



**Disability
Equality
Scotland**

Welcome to the latest issue of **OPEN DOOR**, the quarterly magazine from Disability Equality Scotland.

OPEN DOOR

Disability News and Views for Disabled People Across Scotland

Spotlight: Access Panel Conference 2018!



Your Disability, Your Voice, Your Scotland...

Disability Equality Scotland is a member led organisation so we want to hear from you, our valued members!

Get in touch with us with your disability news by email at: admin@disabilityequality.scot or by calling on **01259 272064**.

Page Number

- 2 Contents
- 3 CEO's Welcome, Introduction from Morven Brooks

Inform

- 4 Meet the Team
- 5-7 Introducing Our New Directors
- 8 About Us
- 9 Investing In Access
- 10 Marissa completes Marathon
- 11 Update from Emma Scott, Equality Projects Manager
- 12 Hate Crime on Public Transport Workshop
- 13 Transport in Rural Areas Workshop
- 14 Young Disabled People Roadshow
- 15 Disability and the Arts Roadshow
- 16 Accessible Travel Hub
- 17 Inclusive Communication Hub
- 18 Inclusive Design Hub
- 19 Disability Safety Hub
- 20 Easy Read Service

Your Say on Disability

- 21 Your Say On Disability
- 22 Consultation: Social Isolation and Loneliness
- 23 RBS Branch Closures
- 24 Ban on Advertising Boards
- 25-26 Weekly Poll Roundup – April to June 2018

Support

- 27-28 deafscotland – In conversation with Janis McDonald
- 29-30 Access at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018
- 31 Disability Snowsport UK

Access Panel Network

- 32-39 Access Panel Network Scotland News

CEO'S Welcome

It is my pleasure to welcome you again to our quarterly magazine 'Open Door'.

It has been a busy year so far for Disability Equality Scotland.

We have held many successful events across the country, from talking to young disabled people about their experiences with Play Alloa, to discussing the ongoing barriers with accessible transport. The articles in this issue will provide you with more insight into the discussions held.



Our weekly polls are a tremendous source of data and insight into the issues still experienced by many disabled people in Scotland. We have been using this information to write to Ministers and MSPs to highlight the issues and so far, have held a couple of meetings with MSPs to discuss the issues further.

As a member, you joined us to tell us your views about accessibility and how you are affected. Please take a moment when you next receive a weekly poll to tell us your thoughts. We aim to improve accessibility and, one way to do this is for you to tell us what the issue is and the potential solution.

There are many interesting articles in this issue, providing you with an update of our project work areas as well as providing you with information from other disability organisations across Scotland.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and as always, we welcome your feedback.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Morven Brooks'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Morven Brooks, Chief Executive Officer

Inform



Morven Brooks - Chief Executive Officer

Morven works with the team to ensure that Disability Equality Scotland promotes the value of and represents the opinions of disabled people. Morven provides a strategic and operational understanding of access and inclusion in Scotland including establishing an evidence base that informs policy and best practice.



Emma Scott - Equality Projects Manager

Emma is responsible for managing a broad number of projects and initiatives. Working closely with the CEO to implement the organisations's strategy to work towards social inclusion for Disabled People in Scotland.



Maeve Bain - Senior Administrator

Maeve is responsible for the administration of our finances, book-keeping and payments, as well as supporting in other areas such as minute-taking and regular Board related duties.



James Davidson - Equality Projects Assistant

James is responsible for sharing and promoting information such as news, events and consultations to our members in a clear and accessible manner. This includes producing our monthly newsletter and quarterly magazine, 'Open Door'. James is also responsible for the upkeep and population of all website content.



Ian Buchanan - Access Engagement Officer

Ian's role is to support, develop and promote the Access Panel Network. He regularly travels around Scotland meeting Access Panels and stakeholders to encourage partnership working.



Gillian Smith - Access Administrator

Gillian is our Access Administrator and it is her role to provide administrative support to the Access Engagement Officer and the wider Access Panel Network.

Inform

Introducing Our New Directors

This year brings some new faces to Disability Equality Scotland! We have recently co-opted five new Directors to our Board, rounding this group of incredible advocates to a total of eleven.

The skills, knowledge and experience on our Board range from:

- HR Management
- Strategy Planning
- Business Management (including in the charity sector)
- Volunteer Management
- Project Management
- Change Management
- Risk Management
- Finance
- Corporate Governance
- Access Panel involvement
- Equalities
- Deafness
- Spinal Injuries
- Personal lived experience as a disabled person
- Accessibility and Inclusive Design
- Ambassadorial Experience
- Previous and current experience working at senior level within public, private and third sector organisations
- Fundraising

All our Directors have a passion for improving equality and accessibility for disabled people in Scotland. Details of Director's profiles are featured on the next two pages.



Inform

Linda Bamford – Convener

After 13 years as a frontline paramedic in Glasgow, Linda moved into management, holding various senior management positions within the Ambulance Service for a further 15 years. Linda has a passion for equality and doing the right thing and strives through her work and volunteering to bring about transformational changes that will assist everyone to lead their lives as they choose.

Dorothy McKinney – Vice Convener

Dorothy has over 35 years' experience in Human Resources and has fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Dorothy is also a Registered Mediator with the Scottish Mediation Network and undertakes pro bono support for Peer Mediators in local schools.

Colin Millar – Treasurer

Colin is currently the Chief Executive Officer (Executive Director) of the Scottish Personal Assistant Employers Network (SPAEN). As a young child, Colin had Legg-Calvé Perthes Disease, a disease which significantly impaired his mobility and independence, an experience he draws on daily as he now seeks to support others to live full, active and inclusive lives and fulfil their potential and ability

Susan Fulton – Director

Susan is a local authority Chartered Surveyor with a background in the construction industry, diversifying into the field of accessibility in 2004. Susan obtained her MSc in Accessibility and Inclusive Design from the University of Salford; is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS); successfully joined their Inclusive Environment Consultant (IEC) scheme and is a consultant member of the National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC).

Carolyn Griffiths – Director

Carolyn has worked in the public and private sectors: 23 years with Barclays Bank and 12 years in the public sector with a Local Authority and is currently working in the NHS. Her areas of expertise include human resource development, organisational development, project management, consultation and engagement. Carolyn also has a strong sense of fairness and equality.

Inform

Janis McDonald – Director

Janis is currently the Chief Officer of deafscotland. Janis has a nursing background and has worked in the Public and Third Sectors. She has thematic specialties covering: addictions, homelessness, equalities and deafness. Janis is now particularly interested in quality and standards, governance and communication equality.

Steven McGhee – Director

Steven has spent the last 11 years living with a complete C3 spinal cord injury, leaving him with no movement from the neck down. This situation has not stopped Steven from ensuring he stays an active member of society. Before his injury Steven was a manager for one of Glasgow's largest retailers with responsibility for over 200 employees, budgeting payroll and stock control.

Kenny Milne – Director

Kenny has been mainly employed in various management structures at different levels including site manager on a busy pharmaceutical site. Whilst employed as site manager Kenny had an accident at work leading him to suffer major damage to his lower back. Kenny has since taken up various volunteering roles including chairing The Three Towns Disability Forum.

Maureen Morrison – Director

Maureen has experience working at board level gained through being a Director with Spinal Injuries Scotland for six years before taking up the position of interim General Manager. The skills Maureen brings to the Board is the ability to connect and develop partnerships and fundraising.

Louise Orr – Director

Louise is a Volunteer Development Officer at the Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface. She is also a trustee with Home-Start Clackmannanshire. Louise brings previous board experience and an understanding of the sector to help support us to ensure good governance for volunteers.

Scott Stewart – Director

As manager for Disability Information Scotland, an organisation supporting disabled people, Scott is aware of the challenges experienced by disabled people, their families and carers and constantly strives to break down the barriers that hinder the opportunities of disabled people in our society.



Inform

About Disability Equality Scotland

We are a national charity working to achieve full access and inclusion for disabled people.

We promote access in its widest sense, including access to the built and natural environment and access to the same opportunities as are enjoyed by others in our communities, promoting a life of dignity, respect and independence.

Our aim is for every disabled person to have the opportunity to participate in a fulfilling life. We represent the views of individuals with any type of impairment, as well as disability organisations and groups who share our values.

Our Vision...

A better life for people living with disabilities.

Our Mission...

Our mission has always been to increase awareness and knowledge of Access and Inclusion, to improve the lives of disabled people in Scotland.



**Achieving full Access
and Inclusion for
disabled people in Scotland.**

Inform

Investing In Access

My name is Anne-Marie Martin and I am delighted to join the team as the Investing in Access Project Worker. This is an exciting project that provides an excellent opportunity for all types of organisations to begin to lead the way on accessible standards in Scotland.



I come to Disability Equality Scotland as a sessional worker on this project with my previous background in senior management and academia in the third sector and private sector in Arts, Culture and Healthcare in the UK. I have experience from the corporate perspective on the barriers to inclusive building standards and planning, as well as international experience in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, with policy and strategic experience in the UK at board level with volunteer community groups. I am honoured to be working with Disability Equality Scotland on this project and as a disabled person, I am excited to see its progress.

The project will consist of a feasibility study researching the need for a recognised benchmark for accessibility. I will be working closely with Access Panels, local businesses, and public bodies, to outline what is required to achieve a national standard of accessibility. This is a unique and exciting project that brings the opportunity for innovation in Accessibility for those organisations who would like to be involved in the pilot. The outcomes of this project will help to strengthen the viability and sustainability of local disability Access Panels and can be used as a tool to reinforce the outstanding work these panels already achieve.

I am currently getting to know our Access Panels, networking with our stakeholders and identifying potential organisations who would like to be involved in the pilot. I will be holding a launch event at the end of August in the central belt to explain more about the project to local organisations and stakeholders.

To get involved, email me at anne-marie@disabilityequality.scot or call the office on: 01259 27204

Marissa completes marathon for Disability Equality Scotland!



Marissa at the finish line!

In the last Issue of our magazine we brought you news that our former intern, Marissa Schlemmer, had decided to raise funds for us by running the Dundee Marathon, which took place on 15 July 2018.

In January, Marissa joined our team for a 10-week work placement as part of her Masters in Global Health and Management, at the University of Aberdeen. Over the course of the placement, Marissa worked closely with Emma and James to support our work with Transport Scotland. This involved helping to organise and promote transport engagement events in Oban, Stirling and Aberdeen.

Marissa also helped to analyse the findings of each event, creating reports highlighting the barriers that disabled people face when travelling in Scotland. The findings were shared with Transport Scotland and are also featured in the transport related articles in this issue of Open Door and on the Accessible Travel Hub: www.accessibletravel.scot

We are delighted to announce that Marissa completed the Marathon in five hours and raised an incredible £400 that will go towards improving access and inclusion in Scotland.

Marissa commented on her decision to run the Dundee Marathon for Disability Equality Scotland:

“Growing up with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis and Complex Regional Pain Syndrome Type I, I was introduced to so many strong individuals who made me realise that a disability never has to define who you are. Equality for people with every range of ability has been a passion of mine for as long as I can remember.”

We would like to say a huge thank you to Marissa. We're grateful for all her hard work and we wish her the best of luck with her future endeavours!

Inform

Update from Emma Scott, Equality Projects Manager

The last few months have kept me very busy around our work with Transport Scotland, the Accessible Travel Hub, Inclusive Communication and Disability Hate Crime.

Transport Scotland

Work for Transport Scotland has kept me busy over the last quarter. I've attended several meetings with Transport Scotland's Accessibility team as they

welcome new staff and I've been involved in planning their key deliverables over the next few months. Our work with the Accessible Travel Hub, Hate Crime and ongoing consultations will contribute to the Accessible Travel Framework. I'm now planning the next three regional transport events, gathering local people together to talk about the transport issues in their area.



Hate Crime

Together with partners from Transport Scotland, SEStran and Police Scotland we held our first consultation event in Fife on the topic of hate crime on public transport. Two more events are planned in the coming months in West Lothian and Clackmannanshire. I am also working on our latest Hub – the Disability Safety Hub website, gathering content to test with disabled peoples' groups and to get their feedback on what the website should contain. Watch this space for news and updates on the new Hub!

Disability Roadshows

We held interesting disability roadshows in the last quarter. I worked with Play Alloa, a leading provider of supported play for young people with additional support needs, to hear from young disabled people about their experiences, as part of the Scottish Government's Year of Young People. We also worked with the Birds of Paradise Theatre Company which is an accessible arts group, to see a sneak preview of their musical 'My Left Right Foot' before having a discussion about disability and the arts. See more on this on page 15.

Hate Crime on Public Transport Workshop



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

We worked in collaboration with Transport Scotland, SEStran and Police Scotland, to host this event on the topic of Hate Crime on Public Transport. This is the first of three consultation events that are intended to gather feedback on peoples' experiences and perceptions of hate crime on public transport and more specifically to test the idea of introducing a national hate crime charter to which transport providers and passengers would commit. This would act as a national approach to tackling hate crime.

There were 33 participants in total; a mix of disabled people, transport providers and representatives from other equalities organisations.

Presentations

The day began with a presentation from PC Stephanie Rose from Police Scotland, who introduced the topic of 'hate crime'. We then heard from PC Derek Jackson from the British Transport Police (BTP), who spoke of ways in which reports of hate crime incidents can be made using the BTP text number. Ivan Cohen, from People First, an organisation for people with learning disabilities, then spoke of some experiences their members, have encountered on a daily basis. Lastly, Karl Zaczek from Transport Scotland, talked about how this work around hate crime is part of Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework, which is a ten-year plan for improving public transport for disabled people.

Group discussions

There were two group discussion sessions during the event. The first was a chance to hear people's own experiences of hate crime, either as passengers or transport providers; including perceptions of whether it is a problem on some transport services. This discussion also included asking people to consider the idea of a Hate Crime Charter to tackle hate crime and if we were to adopt this approach, what would it be like.

Thank you to all who attended. We will be holding two more events about hate crime on transport, later this year in West Lothian and Clackmannanshire.

Transport in Rural Areas Workshop – Stirling, 18 May 2018

We held an event in Stirling on 18 May 2018 to discuss the issue of transport in rural areas. The event brought together disabled people, transport providers and other stakeholders, including local councillors, to discuss some of the issues affecting rural areas.



Presentations

Councillor, Jim Thomson, Convener of the Environment and Health Committee of Stirling Council, then gave a short presentation about a project launched by Stirling Council to introduce more buses to rural areas of Stirling. The project was launched in December 2017 and has been extended to August 2018.

Group discussions

Two group discussions took place, ensuring that disabled people and transport providers had the chance to talk together. Participants were asked to think about their own experiences of rural transport, including the cost, frequency and accessibility of rural travel. Each group was also asked to think about what needs to change and how disabled people could be involved in this process.

Summary of group discussions:

- Evening bus services can be temperamental, or non-existent in rural areas.
- There is inconsistency between what transport providers think of as 'accessible' and what disabled people see as accessible.
- There needs to be better connectivity between different modes of transport, to ensure that passengers can make connections for onward travel.
- Information is not accessible for disabled people. This is especially true if something goes wrong on a journey, such as a change of platform or a cancelled service.
- There should be disability awareness training for drivers in rural areas.

Young Disabled People Roadshow – Alloa, 20 June 2018



We worked in collaboration with Play Alloa to host an event on 20 June 2018. Play Alloa is a leading provider of support services to children and young people with disabilities and additional support needs, in Clackmannanshire. They offer support to 187 families across Clackmannanshire through their many youth clubs, drop in sessions and buddy events.

As 2018 is the Scottish Government's Year of Young People, we held this event to showcase the achievements and talents of young people with additional support needs and to bring together organisations to discuss the ways that engaging with young people can help to further our businesses.

Presentations

We heard very emotional stories from four very brave young people. Each had put a lot of work into their presentations, which contained photos and videos of their lives. We heard from John, who spoke about being bullied at school because of his disability and Lewis, who is putting his own experiences of autism to good use and wants his career to focus on working with others with autism.

Group Discussions

Two group discussions took place. Participants were asked to talk about what they felt were the biggest challenges facing young people with disabilities and what organisations could do to ensure that these young peoples' voices are heard.

Biggest challenges: Building relationships, Feeling valued and respected, Isolation and loneliness, Transitions – from youth to adult services, Stigma and Attitude of others, Abuse, Mental wellbeing, Lack of Confidence.

Engaging with Young People with Disabilities: Sharing ideas on ways to provide opportunities, building stronger connections with youth disability services, actively recruiting young people onto our Boards and sharing skills.

Inform

Disability and the Arts Roadshow – 2 July 2018, Glasgow

We worked together with Birds of Paradise Theatre Company and the National Theatre of Scotland to host an event on 2 July 2018 about disability and the arts. The event gave participants the chance to see a sneak-peek of two songs from BOP's 25th Anniversary production 'My Left / Right Foot - The Musical' ahead of its appearance at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2018. The performance was followed by group discussions about disabled people and the arts and challenging stereotypes.



Views on the Performance

The participants were very positive about the performance from Birds of Paradise. They felt using humour was a great way of making the performance relatable to disabled audiences, but also to raise awareness of issues that non-disabled people might find uncomfortable. In this way, it was thought the performance could help reduce stigma and stereotypes.

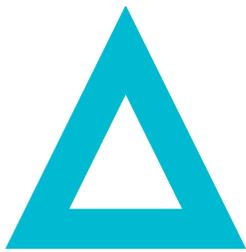
Group Discussions

Those who had experience of performing in the arts, commented on the challenges of becoming an actor, or performer with a disability.

One participant commented on her experience of studying drama, where, she said that not enough support was offered at degree level, specifically a lack of awareness from education establishments about reasonable adjustments and what could be put in place to make education more inclusive. There was a general consensus that more needed to be done to train organisations and venues about making reasonable adjustments, which could be as simple as adding a ramp, or induction hearing loop in some cases.

For more information about Birds of Paradise Theatre Company and their upcoming production, 'My Left / Right Foot – The Musical', please click the following link: www.boptheatre.co.uk/left-right-foot-musical

Accessible Travel Hub - www.accessibletravel.scot



**Accessible
Travel
Hub**

The Accessible Travel Hub is a website for you to find information, articles and guidance on Accessible Travel in Scotland. The Hub launches alongside the Accessible Travel Framework, a ten-year plan launched by Transport Scotland to improve travel access for disabled people.

What can I find on the Hub?

- Articles and Information on accessible transport in Scotland; including the rules and responsibilities of transport providers.
- Dedicated Transport Mode 'Area' for Transport providers /operators to promote good practice in access-related work.
- Links to resources, including; PAMIS' map of Changing Places toilets, Radar keys, Thistle Cards, Traveline, Hate Crime Reporting.
- Signpost to relevant training courses, including disability awareness and inclusive communication.
- News and blog featuring up to date accessible travel news in Scotland.

Inform

Inclusive Communication Hub - www.inclusivecommunication.scot

Supported by the Scottish Government, we are working with Sense Scotland and other partners to host the Inclusive Communication Hub; a website that has been developed for anyone with an interest in improving their inclusive communication tools and processes.



What Is Inclusive Communication?

Inclusive communication means sharing information in a way that everyone can understand. For service providers, it means making sure that you recognise that people understand and express themselves in different ways. For people who use services, it means getting information and expressing themselves in ways that meet their needs. Throughout this Hub you will find helpful resources such as case studies and blogs from employers and individuals; details of training and the latest news on Inclusive Communication.

Inclusive Communication Champions

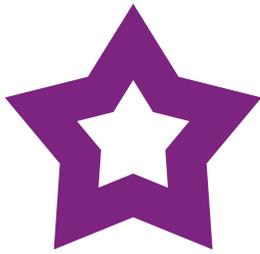
We are looking for a network of individuals to step up and be Inclusive Communication Champions. The individuals could be employers from different organisations or Scottish Government Policy Officials. This network of champions will provide feedback into the Inclusive Communication Hub and be asked to promote inclusive communication within their own organisations, ensuring that the topic stays on the agenda.

If you would like to find out more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Emma Scott, Equality Projects Manager:

Telephone: 01259 272064 Email: emma@disabilityequality.scot

Inform

Inclusive Design Hub - www.inclusivedesign.scot



**Inclusive
Design
Hub**

The Inclusive Design Hub is a website that aims to improve awareness and encourage the take up of inclusive design in Scotland.

What is Inclusive Design?

Inclusive Design is the design of an environment so that it can be accessed and used by as many people as possible, regardless of age, gender and disability. An environment that is designed inclusively is not just relevant to buildings; it also applies to surrounding open spaces, wherever people go about every day.

What can I find on the Hub?

- Articles on the importance of inclusive design.
- Case studies that demonstrate innovative examples of inclusive environments in Scotland.
- A resources library that provides links to inclusive design guidance from a variety of sources.
- An up-to-date blog featuring: interviews, discussion points and all of the latest inclusive design news from across the country.

Inform

Disability Safety Hub - Coming Soon!

The Disability Safety Hub is in its design and planning phase and we plan to carry out focus groups throughout 2018 to gather feedback from disabled people about the type of information they would like to see on the Hub.



We already know from our own research and from data collected by Police Scotland, that there is a need for this type of resource, as disability hate crime is one of the most under-reported of all crimes; estimated at 97% under-reported.

We anticipate that the information contained on this new Hub will make a positive difference to the recognition of hate crime amongst disabled people and the numbers reporting incidents. We want to ensure that disabled people do not accept hate crime as a 'social norm' but that they understand the seriousness of their experiences.

We have conducted weekly polls on this topic. We found that from our members:

- 74% had, or knew someone who had experienced disability hate crime;
- Of these, 35% said that they did not report the crime; and
- 31% said that they would not feel confident to report an incident of disability hate crime.

Disability Equality Scotland Easy Read Service



We have the expertise to produce information in Easy Read

We provide a professional and efficient Easy Read service to all sectors, as part of our commitment towards improving access to information for all.

What is Easy Read?

Easy Read is an accessible format that makes written information easier to understand. The Easy Read format is easy to understand because it uses simple, jargon-free language, shorter sentences and supporting images.

Why produce Easy Read documents?

Easy Read documents make information more accessible to people with learning disabilities. They can also be useful for people with other communication difficulties including:

- acquired brain injury
- dyslexia
- people with hearing impairment whose first language is British Sign Language (BSL)
- people who do not speak English as their first language
- people who find reading difficult
- people with cognitive impairments such as dementia.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act (2010) requires organisations to produce information in an accessible format. Easy Read can ensure that disabled people have equal access to information and are not discriminated against.

Who do I contact?

For more information about our Easy Read service, including examples of our work, please visit our website: www.easyread.scot

You can also contact us by telephone: 01259 272064
or email: admin@disabilityequality.scot

Your Say on Disability

Your Say on Disability - www.yoursayondisability.scot

Gathering the views of disabled people in Scotland

The Have Your Say on Disability website is a place for you to tell us your views on disability issues in Scotland. This website provides the opportunity for disabled people to help shape Scotland's future in accessibility and equality.



As someone with lived experience of – or representing someone with – a disability, we would like you to tell us what you feel is working and what needs to change in Scotland by completing our surveys. Our surveys are on current policy consultations and available in alternative formats.

Weekly Poll

The Weekly Poll will allow you to have your say on a number of different topics affecting disabled people in Scotland. The poll is a simple yes/no question that will be published each week, along with the opportunity to leave a comment on the chosen topic.

BSL Videos

This year we launched our official YouTube channel! To kick things off, we uploaded eight BSL videos that have been translated from our Weekly Poll questions.

What happens to my comments

- Your comments will be passed on in full to those who have requested the survey, making sure that your views really are counted.
- Your responses are anonymous unless you wish to provide your details.
- The Scottish Government and other bodies want to know what is working, what is not and what needs to happen to improve life for Scottish disabled people, so your comments can really make a difference!

Your Say on Disability

Consultation: Social Isolation and Loneliness



A consultation led by the Scottish Government was launched to inform and influence the development of a national strategy to tackle loneliness and isolation. Social isolation is having little or no contact with other people, which can damage an individual's sense of belonging. Feelings of loneliness are linked to poor health, including depression, high blood pressure and weakened immune system. To contribute to the development of this strategy we consulted with our members from 16 January 2018 until 30 April 2018, which prompted 51 responses.

Your Responses

The responses from our members identified the various causes of social isolation and loneliness that affect disabled people and how they can be addressed:

- **Accessible housing** - New houses are built to accessibility standards and existing homes are adapted where possible to ensure disabled people do not have to move from their existing social networks.
- **Infrastructure** - Poor condition of streets, paths and pavements has a central role to play in keeping many disabled people confined to their homes and cut off from local services, activities and everyday interactions.
- **Transport** - Of equal importance to our members was the availability and accessibility of public transport. For many disabled people, public transport acts as a life-line, helping to maintain some level of independence.
- **Hate Crime** - Many disabled people experience abuse when out and about and we would like to see more being done to tackle disability hate crime.
- **Employment** - We would like to see an increase in the numbers of disabled people who are in meaningful employment, which requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to their places of work.

Your Say on Disability

Are RBS Bank Closures in breach of the Equality Act?

We joined up with Scottish Rural Action to write to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission to ask whether the move to close RBS branches is in breach of the Equality Act 2010.

RBS announced plans to close 62 branches across the country in December last year. It has said it will replace some of the branches with short and infrequent visits from mobile banking vans, which are not appropriate for many people with physical disabilities.



We polled our members on the closures and found the lack of disabled access was a major concern. As a result, we joined with Scottish Rural Action, who have been campaigning against the closures since the announcement was made.

Emma Cooper, Chief Executive of Scottish Rural Action said “We already knew that the plans from RBS hadn’t taken fully into consideration the impacts on Scotland’s rural communities, so it comes as no surprise to see that RBS has failed to consider some of its most vulnerable customers. It’s clearer than ever that this has been a decision based purely on figures on a balance sheet and RBS is not prioritising its customers’ needs.”

“There is still time for RBS to reconsider its planned closures - evidence of the impact on rural communities and disabled customers is now piling up. The human impact far outweighs some figures on a balance sheet.”

Morven Brooks, Chief Executive of Disability Equality Scotland, added: “Our members have genuine concerns over the impact these proposed closures will have on disabled people; specifically the introduction of inaccessible and inconvenient mobile banks, which do not provide the service that disabled people are entitled to.”

Your Say on Disability

Ban on Advertising Boards



Advertising boards are to be banned across Edinburgh, after the council's Transport and Environment Committee voted to outlaw all temporary on-street advertising. Robin Wickes, Vice Chair of the Edinburgh Access Panel, said: "For wheelchair users and vision impaired people in particular, navigating our streets is a real challenge, especially since many of our pavements are narrow

and busy with visitors. Banning A-boards will remove a major barrier and help disabled people enjoy equality of access to Edinburgh's streets and pavements."

Weekly Poll Question

For the week commencing 21 May 2018, we asked our members to comment on the question: "Do you think they should be banned in your area?" A total of 67 members answered the poll, with the majority (87%) in agreement that on-street advertising boards should be banned in their local area.

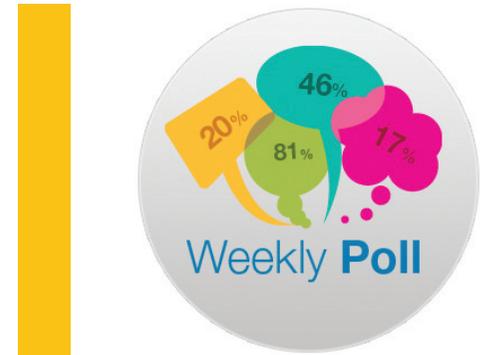
Your Comments

- **Impact on disabled people** - Our members discussed the dangers of on-street advertising boards, which can be a hazard and barrier for disabled people; particularly for those with mobility and visual impairments.
- **Additional street hazards** - It was recognised by our members that there are other hazards such as wheelie bins and on-street car parking, which also pose a threat to pedestrian safety.
- **Wider pavements** - Some of our members felt that a universal ban was not necessary as some pavements are wide enough to accommodate street furniture advertising.
- **Alternatives to advertising boards** - Our members questioned the effectiveness of on-street advertising and provided alternative solutions such as hanging signs and digital communications.

Your Say on Disability

Weekly Poll Roundup

Last year we launched a new way of engaging with our members. Each week, a new Weekly Poll question is sent out on a different topic or subject. The aim is to build up a bank of information and views from our members, so we can better understand disabled people. We also want to increase our outreach and gather more evidence that we can use in our business planning; and to help respond to consultations.



Below is a selection of the weekly poll questions we have asked in the past few months, along with your responses:

Sugar Tax – Week Beginning 9 April

Question: Will the sugar tax help reduce obesity?

Your feedback: Yes - 30% (14 respondents) No - 70% (32 respondents)

Your comments: “Even if companies cut down on sugar, they still replace the sugar with other chemicals that still are not good for our health.”

“Yes it should help but only as part of a package of measures that looks at availability, education and alternative activities.”

Food Banks – Week Beginning 23 April

Question: Have you or someone you know used a food bank?

Your feedback: Yes - 51% (25 respondents) No - 49% (24 respondents)

Your comments: “Food bank use and food poverty are this nation’s shame. Access to food is a basic human right, it’s not a privilege.”

“I do think benefits such as Universal Credit, has resulted in more people using food banks since it seems people are having to wait weeks on end before money is forthcoming.”

...responses continued on next page >>>

Your Say on Disability

>>> responses continued ...

Mental Health – Week Beginning 14 May

Question: Do we need to change our culture to talk more about stress and mental health?

Your feedback: Yes - 98% (49 respondents) No - 2% (1 respondent)

Your comments: “Mental health services are woefully inadequate and a lot more money needs to be invested”

“Ridiculous, almost criminal wait to access mental health support services of upwards of eight months.... which, for some, comes too late.”

Electronic Voting – Week Beginning 28 May

Question: The Scottish Government has announced that it will be undertaking pilots of electronic voting for elections. Do you think the introduction of electronic voting is a good idea?

Your feedback: Yes - 77% (37 respondents) No - 23% (11 respondents)

Your comments: “Electronic Voting is long overdue. As long as they ensure it is fully accessible to Screen Readers etc. Electronic Voting will also encourage our younger members of society to participate.”

“Concerns about security of voting – system could be open to abuse, so a careful recognition system would have to be in place, as well as concerns about the security of voters’ details and data protection.”

Ban on Pavement Parking – Week Beginning 11 June

Question: The Scottish Government is to ban parking on pavements. Do you agree with the ban?

Your feedback: Yes - 98% (87 respondents) No - 2% (2 respondents)

Your comments: “Pavements are for pedestrians not vehicles. A ban will assist me as I will not face so many barriers when out and about in my wheelchair.”

“Will be very difficult in housing estates where there are few designated parking areas. Cars need to be half on pavements to allow buses and lorries to get along the streets.”

Support

deafscotland – In conversation with Janis McDonald

Who are you?

I am Janis McDonald, Chief Officer at deafscotland. My background is in nursing and in my early career I specialised in long stay/rehabilitation. Over the years I worked in addictions, homelessness and more latterly in umbrella bodies at local level. I live in Linwood, enjoy live music, travelling (especially to Mallorca) and have two grown sons.



You have recently changed your name from Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) to deafscotland. What do you hope to achieve with your new brand identity?

The new identity has to fulfil several purposes. Firstly, to modernise and “refresh” our image which did seem a bit old fashioned to many people. Secondly, to convey our position and diverse approach: e.g. the spectrum of deafness and people affected by it – across the four key pillars: Deaf / Deaf Sign Language Users; Deafened; Deafblind; and Hard of Hearing. Finally, it needs to portray our “Connect and Thrive” programme of work, focusing on connections, collaboration and communication. I hope we have succeeded in the vibrant and fresh logo. The feedback to date has been substantial and consistently positive.



Tell us more about deafscotland and what your main aim is?

We aim to achieve equality, access and citizenship for deaf people and build appropriate interventions. We seek to do this through awareness raising, information

sharing, policy influencing, networking and developing action through our membership, education and training. Our strapline is ‘equality & integration through communication for all’. This reflects our beneficial “Connect and Thrive” programme.

...interview with Janis continues on the next page >>>

Support

What are the biggest challenges that deaf people face in 2018?

The barriers that people face relate to access, participation and integration. For example:

- **Access:** many services are accessed through door entry systems and/or telephone appointment systems. Simply getting into car parks, buildings and services is a problem. Communication is then an ongoing barrier, whether it is due to access in the correct language, for example British Sign Language or English, or a combination of language and technical support.
- **Process:** whilst access is sometimes easier than it used to be, processes can often mean that for example, goods can be ordered online but changes in delivery arrangements need to be carried out by phone. Both access and process can be challenging.
- **Participation:** without good quality information people can be disadvantaged in participative processes. Communication support would need to be in place to ease conversation, express opinions and understand others' views.

What best practice have you come across recently that others should follow?

Access and inclusion is challenging and best practice for us includes the provision of a range of supports. We always ask and try to provide consistency through British Sign Language (BSL) / English Interpreters, Electronic Note-takers, Guide Communicators and a range of technical supports.

What has deafscotland got planned for the remainder of 2018?

We are currently revising our plan for the rest of 2018 into 2019. There is work to raise awareness around access in English in the summer, an event with Scottish Care in the Autumn, to look at barriers faced by those in care services and work to raise awareness about the increased risks of mental health issues for deaf people in the winter months. We are also currently working with partners to develop a conference and awards ceremony next year on Friday 15 March 2019 in Glasgow.

To get involved contact: Phone: 0141 248 2474 Email: admin@deafscotland.org

To read the full interview with Janis visit our website: www.disabilityequality.scot/news/deaf-scotland/

Support

Access at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018

The Fringe Society works to make sure that the Fringe is as accessible and inclusive as it can be. We are committed to listening to the access needs of our audiences, performers and our wider community and work continuously to improve the accessibility at Fringe venues and Box Offices.



The city of Edinburgh is one of the Fringe's biggest assets but also presents one of its biggest challenges, its medieval and Georgian architecture create an immediate physical barrier, which in many cases cannot be altered. Venues for the Fringe often appear non-traditional theatre spaces, so we work to help venues, performers and audiences improve accessibility where they can. We encourage participants to include accessible performances where possible to ensure that their shows reach as wide an audience as possible. We are dedicated to making sure that anyone who wants to be part of the festival can be, whether that's as an audience member or a participant.

Our Venue Access Award, developed in partnership with the charity Attitude is Everything, provides venue managers with a minimum standard of accessibility to aim for and offers different levels of achievement. Venues began displaying Venue Access Award certificates in 2017. 19 venues have completed level 1 of the award, with an additional 10 venues (including some of the largest venues at the Fringe) currently working towards level 1. In 2017 we also began offering a mobile changing place for Fringe audiences. This is a Mobiloo, the world's first attended, mobile toilet and changing facility for disabled people who can't use a standard accessible loo. This will be parked on the corner of Windmill Street, next to Fringe Central, and open from 10:00 – 22:00 each day of the Fringe.

In 2018 the Fringe Society will be unveiling a new look street events arena on the Royal Mile, featuring new stages and performance areas, making space for an even wider range of Fringe shows and street theatre spectacles. The redevelopment will also make the Virgin Money Street Events more accessible than ever before, with dedicated viewing areas for those with access needs, BSL interpreted performances on the West Parliament stage on the 18th and 19th of August, fully accessible stages and sensory backpacks available for children and adults on the autism spectrum.

Support

... Access at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe continued >>>

The Fringe Society has also become an Attitude Champion, working to improve access through set goals. These range from committing to ensuring that Fringe Society organised events are accessible to everyone, to creating an environment that encourages deaf and disabled people to work and/or perform at the Fringe. You can find out more about our Attitude Champion work on our website:

<https://www.edfringe.com/learn/accessibility-initiatives>

Our access bookings team maintains a database with access information on venues and spaces at the Fringe, enabling audience members to make informed choices.

If you require a personal assistant (PA) to help you attend the Fringe, you are entitled to a complimentary PA ticket. Wheelchair users requiring a PA ticket should phone 0131 226 0002, contact the team on accessbookings@edfringe.com or by text message on 07860018299. All our customer service staff are trained by our access bookings team, meaning audiences don't have to seek a specialist to help them book shows. As well as booking a wheelchair space, or personal assistants, customers can book captioning units, find out more information about BSL interpreters, or ensure they get early access to a venue by contacting the access bookings team in advance, who will make sure the venue knows what to expect.

You can find information on venue accessibility by visiting the venue index on edfringe.com or using the advanced search to filter shows by accessibility. This allows you to see which shows are in venues that have level access, audio enhancement, wheelchair access, and accessible toilets.

If you are interested in shows which offer captioning, signed performances, audio description or relaxed performance, you can search for these using the advanced search function on edfringe.com. This will give an overview of which shows are offering these performances. For specific dates, then head over to <http://edfringe.com/accessible-performances> alternatively, if you find a show you would like to see, either online or in the printed programme, look for the access icons next to each entry. Please note that although shows may have many performances during the festival, the accessible performances are only on the dates listed at <http://edfringe.com/accessible-performances>

Support

Disability Snowsport UK

Disability Snowsport UK (DSUK's) Mission Statement is to promote equality and opportunity for people with disabilities, to take part in Snowsports, and to help improve their enjoyment and standard of performance at their level of choice. Skiers and Snowboarders with a disability should be able to ski alongside non-disabled skiers and snowboarders as equals.

DSUK run 6 Adaptive Snowsport Schools in the UK. Two of the schools are located in the central belt of Scotland. Our schools provide professionally qualified adaptive snow sport instructors, trained volunteers and adaptive equipment. Our adaptive snow sport schools give access to affordable adaptive snow sports by providing private and group lessons for adults and children with all types of disabilities.

The physical, mental and emotional benefits of taking part in snow sports go way beyond the hour-long lesson. Skiing and snowboarding are just vehicles for what we do; promote social inclusion, build confidence, provide mental stimulation and life-enriching experiences.

As a small team with limited resources, we welcome the support of our corporate partners and communities around the UK to help us to continue to break down the physical, social and financial barriers to adaptive snowsports.

For more information to get involved contact Alina Rennie:
alina.rennie@disabilitysnowsport.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitysnowsport.org.uk

Twitter: @dsuksnowsport

Facebook: Disability Snowsport UK



Access Panel Network

Access Panels



**Access
Panel
Network**

We are the umbrella organisation for all disability Access Panels in Scotland, providing them with support and guidance to improve the lives of disabled people at a local level throughout Scotland.

What is an Access Panel?

Access Panels can be found in all regions and are made up of groups of disabled volunteers who work together to improve physical access and wider social inclusion in their local communities. We offer support and training opportunities to help them operate efficiently, link together as a network and learn from each other.

Get Involved!

Joining your local Access Panel is easy and a great way to help improve accessibility in your community. You can learn new skills, help with promotional campaigns or give support at events, help with research and publicity. Give the time and commitment with which you feel comfortable and help to make a difference in your community.

To find out more about the Access Panel Network and how to join your local Access Panel contact Gillian Smith:

Tel: 01259 272064

Email: access@disabilityequality.scot

Website: www.accesspanelnetwork.org.uk

Access Panel Network

Geographical location of Access Panels in Scotland

Western Isles and Argyll

- Barra Access Panel
- Cowal Access Panel (Dunoon)
- Harris Disability Access Panel
- Isle of Lewis Access Panel
- Oban & District Disability Forum & Access Panel

South West

- North Ayrshire Access Panel

Forth Valley and Tayside

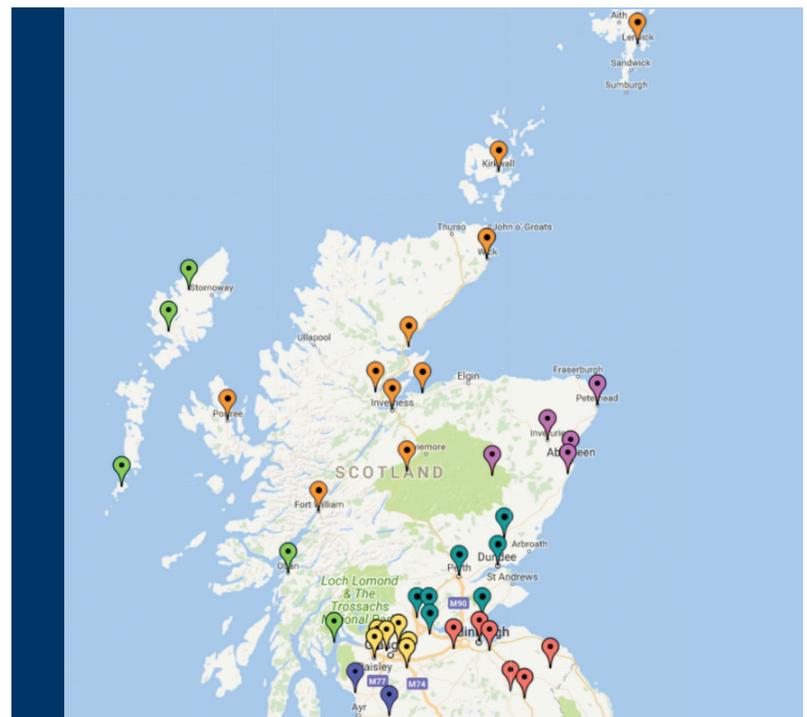
- Angus Access Panel
- Centre for Inclusive Living Perth & Kinross
- Disabilities Fife
- Dundee Access Group
- Falkirk Area Disability Access Panel
- Stirling Area Access Panel

Glasgow and Clyde Valley

- East Dunbartonshire Access Panel
- Glasgow Access Panel
- North Lanarkshire Access Panel
- Renfrewshire Access Panel
- South Lanarkshire Access Panel
- West Dunbartonshire Access Panel
- East Renfrewshire Access Panel

Highlands and Islands

- Access Panel Orkney
- Badenoch and Strathspey Access Panel
- Caithness Disabled Access Panel
- Inverness Access Panel
- Lochaber Disability Access Panel
- Nairn Access Panel



- Ross and Cromarty Access Panel
- Sutherland Access Panel
- Shetland Access Panel
- Skye & Lochalsh Access Panel
- Uist Access Panel

North East

- Aberdeenshire North Access Panel
- Aberdeenshire South Access Panel
- Bon Accord Access Panel
- Central Aberdeenshire Access Panel West
- Aberdeenshire Access Panel

Lothian and Borders

- AccessAble (Central Borders Access Panel)
- Berwickshire Access Panel
- East Lothian Access Panel
- Edinburgh Access Panel
- Midlothian Access Panel
- Tweeddale Access Panel
- West Lothian Access Committee

Access Panel Network

Access Engagement Officer's Update



Ian Buchanan

Dear Readers,

The last few months have been busy for me and they've seen me spending lots of quality time with Access Panels up and down Scotland. April saw me visit the Western Isles to support the development of a new Access Panel on Uist. Sheena and her team at the Uist Council for Voluntary Organisations supported me with an initial meeting and I'm delighted to report to you, our readers, that we have a brand-new Access Panel in East Renfrewshire. After months of planning preparation, the new Panel has finalised and agreed their constitution, so I'd appreciate it if you could give East Renfrewshire Access Panel (ERAP) a big, warm welcome into our Access Family.

I've also been busy working with the Access team here at Disability Equality Scotland to get started with delivering the training programme. We've been able to pilot the course to one Access Panel already and after we've tweaked some of the content we'll be ready to roll it out to the rest of you. Keep an eye out for training e-mails from Gillian and me.

I'm also pleased to welcome Anne-Marie Martin to Disability Equality Scotland. Anne-Marie will be leading on our Investing in Access pilot project which will be running across Forth Valley over the next year. Investing in Access is a bold and ambitious plan to scope out whether a set of quality standards for accessibility in the built environment would be a good thing. Needless to say, we think they are but let's wait and see the findings from Anne-Marie. There'll be a launch event soon too, so it'll be a chance for you to come on down, meet Anne-Marie, and do what Access Panels do best: share your opinion and get involved in something new.

Take care out there everyone,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Buchanan'.

Ian Buchanan

Access Panel Network

Access Panel Conference 2018

This year's Access Panel Conference was held in the Norton Park Conference Centre in Edinburgh.

This year's conference was well attended, with the keynote speaker, Monica Lennon MSP. Monica's presentation focussed on her role as the Local Government and Communities Committee in the Scottish Parliament. She also discussed the role of Access Panels in relation to planning law and the possibility of Access Panels gaining statutory consultee status. Claire Smith, Head of Transport Accessibility and Road Safety, Scottish Government also gave a presentation on accessibility.

Overall, delegates enjoyed the day; good food, good venue, great speakers. Delegates also told us they would like more time with speakers to discuss issues and network with other Access Panel members.



In Autumn this year we plan to host a biannual Access Panel Conference. The format for this would be more of a panel question and answer type session and we are in the process of organising speakers and a suitable venue.

If anyone would like to know more about their local Access Panel and how they could get involved, please email access@disabilityequality.scot or call 01259 272064.

Access Panel Network

Access Panel News



**Access
Panel
Network**

The following pages provide an insight into the activities and hard work volunteers put into their local Access Panels. If you are not yet a member with your local Access Panel and would like to get involved in improving access in your local community, contact your local

Access Panel today. Contact details of each Access Panel can be found at www.accesspanelnetwork.org.uk/directory-panels or contact Ian Buchanan telephone: **01259 272066** email: access@disabilityequality.scot

Angus Access Panel

Tel: 01307 465161 | Email: anguspanel@tiscali.co.uk

Angus Access Panel recently completed three access audits. Two of the audits were of local football parks and we also completed an audit of the village hall. We are delighted to announce that invitations have been sent out for applications for our prestigious Rod McFarlane Award. The Rod MacFarlane Award is presented annually to buildings or facilities in Angus that demonstrate the most positive efforts being made to encourage the inclusion of disabled people. Last year the Rod McFarlane Award was won by Forfar Community Campus; an outstanding building, which is well thought out and goes to great length to provide accessibility for all those who will use it. There is a varied mix of spaces available to pupils and the public, with level-controlled access for the different groups. We look forward to receiving applications for this year's award.



We are also planning for our Young People's Competition covering the topic of disability and transport. More information about this project will be shared with pupils at the start of the new term in August.

Access Panel Network

Badenoch and Strathspey Access Panel
Tel: 01540 661797 | Email: basapanel@gmail.com

Our Panel takes a break from formal meetings during July and August and will resume on Tuesday 11th September. However, the work continues with Access Audits being carried out at the new Shinty Pavilion in Kingussie making it fully disabled accessible. It now also has an electronic score board. An access audit has also been done on the entrance to the new Cairngorm National Park's main office in Grantown- on- Spey.



Our Website is being overhauled and an App is being prepared. Preparations continue for our two Awareness Days in October. These will involve 200 pupils from all nine Primary Schools in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Edinburgh Access Panel Tel: 07969 515296
Email: edinburghaccesspanel@hotmail.com

The Edinburgh panel has had a busy but productive time working on several interesting new projects recently. The Fringe Office approached us for consultation about ways to improve access for disabled people to open-air events like street theatre. They were very



receptive to our recommendations for things like designated spaces for wheelchair users and the recruitment and training of volunteers who would proactively look for opportunities to provide help and support to disabled spectators.

We're continuing to work closely with Edinburgh Leisure to help them improve accessibility at their gyms and swimming pools. Most recently we've met with their management to discuss ways to improve access for people with dementia.

Edinburgh's Napier University has been contracted to train staff at Edinburgh Council in inclusive street design and the panel will be closely involved.

Access Panel Network

>>> Edinburgh Access Panel update continued...

For disabled pedestrians there are lots of access issues associated with modern trends in street design like shared space, floating bus stops and continuous footways. The University will be working with the panel as it develops its training material and several panellists will be involved in the delivery of the training.

Transport for Edinburgh is busy developing a new large-scale cycle-hire scheme for the city and are consulting the panel on aspects like dockless parking. Our concern is to ensure that pavements are not cluttered up with bicycles – especially now that the Council have at long last agreed to ban A-board advertising. All nine Primary Schools in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Stirling Area Access Panel

Tel: 01360 440741 | Email: rh.dick@btinternet.com



Stirling Area Access Panel were one of the specialist supporting organisations who attended the Village Hall Summit in June, run by the Community Partnership at the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Headquarters in Balloch. We advised a number of the Trustee Organisations, and issued to many of the 75+ attendees, a list of Access Pointers on typical barriers which may be found in community buildings.

Sutherland Access Panel

Tel: 01641 561209 | Email: a.dawson442@btinternet.com



We are busy with planning applications and as usual we are trying to recruit younger people to join the panel. We

are also progressing access for St Andrews Church in Golspie this has been very difficult as the land is owned by the council and the church is owned by the Church of Scotland, but we now have a member that represents the church at our meetings and we hope for a speedy conclusion to this project.

Access Panel Network



6 ways to get involved

1. Join your local Access Panel
www.accesspanelnetwork.org.uk/directory-panels
2. Be on our mailing list and join Disability Equality Scotland
www.disabilityequality.scot/membership/
3. Like our Facebook Pages
Disability Equality Scotland
Access Panel Network
4. Follow us on twitter
@DEScotTweets
@AccessPanelNet
5. Come along to our events
6. Spread the word and encourage your friends, family and colleagues to join

Our Sponsors...

Disability Equality Scotland is grateful for the generosity of its sponsors and their ongoing support as we work together toward achieving the goals of the organisation.



If you are interested in sponsoring our magazine OPEN DOOR, please complete our online registration form - www.disabilityequality.scot/our-sponsors
Alternatively, please contact email admin@disabilityequality.scot

OPEN DOOR is published by

Disability Equality Scotland
Office 2/4, The e-Centre Cooperage Way
Alloa, FK10 3LP
Telephone: 01259 272064
Email: admin@disabilityequality.scot



Disability Equality Scotland

Connect with us...



Disability Equality Scotland is funded by



Disability Equality Scotland is Registered in Scotland as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status
Charity Number SC031893, Company Number SC243392