

Receive our Networker Magazine Only

Membership Evaluation Report 2013 – For members who receive the Networker Magazine

389 questionnaires were sent out. 64 (16.5%) responses were received.

Of those returned;

Newsletter

62 (96.9%) of those that answered think it is a useful publication.

60 (93.8%) liked the layout and appearance of the newsletter.

57 (89.1%) said they thought it was published frequently enough.

Other comments concerning the newsletter:

Frequency: "Think it should be monthly"/"Published monthly"/"I would like 'Networker' to be a monthly magazine. I would be willing to pay a small contribution."/

Information/Content:

"A monthly update on how the current financial crisis and benefits cuts are affecting local people".

"Advice on hearing problems including telephone hearing problems"/

"A 'for sale' section"/"For sale/wanted disabled equipment"/"Numbers for second hand equipment/scooters etc."/ "I would like to see an article 'for sale' page"

"More medical adverts and more information on medical equipment"

"Somewhere where parents can meet up locally. Single mother and son Autistic"/"Love to meet other parents/carers in same situation. Very isolated and need to meet people who understand and share"/"List of clubs / Social gatherings"/"More information about clubs, societies and charities for disabled people, advice on welfare benefits

"Hints on making life easier with a disability - e.g. for deafness, the lip reader tutor advised never ask 'shall we go yes or no' . the answer will be double-barrelled and for a deafened person no answer at all. Just ask 'shall we go'. Been a great help."

"More information about Fybromyalgia. Support groups, contact with others".

"More stories from other readers, information/problems associated with Dyslexia and Dyscalculia"

"Information on accessible days out, readers column, maybe a crossword - make it more of a magazine."

"Some true stories about it's readers, problems and how things were put right"

Suggestions in Wilts/Dorset/Somerset for accessible days out, particularly in wildlife centres and gardens, which are accessible to those in wheelchairs

"More interests in my area - Street/Glastonbury. Lack of transport."/ "More on Mendip

area"

"Clear simple language so those of us with learning difficulties can understand"

Other comments

"Why do disabled people have to pay parking? Why is it made so difficult for us to park close to shops?"

As per the main membership evaluation, members were given the opportunity to express if they would like to be involved with other aspects of the organisation.

Membership

1 (1.6%) person said they would like to be more involved with consultation work / discussion groups / forums

7 (10.9%) people said they would like to be more involved with completing questionnaires

2 (3.1%) people said they would like to be more involved in Training

Where contact details have been provided membership records have been updated.

Have we discriminated against you in anyway? (This could involve our staff, when receiving information

1 (1.6%) Felt they have been discriminated against.

No further information was supplied.

Contacting the organisation;

6 (9.4%) people had contacted Compass Disability Network in the last year

1 (1.6%) had contacted Compass Disability Network in person

4 (6.2%) had contacted Compass Disability Network by phone

0 (0%) had contacted Compass Disability Network in writing

2 (3.1%) had contacted Compass Disability Network by email

Website

41 (64.1%) people said they have access to a computer

18 (28.1%) people had used the Compass Disability Network website.

16 (25%) people said they found the information they were looking for

Other comments regarding the website;

"I will wait and see how the next issues cover what I need as a person who is unable to journey to meetings"

"Accessibility options to work. Less jumbled - information about projects and services aren't reader friendly unless you have previous knowledge. Contact us

information is hard to find - should be at bottom or top of screen in an easy to find”

"Information and help regarding welfare changes/assessments"

"Help to fill in social security/job seeker plus"

"Places to visit."

"Better coverage of local events"

Social Media

14 (21.9%) people said they used facebook

0 (0%) people said they use Twitter

9 (14.1%) people were aware of Compass Disability Services on facebook/twitter

Other Areas

Members were asked to select the three areas they would like Compass to concentrate on in the next financial year from our Strategic priorities;

12 (18.8%) would like Compass Disability Services to develop in line with the needs of users.

14 (21.9%) would like Compass Disability Services to work alongside the national agenda for disability and develop services in line with this.

16 (25%) would like Compass to involve users in decisions and policy development at District, County and regional level and seek and promote opportunities for disabled people to express views.

14 (21.9%) would like Compass to develop as a Centre for Independent Living

33 (51.6%) would like Compass to become established as a provider of information for disabled people in Somerset.

9 (14.1%) would like Compass to provide educational opportunities to enable disabled people to enhance their quality of life.

15 (23.4%) would like Compass to actively expand services to provide further opportunities/services for disabled people

9 (14.1%) would like Compass to explore the issues connected to disability hate crime, raising awareness of the existence of hate crime in Somerset.

26 (40.6%) would like Compass to actively promote the need for physical access to premises and services within Somerset.

8 (12.5%) would like Compass to look to adapt services, to meet the changing needs of the personalisation agenda and the transformation of social care.

15 (23.4%) would like Compass to actively look to change the negative attitudes and behaviours that disabled people can face.

15 (23.4%) would like Compass to actively support carers to have a life outside of

caring including those who do not choose to identify themselves as carers.

9 (14.1%) would like Compass to develop opportunities for disabled people and carers to play a full and active part in society.

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

Access- "Access"/"Physical access"/"Access for wheelchairs"/"Access"/"Roads and paths not wheelchair friendly"

Attitudes/Behaviours - "Unhelpful adults"/"Expectations of others to do my work"/"Lack of consideration locally for the elderly"/"People being derogatory because of my Motability vehicle"/"Changing attitudes to disabled people - lazy, scroungers etc"/"Difficulty making people realise I take longer to get ready to do something than they would."/ "Social model" understanding of disability by others (mostly the lack of it!)/ "Not understood by other people"/"The public's perception of how my disability affects my daily life".

Benefits - "Whether I will have my benefits reduced/removed"/"Benefits"

Caring - "Too dependant on my carer (husband)"/

Employment - "Understanding of colleagues and bosses in work, little understanding - hidden disability. Also same with friends"

Health - "GPs understand medical problems but have no idea about living with disability"/"Health problems which affect mobility and independent living"/"Difficulty using hands"

Independence - "My independence"/"Independence"

Impairments/conditions - "Hearing disability"/"Depression"/"Aphasia"/"MS"/"Have Rheumatoid Arthritis. Find things difficult to do as hands, feet and arms are badly affected."/ "Amputation of right leg"/"Walking disability"/"Stroke"/"Primary progress MS"/"Husband diabetic, registered blind enough has some sight, so unable to help me very much. I suffer physical disabilities."/ "Osteo-arthritis"

Information - "More info in above area Bath and North West Somerset"/"Information you get everyday is too complicated for people with learning difficulties"/"Information and communication"/ "Access to information on facilities available in cities etc. e.g. transport to Disability Somerset 2013 from Yeovil."

Isolation - "Loneliness"

Money - "Money"/"Not enough money"/"Financial problems - making ends meet"/"Insufficient funding to cover own requirements"/"Whether I will be able to pay for my heating bills after this cold winter."/

Mobility - "Lack of Mobility"/"Getting around as bed ridden/wheelchair"/"The ability to maintain mobility with my car"/"General mobility in all joints etc"/"Getting out and

about"

Pain - "Control of my pain to be able to function"/"Coping with pain that I suffer from"/"My own understanding of my illness and the fatigue that comes with it - I find it difficult to get out of bed some days, and often don't bother."/"Dependance on painkillers throughout day"

Parking - "Difficult parking in Yeovil close enough to shops"/"Parking across access points"

Services - "I think there should be more activity centres the under 60 can go to as there is none in Somerset"/"Waiting for council to convert bedroom/bathroom now for 1 year"/ "Suitable equipment for sight, wheelchair and home use"/"I may need a new central heating boiler, but Warm Front have stopped giving grants"/ "Having the right equipment to assist with learning"/"The continued need to monitor my disabled daughters educational needs are met correctly"/"The steady reduction of services that have been increasingly necessary."/ "Medical services"/"NHS wheelchair supply"/"Feeling of pursecution from government agencies and lack of trust from them for running my own care."/ "Very little support for people with so called 'mild' learning difficulties"

Transport - "Drop down buses in the Radstock/Mid Norton area"/"Transport"/"Inability to travel to shop beyond the range of my wheelchair"/"Getting around - transport"/"Lack of affordable transport"/ "Lack of transport"/"Restrictive transport to venues for leisure activities, art etc plus days out".

Other - "Weather conditions"/"Not being able to drive"/"Doors closing on my previous life - unable to do so much"/"Unable to cook or clean our apartment"/"Getting help I need"/ "Having to find relatives or friends to take me to appointments"/ "Difficulty in making Taunton Deane understand I need to know in advance when anyone calling to my home"/"Shopping"/"Flexibility r.e. time/stamina"/"Inability to maintain my garden as it needs"/"Coping with changes to routine and ways of doing things."/ "Some times getting frustrated"/"General drop in living standards"/ "Disabled people to test areas that say they are wheelchair friendly, which is often not the case"

Monitoring Information

Age

2 (3.1%)	members are 16-29 years old
1 (1.6%)	members are 30-39 years old
1 (1.6%)	members are 40-49 years old
16 (25%)	members are 50-59 years old
8 (12.5%)	members are 60-65 years old
35 (54.7%)	members are Over 65 years old
1 (1.6%)	members failed to answer this question

Where do you live?

8 (12.5%)	members live in the Mendip area
2 (3.1%)	members live outside the county
18 (28.1%)	members live in the Sedgemoor area
19 (29.7%)	members live in the South Somerset area
12 (18.8%)	members live in the Taunton Deane area
1 (1.6%)	members live in the West Somerset area
4 (6.2%)	members failed to answer this question

Do you consider yourself disabled?

4	members said they were not disabled or have left this question blank
60 (93.8%)	members said they do consider themselves disabled

Gender

22 (34.4%)	members are male
36 (56.2%)	members are female
0 (0%)	members identified themselves as transgender
6 (9.4%)	members failed to answer this question

Religion/Faith

1 (1.6%)	member is Buddhist
48 (75%)	members are Christian
0 (0%)	members are Hindu
0 (0%)	members are Jewish
0 (0%)	members are Muslim
9 (14.1%)	members are No Religion
2 (3.1%)	members are Other
0 (0%)	members are Sikh
4 (6.2%)	members failed to answer this question

Sexual Orientation

0 (0%)	members identified themselves as bi-sexual
1 (1.6%)	member identified themselves as gay
43 (67.2%)	members identified themselves as heterosexual
1 (1.6%)	member identified themselves as lesbian
19 (29.7%)	members failed to answer this question

Ethnicity

1 (1.6%)	member identified themselves as Other Ethnic Group
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59 (92.2%)	members identified themselves as White (British)
1 (1.6%)	member identified themselves as White (Other Cultural Background)
2 (3.1%)	members failed to answer this question

Summary

It is pleasing to note that 97% of our members feel that the networker is a useful publication and that 94% liked the layout and appearance of the magazine.

As per the main membership evaluation where members asked for specific information on topics such as deaf issues, members have asked for more information on hearing problems and conditions such as Fybromyalgia. An article was published in the April edition of the Networker on Fybromyalgia and we will continue to cover specific impairments and conditions in future publications.

Social Clubs and information on where people can meet locally was also requested along with information on accessible days out. Compass Carers magazine will be publishing details on social clubs and future publications of the Networker will contain some information on clubs.

It is not our intention to include crosswords in order to include as much information as possible to members. However, we will seek to include information on accessible days out.

One person commented the need for clear and simply language for people with learning difficulties. We try and make our publication suitable for all members and put information in text boxes to isolate data from content. Any further work would require a separate publication which we will consider in future planning and development.

In terms of the frequency 89% said they felt the Networker is published frequently enough, however some commented that they would like it published monthly. In order to do this we would need to charge a monthly subscription to cover the publishing costs. This could be investigated further in future evaluations.

Members have requested a monthly update on the financial crisis and benefit cuts. We have published articles in the past and will continue to provide updates in future. Where changes can be frequent information may be out of date quite quickly, however we will investigate a regular social media update.

Advertisements from sellers of equipment are welcome but are chargeable.

Members would like to see more letters from disabled people which we always

encourage, this needs to be highlighted and perhaps publicised more specifically in advance when articles are requested.

One of the aims of the Networker is to outline the services of Compass Disability Services. In the latest edition of Networker nine other organisations were also included. Associate Members are contacted each month to give them a chance to contribute.

Regarding a 'For Sale' items section of the publication. As the magazine is currently bi-monthly we do not feel that the publication is frequent enough to support a section for this at the moment.

Regarding the website, the responses were very similar to the main membership evaluation where less than half of those who have internet access use the Compass Disability Network website. This highlights the need for more promotion and links to our website in our communication. Specific comments regarding the layout of the website will be considered as part of the audits carried out.

In terms of future developments the results were the same as the main membership evaluation where the top three areas were as follows; 52% said they would like Compass Disability Services to become established as a provider of information for disabled people in Somerset. 41% said they would like Compass to actively promote the need for physical access to premises and services in Somerset and lastly, 25% said they would like Compass to involve users in decisions and policy development at District, County and regional level and seek and promote opportunities for disabled people to express views.

Compass Disability Services will be organising Disability Somerset for the third year running in September 2013 which will provide members with an opportunity to access information providers and services of interest.

The Networker is also a useful way of providing information to disabled people and carers in Somerset. This is now available in most Doctors Surgeries and Hospitals and significant number of public events will be attended during the coming year to promote the publication and our services to additional people.

The organisation now has a Volunteer Coordinator who's role will be to re-establish the Voice and Influence Project to ensure that we fully explore and utilise the representation opportunities that exist in Somerset for disabled people and carers.

Our members concerns

Regarding our members concerns which affect their daily living;

The concern over welfare reforms was highlighted by our members this year. Articles have been submitted in the Networker magazine regarding this and we will continue to ensure we keep members updated on this and the organisations that may be available to help.

One issue was raised regarding information on transport for Disability Somerset 2013. Clear information on transport to the exhibition will be highlighted in the Networker in advance so that members are aware of how to get there. Unfortunately we are not funded to provide free transport to this event, but are working with transport operators in the area to ensure that services go into the exhibition.

We will also use the concerns in the planning of our future disability forums and groups and invite speakers who may be able to address the concerns raised.