



sleeping GIANTS



A review of our work and future opportunities:

Key findings from an internal evaluation

Final Report

29 October 2025

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Summary

About this report

We invited our clients and partners to tell us what they think of our work and future services. This report summarises what they told us and presents our own reflections on Sleeping Giants' work. We plan to use the findings to plan for our next strategic plan and strengthen future tenders and funding applications.

Our work

Since we prepared our 2023-2026 strategic plan, much has changed. We've grown to a team of 5 and the Scottish Government funded Empowering Women Panel makes up over half of our project work.

The Empowering Women Panel has brought together over 20 women from across Scotland and supported them to be heard in policymaking spaces. Participation in the Panel has been empowering for its members and there are examples of how its work is beginning to influence national policy. It's making a difference to Sleeping Giants too – we've learned how best to support some of the most marginalised voices. We want to build on this learning as we move towards our next strategic plan.

What clients and partners think of our work

100% (30) of those who completed an online survey rated our work as excellent, very good or good. They described Sleeping Giants as inspiring, knowledgeable and professional.

Our work is making a difference to the organisations we support

Clients told us that our services are helping them to develop a clearer vision and values and better plan for the future.

Some clients (85.7%, 12) thought that their organisation was now more fundable and sustainable since working with us. 95.2% (20) said that their staff were now more knowledgeable, skilled and confident.

There was also evidence that organisations were better at involving volunteers, reaching groups who face barriers to participation and engaging with stakeholders.



Looking ahead

We asked our clients and partners what they thought of some of our ideas to develop our services. There was support for:

- **Offering training, mentoring and a peer network for inexperienced third sector managers**, whose organisation might not have the capacity or skills needed to enable them to take on their new role.
- Our current training courses were perceived to be of high quality and **clients and partners welcomed our suggested introduction of additional courses**. 'Inclusive participation and engagement' and 'undertaking evaluation in accessible and engaging ways' were identified as potentially the most useful new courses.
- We think we can build on the expertise we've developed through our work with the Empowering Women Panel by **expanding our lived experience work** and clients and partners supported this suggestion.

Clients and partners identified other potential development opportunities in the evaluation around, for example, our participation and community empowerment work, widening the reach of our capacity building support and place based work.

Conclusions and recommendations

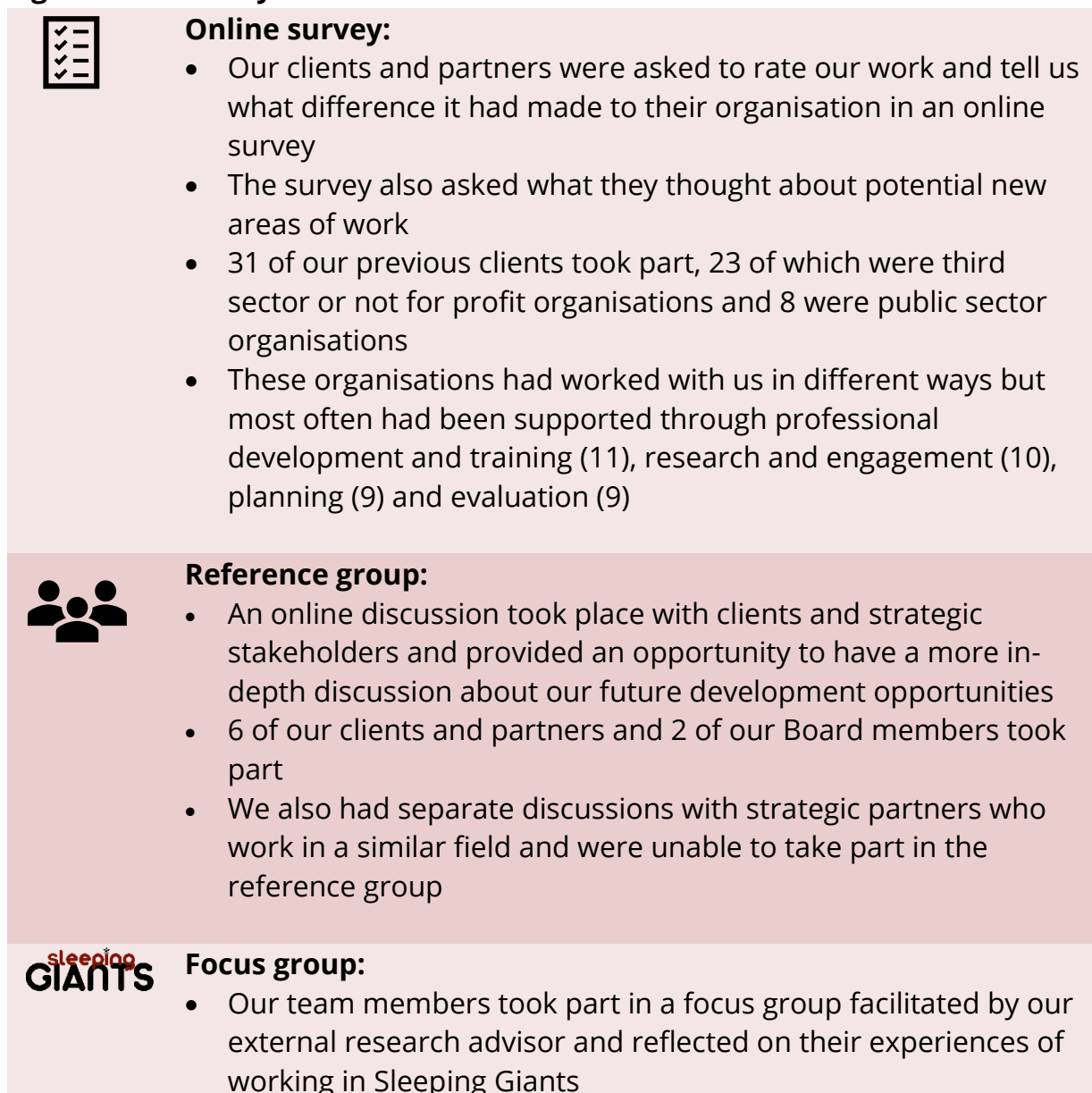
The evaluation findings give us renewed confidence in our work – clients and partners are overwhelmingly positive about the services we deliver and the difference they make. The suggestions made about development opportunities will also help us to identify and agree our next strategic objectives. While each of these need to be reviewed in turn, we believe that there are already recommendations that can be drawn from the findings. These include:

1. Sustaining and developing our current level of skills and expertise
2. Supporting organisations to embed lived experience voices within policy making
3. Building on the platform created by the Empowering Women Panel and developing a plan to create a wider network of women and girls
4. Strengthening our connections with strategic partners and developing our position as an anchor organisation so that we can increase our capacity building offer
5. Building on our strengths as a training provider and using the evaluation findings to better promote our training offer and its quality

1. Introduction

Our 2023-2026 strategic plan sets out the values and objectives that guide our work. To help us prepare for our next strategy, we've been evaluating our services and future opportunities. Hearing from our clients and partners has been an important part of this and they were invited to share their experiences of working with us and thoughts on our future services. Figure 1 summarises how we did this and who took part.

Figure 1: Summary of Evaluation Methods



Our external research associate analysed the information we collected and prepared this report. The findings summarised here will be used to support our next phase of strategic planning.

2. What we've Delivered

Community, participation, equality and inclusion are the golden threads that define our work as a capacity building social enterprise. But much has changed since we prepared our 2023-2026 strategic plan. We've continued to work with community focused and public sector organisations in the South of Scotland and neighbouring authorities, but over half of our current project work is with the Scottish Government and the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls. To support our additional workload, we've grown our team to 5 (3.2 full time equivalents). We may be a small team, but we have a large reach and impact, and together we've delivered projects on health care, employability, neurodivergence, local place planning, equalities and inclusion and lived experience participation.

Since we started working against our strategic plan in 2023 we have:

 <p>Worked with 42 organisations, 32 of which were third sector organisations and 10 were public sector</p>	 <p>31 of these organisations were in Dumfries and Galloway but we've also worked nationally. 3 of our clients have been Scottish wide organisations and 2 UK wide</p>		
 <p>Raised £275,000 in funding for our clients</p>	 <p>Completed 11 research/engagement projects</p>	 <p>Delivered 17 training sessions</p>	 <p>Supported 4 communities with Local Place Plans</p>

Because the Empowering Women Panel has been such a large part of our project work over the last two years and shifted our profile from local to national, it's important to reflect on what we've achieved and what this might mean for us in the future. More details on our work with the Panel are provided in Section 3.

3.Spotlight: Working with the Empowering Women Panel

What is the Empowering Women Panel and where did it come from?



The Empowering Women Panel was established in March 2023 to strengthen the work of the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG), which advises and challenges the First Minister to help create a more equal Scotland for women and girls. Sleeping Giants was commissioned to set up and support the Empowering Women Panel, which was designed to enable women from marginalised communities to be heard in policymaking spaces. The Panel has brought together over 20 women and non-binary people from across Scotland.

Our Approach

Sleeping Giants’ approach to supporting the Panel has been person-centred and adapted to meet their needs. It’s centred around 3 main activity strands:

Mentoring and support:	Capacity building:	Participation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular 1-1 meetings with a mentor• Online drop-ins• Tailored access and support plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender equality training using an intersectional lens• Participation training• Training on other topics that the Panel ask for	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular face-to-face and online meetings• Collaborative events with the National Advisory Council• Engagement with civil servants and ministers

We strive to tackle the barriers to participation by enabling women to take part in whatever way they are most comfortable with. We also work hard to support any access needs. Being flexible is important here but so too is bringing in additional support where it’s needed. We offer enhanced mentoring to the most vulnerable Panel members so that they are able to prepare for events and meetings and contribute as equals.

What’s been achieved so far?

We’re now in Year 3 of our contract to support the Panel. Our internal monitoring and evaluation of the Panel shows that its work is making a difference to its members.

Because they have been given the time and space to share their views and have their voices heard, members feel that their contribution is valued and that they are being empowered by their participation.

"To know that every time you speak in a group you are listened to, respected & appreciated makes a person realise the power they have within themselves but also with the people you're working with. Every member has been given this opportunity & treatment so it's a shared power amongst us all which I think is wonderful & something I hope will continue to grow."

"I feel like my voice is louder and my confidence has grown massively. I felt a bit stuck before I joined the panel and now I feel a bit unstoppable!!!"

The Panel has explored the issues that affect the lives of marginalised women and girls, like the cost of living and care. It has worked with the National Advisory Council to challenge the Scottish Government's handling of these issues. A strong partnership has been formed between the National Advisory Council and Panel, and members have described a sense of solidarity between them. Because of this, the Panel are now shaping the work of the National Advisory Council.

The Panel has also engaged with Scottish Government ministers and civil servants to tell them about their experiences and what they've found through their work. While more needs to be done to make sure that the Panel can participate as equals in all spaces, there's some evidence that they are beginning to have an influence on policy. They recently worked with the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare team and took part in a drama-based workshop to discuss their experiences of childcare and their childcare needs. What they said directly informed the development of a new School Age Childcare Programme. Panel members felt that they were able to take part as equals and consider their role in the development of the new programme as one of the biggest achievements to date.

Our team has also learned much from its experience of working with and supporting the Panel. We have worked with some of the most marginalised groups of women including gypsies and travellers and asylum seekers and created a space for them to be heard. We've learned that this way of working requires commitment from the top-down: women can only participate in a meaningful way if they are given the information and resources needed to engage in discussions with civil servants and

ministers. We want to build on this learning in our next strategic plan and make sure that it can strengthen the voice of more marginalised groups.

What the Panel have said about Sleeping Giants

Members have had a positive experience of the Panel and feel that they are well supported by Sleeping Giants. They have described us as the catalysts that make their work happen and value the time and effort we put into enabling them to participate. The women feel that we are doing everything we can to support their participation.

*“Having mobility issues can make taking part in face-to-face meetings and projects challenging. As part of the Panel, I have never felt anything other than just a member of the Panel. Everything that could be done to make things accessible and comfortable for me has been done and then some. I'm also dyslexic and the fact that *name would fill in forms and basically be my scribe was invaluable and such a relief that it makes me want to be more involved with Sleeping Giants.”*

What does this mean for the future?

Our work with the Panel is funded until February 2026 and members have told us that they don't want it to end. They want their voices to continue to be heard in policy spaces. Whatever happens with the Panel's future, both its members and the National Advisory Council hope that its legacy will be creating a stronger platform for lived experience. It has shown what is required to achieved good participation and the work required from the top-down to enable this.

The challenge for Sleeping Giants then is to use their expertise to continue challenging systems of government to be inclusive of marginalised voices. Opportunities here include:

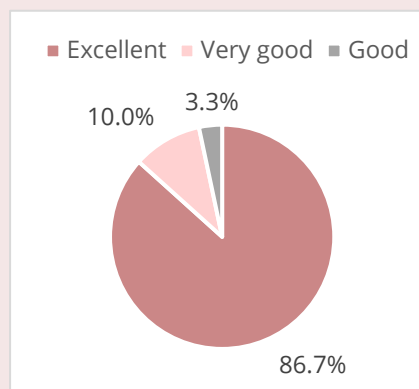
- Continuing to strengthen the Panel's model of participation beyond 2026 and build on the platform created for seldom heard and intersectionally marginalised women to participate
- Exploring how local and national government can be supported to embed learning from the Panel into their participation practices
- Supporting other organisations to adopt similar empowering approaches

4. Our Work and the Difference it's Making

What clients and partners thought of our work

We asked those completing the survey to rate our work and the responses were overwhelmingly positive – everyone gave a good, very good or excellent rating.

In the comments made throughout the survey, people told us that we are 'inspiring', 'excellent', 'knowledgeable' and 'professional'.



Base: Everyone who answered the question = 30

“ the team were knowledgeable, proactive and responsive and worked within quite a challenging environment; they also managed conflicting views and some movable goal posts with professionalism and provided excellent advice and guidance. Their evaluation of the consultation was excellent ”

“ We were really listened to, and it was obvious that the person helping us really understood our organisation ”

Where improvements were suggested, they often related to project specifics rather than a call for a different way of working. For example, delivering a course over two sessions rather than one or shorter delivery timescales. Others would have liked more time with Sleeping Giants.

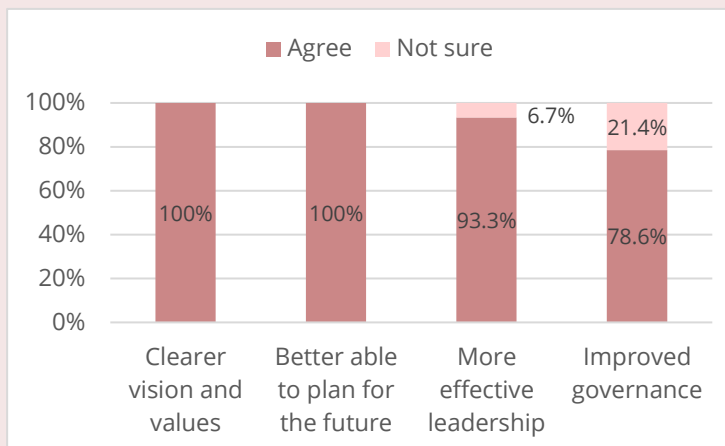
We reflected on these findings in the team focus group and felt that collaborative working was one of our key strengths.

“ We're always doing things with other people. We're not parachuting in and saying, this is what you have to do. ”

Being able to work alongside organisations and learn about their services was a source of satisfaction for the Sleeping Giants team. But the strong relationships built meant that reaching an end point could be challenging. It was also recognised that the pace and intensity of work on multiple projects, often with short and competing deadlines, could potentially lead to staff burnout. To better manage this, we are trying to improve the efficiency of our work by better delegating responsibilities.

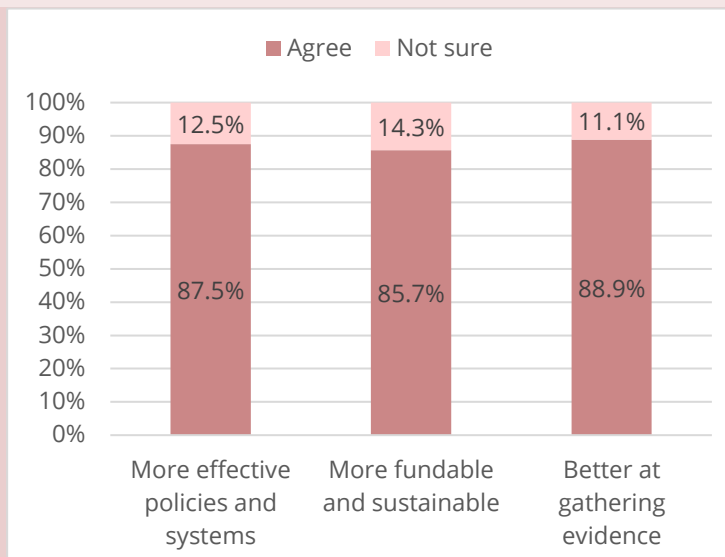
The Difference our Work is Making

Our services have made a difference to the leadership and governance of the organisations we have supported. Everyone who had received relevant support thought that their organisation had a clearer vision and values and was better able to plan for the future since working with us.



Base: Clearer vision and values=17; Better able to plan for the future =19; More effective leadership=15; Improved governance=14

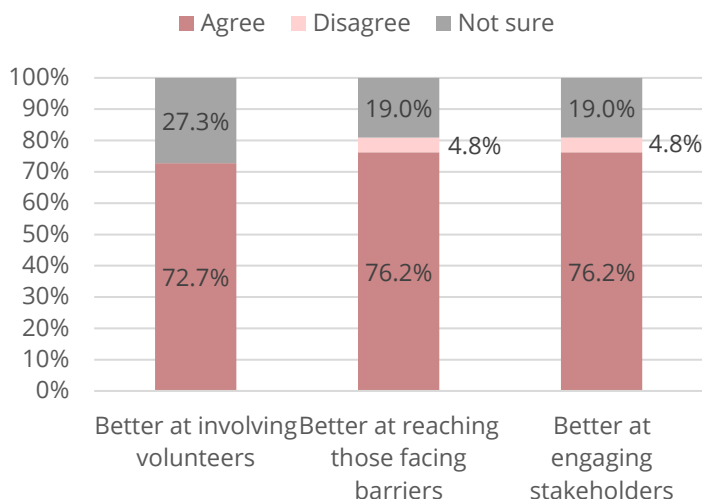
Some people thought that our work was improving their organisation in other ways too. For example, 87.5% (14) of clients who thought that these improvements were relevant to the support received said that their organisation now had more effective policies and systems. 85.7% (12) thought that they were more fundable and sustainable and 88.9% (16) better at gathering evidence.



Base: More effective polices and systems =16; More fundable and sustainable =14; Better at gathering evidence =18

Our services are also helping organisations to better involve volunteers, reach groups facing barriers to participation and engage with stakeholders.

As the chart shows, there were more 'not sure' and some disagree responses to these survey questions. These figures include only the responses of those clients who thought that we'd provided a relevant service.

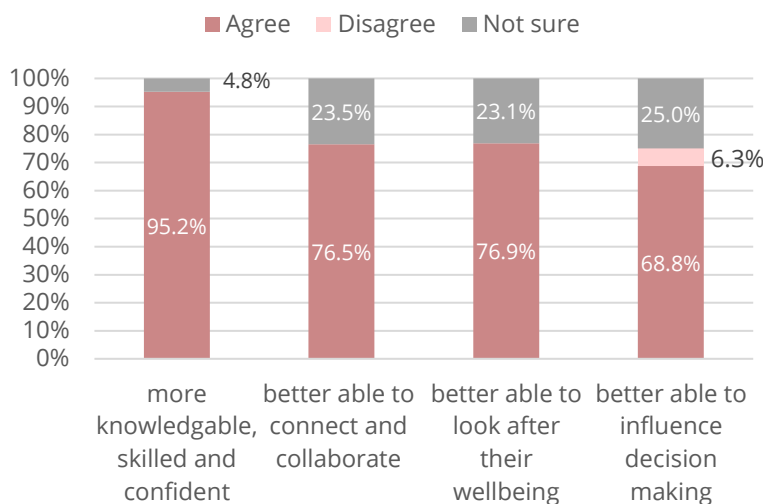


Base: Better at involving volunteers =11; Better at reaching those facing barriers = 21; Better at engaging stakeholders =21

4 people chose to make an additional comment to explain these responses:

- 2 said that these improvements were beyond the scope of Sleeping Giants work
- another thought that they were already good at reaching people facing barriers
- the fourth said their organisation still needed to do more to better reach its service users.

Staff and volunteers were also thought to have benefited from our work. For example, 95.2% (20) of those that had received relevant support said that their staff were more knowledgeable, skilled and confident since working with us and 76.5% (13) were better able to connect and collaborate with others. ¹



Base: More knowledgeable, skilled and confident = 21; Better able to connect and collaborate = 17; Better able to look after their wellbeing =13; Better able to influence decision making =16

The 1 disagree response was given because an organisation hadn't yet achieved their goal of influencing policy making.

The survey also asked people to tell us about any other differences our work had made. The responses given were varied but a key theme was that staff and boards often felt more confident or energised because of working with Sleeping Giants. Some also felt that the work had given them a fresh perspective and the clarity needed to progress or improve their activities. For example:

“ It offered the opportunity to look around outwards and upwards rather than narrowly inwards and the benefits of working collaboratively, inclusively and in partnership ”

“ It has re-ignited passion in the staff team to support our young people to find and use their voices! ”

“ The research carried out had credibility and impact and resulted in senior staff acknowledging issues and needs for many staff that had previously not been widely discussed ”



5. Looking Ahead: Exploring our Development Opportunities

Our move to work nationally was prompted by a reference group meeting during the development of our last strategic plan. We followed the advice given to work beyond the region and went on to win a 3-year Scottish Government contract to set up and support the Empowering Women Panel. This lived experience panel brings together women from across Scotland to inform the work of the National Advisory Council for Women and Girls. As we approach the end of this contract, we now have a national platform that we can build on in our next strategic plan.

We also want to explore how we can develop our role as a local anchor organisation. We want to continue building the capacity of community focused organisations to work with larger public and third sector bodies.

The survey and reference group provided an opportunity to better understand the challenges organisations are facing and the types of solutions we can develop to support them. As a team, we've identified some potential new services that we think might help community focused services. We presented these in both the survey and reference group to find out if there is a need for them and how we might develop them. What was said is summarised in this section.

Challenges Facing Our Clients

The types of challenges reported in the survey can be grouped into four broad categories: finance, sustainability and succession planning, people management and demand for services.



Finance:

Finding funding, financial pressures and financial sustainability were mentioned by 24 of the 30 people answering this question. This was the most common type of response.



People:

Difficulties recruiting and managing staff and volunteers were mentioned by 10 people.



Capacity:

9 people described the challenge of managing the demands of their service with the available funding and staffing. Some of these responses referred to an increasing demand.

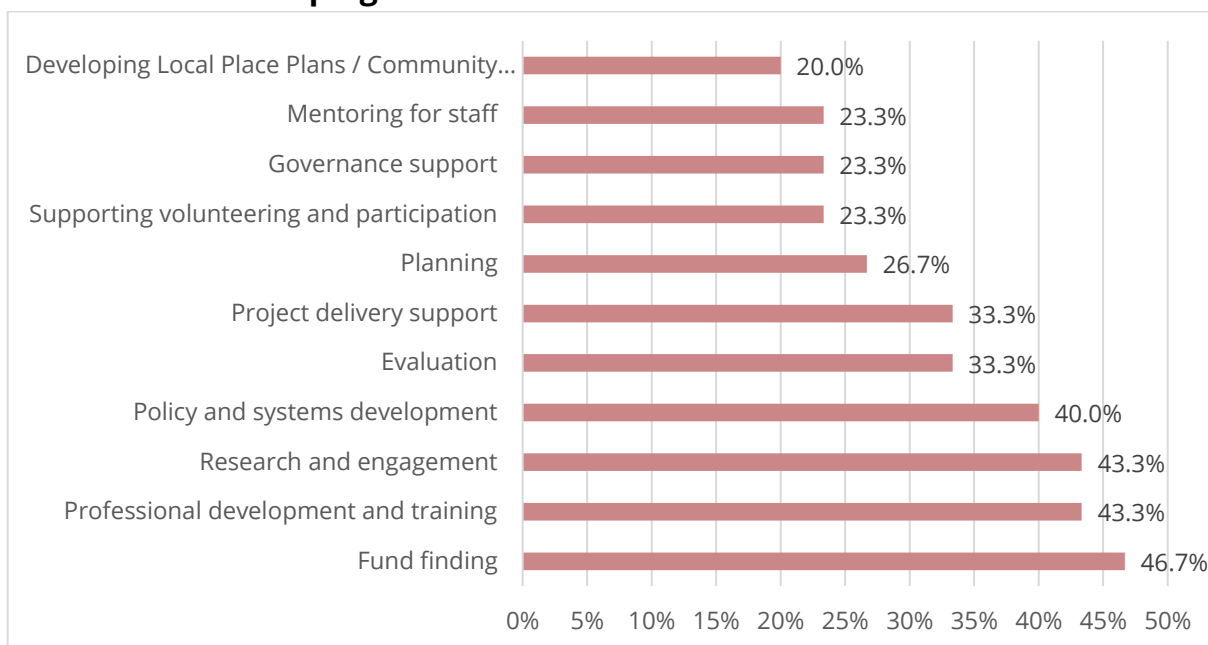


Sustainability:

6 people said that sustainability or succession planning (e.g. Board, staff) were key challenges.

The survey asked people to select up to five of our services that are most valuable in facing these challenges. As might be expected given the number of organisations facing financial challenges, 'fund finding' was selected most often. 'Research and engagement', 'professional development and training' and 'policy and systems development' were also amongst the common responses.

Most Valuable Sleeping Giants Services



Base: 30 clients and partners answering the question

Potential Solutions

Our team has identified what we can do to help public and third sector organisations prepare for and respond to the challenges faced. To help us assess the feasibility of our ideas, we asked our clients and partners to tell us what they thought of them. Each of these potential solutions and what was said about them are discussed in turn here.

Supporting third sector managers

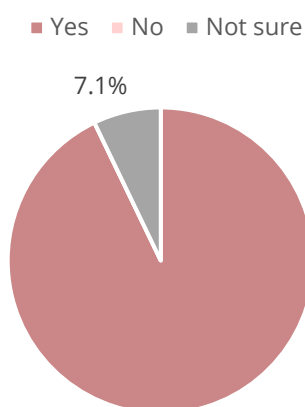
Recruiting third sector managers can be difficult and a lack of suitable applicants can mean that boards end up spending a lot of time on operational management issues or that organisations rely on less experienced staff or volunteers to fill the gap. New managers are then expected to become an expert in all issues without access to the support they need.

We're considering offering support to inexperienced managers through:

- Training
- Mentoring
- A peer network

What our clients and partners said about it:

Most thought that there was a need for this type of support: 92.9% (26) said it was needed (the other 2 were unsure).



The additional comments made supported the need to upskill managers through mentoring, a peer network and training, with some people reflecting on their own experience as a new manager in their response. While comments most often related to the need for broad management support, more specific calls were made for help around volunteer management, payroll and tax.

Base: Everyone who answered the question =28

“ I've been in this kind of role myself previously and would have welcomed this kind of support. I see many Managers in this situation across South Scotland. Being managed by a voluntary Board, which might lack appropriate experience to support and guide effectively can be challenging, and external support like this could be very helpful. ”

“ Would welcome this - managing a very small team can be challenging. Risk of Trustees becoming unpaid CEOs of small charities. ”

“ I'm really keen to keep improving and learning, so I'd love to connect with others in similar roles. Having a peer network to bounce ideas off, share experiences, and get some advice would be really helpful as I work through these [staff management] challenges and continue to grow in my role. ”

Support for new managers was also discussed in the reference group and a member described how increased dependency on short term funding meant that public sector organisations could also have trouble retaining skills (because experienced staff are being lost when a project ends).

Much of the wider discussion related building the capacity of organisations as a means to better support managers. Key points raised here included:

- Small, volunteer led organisations often lack the capacity and energy to engage with networks and need help connecting with the support that's right for them. Given the constraints on the capacity of small organisations to access support, the services of Sleeping Giants can have a big impact.
- Enabling organisations and communities more broadly to become more enterprising is an important way of increasing their capacity
- Anchor institutions (large organisations in a region) were identified as having the capacity to provide smaller organisations with access to mentorship, support and expertise. For example, third and other public sector partners could be invited to attend training courses being delivered in larger organisations.

While the role of Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway was identified as important here, reference group members also thought that Sleeping Giants had a role to play. Sleeping Giants were identified as a catalyst for new projects and their work at the intersection of small and large organisations meant that they're well placed to support the flow of skills between them.

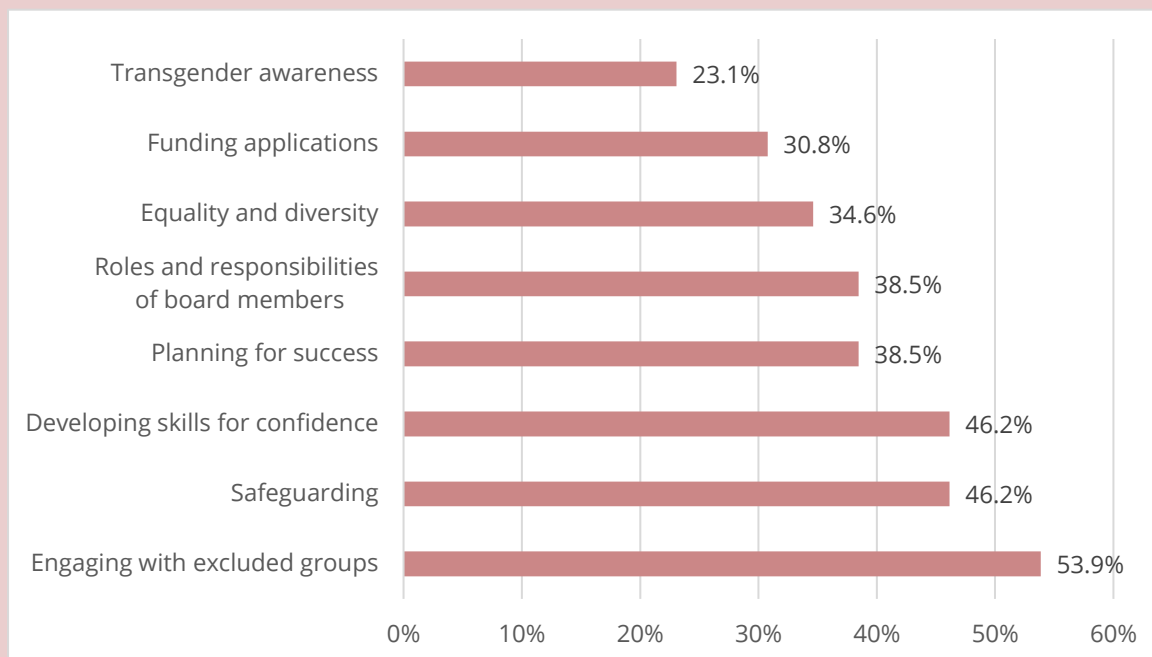
Developing our training offer

We'd like to offer courses that fill gaps in local provision and help organisations to overcome the challenges they face. For example, our work on the Empowering Women Panel has demonstrated the importance of looking at the layers of marginalisation to remove barriers to participation. We also know from our recent neurodivergence project that there is a gap in neurodiversity training in the region.

To help inform understanding of how best to develop our training offer, the survey also asked which of our current courses were the most useful.

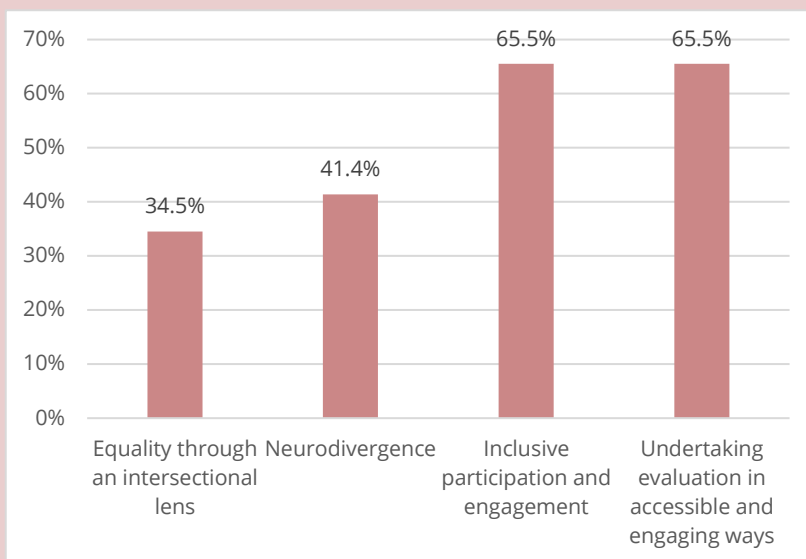
What our clients and partners said

The courses most often selected as useful included engaging with excluded groups, developing skills for confidence and safeguarding.



Base: Everyone who answered the question = 26

We presented a list of 4 potential new courses in the survey and asked people to select the most useful to their organisation. Inclusive participation and engagement, including co-production with people with lived experience, and accessible evaluation were selected most often.



Base: Everyone who answered the question = 29

Members taking part in the reference group also discussed our current and future training offer. Key points raised included:

- Training was perceived to be one of our key strengths and was of a high quality
- Demographics are changing and Dumfries and Galloway is becoming more culturally diverse so there is a growing need to better understand the *"different ways that people live their life within the region"*
- There's a need for a training course that ensures organisations can utilise the opportunities presented by AI
- There's a need to tackle misconceptions about neurodivergence and intersectionality
- Because organisations are under increasing pressure to deliver more with less budget, it was suggested that Sleeping Giant's offer could extend its offer to include coaching. Another member thought that this would be particularly valuable after a piece of consultation or engagement, when organisations might lack the skills and confidence needed to implement the next steps.

Training for trainers

We're thinking of running training to build the skills and confidence of organisations to train their own teams and boards. This could help organisations to build their capacity.

What our clients and partners said

Survey respondents told us which topics they thought would be most useful. The responses were varied and included:

- Safeguarding
- Strengths based management
- Managing volunteers (induction, roles, responsibilities)
- Suicide prevention
- Project management
- Engaging with marginalised people
- Conflict management
- Financial planning
- Board member training

Lived experience voice

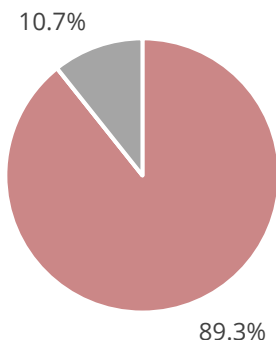
We've described the work we've been doing with the Empowering Women Panel in this report. It's shown us how marginalised voices can be heard in policy spaces but also the hard work and resources required to achieve this. We want to use our expertise and learning from our work with the Panel to help more communities be supported to take part in decision making. We think public bodies and organisations could be better supported to involve people with lived experience in a meaningful way. We could use our expertise to help them develop approaches that makes best use of their resources.

What our clients and partners said

Most of the people completing the survey would like to see Sleeping Giants doing more work in this area.



■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure



While it was recognised that this was a ‘hard one to get right’, a survey respondent suggested that Sleeping Giants was well placed to support marginalised voices.

There was more detailed discussion in the reference group of the challenges organisations face to engaging with people with lived experience. Key points raised included:

Base: Everyone who answered the question =28

- Maintaining lived experience participation and ensuring people can have a meaningful impact is difficult. Over time, people become familiar with the difficulties of changing a policy (e.g. because of lack of funds) and stop challenging organisations to do things differently.
- With training and support, community councils could become a *“really effective layer of interface with your community”*.

Other suggestions

We asked both survey respondents and those taking part in the reference group what else Sleeping Giants could do to support communities. These suggestions can be summarised under the following key themes:

Participation and community empowerment:

- Explore different models of empowering people including enabling young people to be better heard

Widening the reach of our capacity building support:

- Explore commissions from Funders across Scotland to provide pro-bono support for grassroots organisations
- Do more outreach work to make smaller groups across the region aware of the support Sleeping Giants can offer
- Support small organisations to bid for public sector contracts. The region’s Third Sector Interface has an officer in post to support this and it was suggested that a consortium approach could help organisations to be more competitive
- Build the capacity of organisations to make full use of the opportunities of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill (including developing consortia approaches to delivering goods, facilities and services)

Place based work:

- Support communities to use and benefit from community benefit funding from wind farms
- Continuing to support Local Place Planning and Community Action Planning where appropriate

Human rights and equalities

- Provide more help for organisations to support neurodivergent participants and employees
- Support public bodies to prepare for the Human Rights Act (if passed, rights on everyday essentials, Women's rights, rights related to race, disabled people's rights and the right to a healthy environment will be incorporated into law)
- Explore opportunities for collaborative working arrangements with small equalities focussed organisations across Scotland

Education, Training and Employability:

- Explore opportunities to build on previous work, in line with an increasing focus on employability and child poverty including the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee and No One Left Behind policy initiatives

Partnerships:

- Working more closely with Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway (and other TSIs where appropriate) around key areas of development
- Continuing to develop collaborations and partnerships with like-minded organisations

More broadly, a reference group member emphasised the importance of sustainability, where development rather than growth might be a more appropriate goal.



The focus group with Sleeping Giants provided an opportunity for the team to reflect on how they might better support capacity building. The funding model for capacity building was identified as a key challenge. Because there isn't funding for core capacity building work, small grassroots organisations need to secure their own funds to access Sleeping Giants support. The commissioned projects are then typically small and lack the benefits of economies of scale, which means that Sleeping Giants can spend more days delivering a project than are funded. To better manage the financial implications of this, limits have already been set on bid writing (Sleeping Giants no longer writes lower value funding applications) and a mix of larger and smaller scale projects identified as a necessary longer-term solution.

Sleeping Giants has been commissioned by the Holywood Trust (a local funder that supports work with young people) to provide capacity building consultancy to several of their grant holders. This model could be explored with other funders and consideration is being given to how best to develop relationships with these bodies to enable Sleeping Giants to support even more organisations.

There was also recognition of the need to become more enterprising through better monetising of Sleeping Giants' expertise. Lived experience panels were highlighted as an area where they could position themselves as the experts and explore potential opportunities around that. Sharing learning from the Empowering Women Panel was identified as important here.

The team also identified several other potential development opportunities such as strengthening relationships with development trusts and anchor organisations as another potential source of funding for capacity building work and upskilling the education workforce to better support young people and staff who are neurodivergent.



6. Conclusions and Recommendations for our Future

This evaluation is an important step in the development of our next strategic plan and will help us to demonstrate our impact to our clients and stakeholders. The findings give us renewed confidence in our work – clients and partners are overwhelmingly positive about the services we deliver and the difference they make. Our clients and partners also believe that we are well placed to strengthen our capacity building work and our position at the interface between large and small organisations. We are seen as a catalyst, capable of bringing about the changes needed to build capacity within communities.

The findings, together with our own reflections, highlight our strengths and provide indications of where our future focus should lie. In evidencing the quality and value of our existing services, these findings also remind us that our current work provides strong foundations on which we can build our next strategic plan.

We recommend that a key strategic objective should be sustaining and developing our current level of skills and expertise.

This report also sets out the different development opportunities identified in the evaluation process and our team and Board need to take time to reflect on the feasibility of each of these. But we think that are already actionable recommendations associated with some of these opportunities. These centre upon the development of our lived experience, capacity building and training services:

Lived Experience Participation

The Empowering Women Panel has been a significant part of our work over the past two years. The project has enabled our team to grow to a team of 5 and given Sleeping Giants a national profile. We've learned a lot about supporting marginalised women and how they can be heard in policy spaces. Clients and partners have told us that we're well placed to develop our lived experience work and we have a proven approach to participation. We believe that we can help other public sector organisations to better engage with marginalised groups.

We recommend that supporting organisations to embed lived experience voices within policy making is a key objective in our next strategic plan. If accepted, work should begin to explore opportunities on how best to achieve this, particularly given the budgetary and capacity constraints within the public sector.



Women on the Panel want us to continue supporting them and we value the relationships we've built with them. The National Advisory Council for Women and Girls has challenged us to support Panel members to become leaders in their community. Enabling members to do this could create a wider network of women connected to some of the most marginalised groups in Scotland. Together, we could enable more women and girls to be heard.

We recommend that Sleeping Giants builds on the platform created by the Empowering Women Panel and develops a plan to create a wider network of women and girls.

Capacity Building

The support we provide is valued by our clients and is making a difference to their organisation. But funding limits who we can work and we know that we need to explore other funding opportunities to support more grassroots organisations.

Our clients have also emphasised the importance of building the capacity for communities to be enterprising. Planned legislation around Community Wealth Building and South of Scotland Enterprise's strategic focus on 'activating and empowering enterprising communities' could be important enablers here. Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway's work with small organisations around winning public sector contracts is important too.

The reference group felt that there was also a role for Sleeping Giants here and that we could develop our work at the interface between smaller and larger organisations. It was suggested that enabling the flow of skills and expertise between organisations will become an increasingly important capacity building mechanism (and perhaps a necessary response to budgetary pressures). This could also be a potential solution to the identified need to better support new third sector managers, where there is a lack of capacity within their own organisation to provide the knowledge and skills they need.

We recommend that Sleeping Giants strengthens its connections with strategic partners and develops its position as an anchor organisation so that it can increase its capacity building offer.



Training

We have run 17 training sessions since we started delivering against our 2023-2026 strategic plan. Clients and partners told us that training is one of our key strengths and were supportive of our proposed new courses. It was also suggested that coaching could be a particularly valuable offer, particularly if it was to follow on from consultation or engagement work where an organisation lacks the skills and confidence to take the next steps.

We recommend that we build on our strengths as a training provider and use the findings from this evaluation to better promote the quality of our training offer. The availability of coaching, either as a standalone piece of work or as a broader package of support, could also be featured within future promotions.

Next Steps

The evaluation provides a valuable evidence base that can shape our future strategy but also to position ourselves as a quality capacity building social enterprise in our future tenders and funding applications. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the findings with our Board and work together to identify the actions that will enable us to sustain and develop our services.

