disabled

Gender

97 (40%) 123 (43%) members are male
 128 (53%) 150 (52%) members are female
 13 (5%) 9 (5%) members failed to answer this question

Transgender

2 (1%) 3 (1%) members identified themselves as transgender

Religion/Faith

176 (73%) 215(75%) members are Christian
 1 (0.4%) 1 (0.3%) member is Hindu
 0 (0%) 1 (0.3%) member is Jewish
 2 (1%) (0%) are Buddhist
 22 (9%) 35 (12%) members have no religion
 9 (4%) 11 (4%) members identified themselves as another religion
 29 ((12%) 21 (7%) members failed to answer this question

Sexual Orientation

1(0.4%) 2 (0.7%) members identified themselves as bi sexual
 1(0.4%) 1 (0.3%) member identified themselves as gay
 164 (68%) 193 (67%) members identified themselves as heterosexual
 1 (0.4%) 1 (0.3%) member identified themselves as a lesbian
 75 (31%) 89 (31%) members failed to answer this question

Ethnicity

217 258 (90%) members identified themselves as White (British)
 2 3 (1%) members identified themselves as White (Irish)
 3 2 (0.7%) members identified themselves as White (other cultural background)
 1 (0.4%) 0% members identified themselves as Other ethnic group
 18 19 (7%) failed to answer this question

In summary

Membership of SAIN has reduced during the year, mainly due to an exercise to maintain the validity of the information we hold. We are due to distribute the Quality Of Life Survey again this year where membership forms will accompany the survey. We do usually see an increase in membership when this survey goes out. We have a number of activities planned on the SAIN work plan to develop the number of individual members, including working with local colleges to develop the youth representation.

From the responses received this year, there has been no change in the percentage that have participated in events, this still stands at 24%. We appreciate that it would be nice to see

this figure increase further. A slightly higher percentage had responded this time to say that the venue was too far/not accessible (22% instead of 20%); we must therefore continue to evaluate the location of suitable venues.

It was encouraging to note that such a high percentage of members were happy with their level of involvement with the organisation at 76%. This figure has decreased from 87% last year.

Concerning our strategic priorities, the highest response related to Information and advice services where 63% said they considered this to be the most important area for us to focus our activities on in the next year, followed by work on a regional and national level to promote the needs of disabled people (49%). The results from this part of the survey will be used to inform our business planning process in October.

We will also be using the survey results to identify other methods of involvement that may encourage people to get involved with the organisation in different ways. This includes the review and upgrade of our website which will take place later this year and training opportunities for disabled people.

Again, comments were made this year that we focus mainly on the Taunton area. One reason for this comment could be due to the two high profile forums that we run in the area; Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group and the Sedgemoor Disability Forum. These are held either at our offices for the Taunton forum and in the Sedgemoor district for the Sedgemoor Forum. For other events we make a considerable effort to reach the other districts such as Mendip, West Somerset and South Somerset and attempt to move around the county each year to make it fair to all.

One event was held in the Mendip area (Glastonbury) during the period, however concerns were raised on the suitability of the venue for future use and a letter has been sent to the venue in question.

We continue to work with Mendip Community Support to further establish links in this area and attended the Mendip Forum in March with our display stand. We will also be attending the Mendip Disability Forum in September to give a presentation on the organisation and its work.

Again, this year we have seen a high percentage of members (98%) respond to say that the networker is a useful publication. We will be looking to expand this publication in terms of the numbers of people it reaches and the advertising within it.

There was also an increase in the number of people that had used the website (+5%) this year.

An additional section was added to the survey this year to allow people the opportunity to supply their contact details to enable us to respond. From the 242 received, 102 people supplied their contact details requesting a response which has been actioned accordingly.