

# Engagement and Communication

In total, 456 people were recorded as having contributed to the full range of consultations conducted over the course of the 'Connections Project'. This represents over 10% of the total membership of the Association.

## Some facts

- Eighty percent of State-wide and phone survey respondents were over the age of 60.
- Teens to adults 45 years of age represented only 7% of survey respondents.
- Approximately 60% of survey respondents were female.
- Interest in personalised or face to face engagement opportunities attracted approximately 40% of responses.
- Interest in engagement opportunities via the use of technology attracted approximately 31% of responses.

Cause for thought! We observed that our more senior members of the Association were more inclined to participate in the Connections Project consultations and surveys (which is fantastic), but this does highlight the need for opportunities to be created to engage younger and working-age people.

Interestingly, the use of technological methods to get involved was not limited to the younger participants. Many people over the age of 60 indicated interest in getting more involved and in having a say through online options, email, and via other technology (Skype etc).

This of course does not diminish the very strong interest in face to face contact, but instead supports a broad, diverse range of consultation methods that the Association will be able to explore.

We acknowledge that not everyone has the desire or time to get involved in consultations, planning or feedback opportunities. In fact, 72% of survey respondents identified that they did not desire involvement in future consultations or feedback provision. In saying this, our aim is to make opportunities as available and convenient as possible so that people can make choices about what and when they would like to contribute.

## Publications

The Association's publications have a large readership and this was evident in the feedback received. This is encouraging but there is still a lot that can be done to improve the information, relevance and timing of our mail outs. Our regional readers have called for more regionally relevant information and it is our intention to provide this.

**"The newsletters are useful and they are read. Clients need to know that the Association is working on addressing the feedback arising from this project."**

- Quote

The Association has three regular publications that are prepared and sent to a range of audience groups. The main publications that are routinely sent out to clients include:

- **Community Insight**

'Community Insight' is the Association's feature publication and is distributed to all members of the Association including organisations and donors who have taken membership. Until recently, 'Community Insight' was published quarterly, however this will now be published twice a year.

- **Library Link**

This newsletter is produced as new developments occur and is the main vehicle for updating clients about Library related news and changes. This newsletter is very topical at the moment with regard to the upcoming transition from cassettes and CDs to digital audio. Keep this one on your radar if you are a library user!

- **What's On**

'What's On' is our more informal newsletter advising of activities, events, courses and other newsworthy matters and opportunities. 'What's On' is a quarterly publication. It is distributed to clients/members who are blind or have vision impairment. Information featured includes articles regarding international events, research, online opportunities, Tele-link groups and the Confident Living Program activities in Victoria Park.

### **Would you like us to e-mail you our publications?**

If you are able, we encourage you to consider the option of receiving publications via email. In the interest of being considerate of our environment, we offer email or online access to our publications.

That being said, we completely understand that for many people who have vision impairment, a printed or audio copy can be a preferable format. It is your choice.

### **Q. What are your interests?**

**"Newsletters. Have a call out to people to put their stories in. I would. Local personal stories. I read 'Community Insight' three or four times."**

- Quote

Your feedback is making a difference! The quote above is one example of many. We have now included a 'Client Stories' page on our website and are open to including more personal stories that will benefit other people by the sharing of experiences.

### **What we will do next**

- We will begin by ensuring that 'Community Insight' and 'What's On' have articles dedicated to regional information.
- A 'Consultation Contact Register' is being developed. This register will allow people who are interested in being involved in future consultations and feedback opportunities, to select specific areas of interest. In this way, we will be able to inform you of matters of personal interest and prevent you from being contacted about issues that are irrelevant to you.
- We will explore the use of online forums, chat rooms or Skype as potential mechanisms for online consultations and engagement. These fact sheets are a direct feedback initiative resulting from the 'Connections Project'.
- These fact sheets are a direct feedback initiative resulting from the 'Connections Project'. The purpose of these fact sheets is to reassure people who gave of their time and insights that their feedback was heard and that many things are being done in response.