Why?

Why did we decide to put on an event to explore the more sensitive aspects of service design? It is because we recognise a movement is currently taking place in Scotland, fueled by a desire across sectors to improve service design.

We want to make sure that experiences and knowledge from the third sector are surfaced, shared and connected. Through this event, we merely scratched the surface of all the insights available in this vast field. However, we think it provides a strong foundation to build upon and continue exploring how we might *#DesignWithAll* in the future.

We are committed to take this work forward, by:

1. Connecting with the Scottish Government service design community platform to ensure the expertise of the third sector plays a part.
2. Organising future learning and networking opportunities for people in Scotland from any background to engage with design.

The next pages are summaries of the talks we heard, followed by some reflections and further provocations.

"We are the gatekeepers, we keep the monsters at bay"

Wojtek Kutyla *(independent service design consultant and trainer)* opened the day by reminding us that although we have a difficult task at hand – to include everyone in our design processes – it is achievable by breaking it down into small steps.

Some of the practical tips Wojtek shared were:

- Know who you are designing for
- Be aware that inclusion of some might imply exclusion of others
- Embed the people you are designing for in your design teams
- Collaborate with others and pass on good practice: "Good design is a bit like the flu"
- Apply the common sense you apply to your daily life to your work in the office too: ask people what's right for them before making something for them
- Take ownership of the shared responsibility we have to design things better
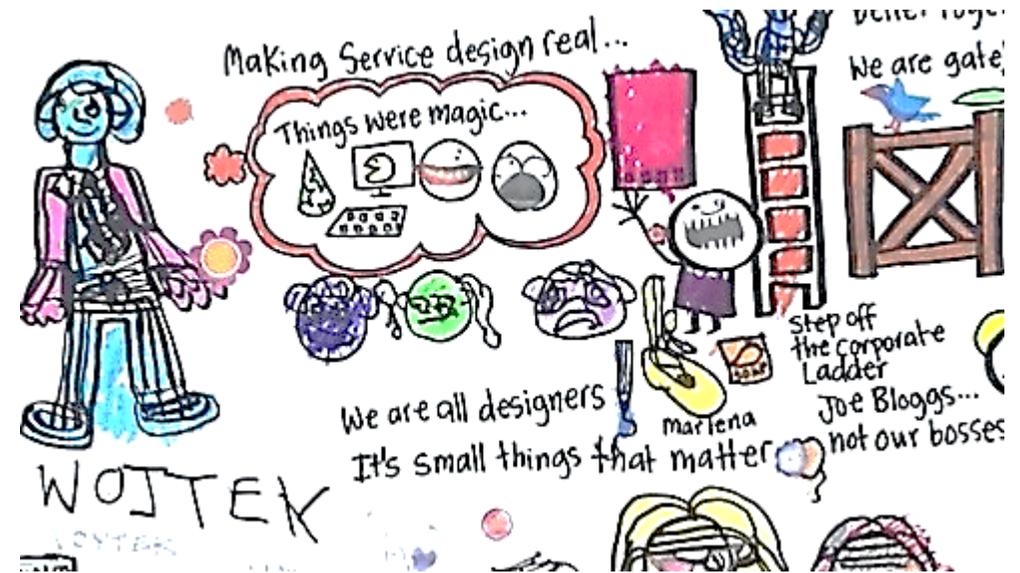
"We need to be hearing diverse voices to create change"

Zarina Ahmad *(Climate Change and Environment Officer, CEMVO)* started her talk from personal experience and highlighted some of the work she was involved in, which supported diverse communities to access government resources.

Key points to take away from Zarina's talk were:

- If equality is not embedded in tender documents, BME communities will not be able to access them.
- Extra resources (time and money) are needed to ensure equality of access. You will need to go out and build relationships from the ground up.
- Communication and cultural sensitivity are important: allow people to make their own informed choices.
- BME groups are not homogenous. They are diverse: consider diversity within diversity.
- Diversity brings a different perspective and this brings resilience, strength and effectiveness to a team.
- Consider the difference between equality and equity: people are at different starting points.
- And finally, if you are at the forefront, consider who is behind you. Open doors and help them to the front by being inclusive and fair.

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"Share information in a way that anyone can understand it"

Tina Yu *(Policy Officer, Sense Scotland)* introduced us to the topic of 'inclusive communication' and shared some useful resources and ways to ensure that our communications are accessible to everyone, in line with the Equality Act 2010. Tina highlighted that if services are designed right from the start, around the needs of all those that use them, they will be more cost effective, user friendly and fit for purpose.

Tina's practical tips were:

- As people with communication support needs might need support with understanding, expressing themselves or interacting with others, it is always best to ask how they want to be supported
- It is important to give people information about the event they will attend in plenty of time, so they can consider and make the necessary arrangements for the support they might need
- Be honest and look at your capacity - if you can provide accessible formats and let people know about it.
- If you can make changes to benefit 80 or 90% of people, you can then use more resources to concentrate on the remaining 10%.
- Some adjustments do not cost a lot, such as large print or 'text to read' software that you can email to someone. Ask people what their preferences are.

"You can be the bridge that supports the communication of the other person"

Lois Cameron *(Director, Talking Mats)* continued the thread of inclusive communication, bringing forward some of the insight gained through using Talking Mats, a visual communication framework which is "simple, but not simplistic."

The tool can reduce the impact of a communication disability and supports people of all ages regardless of their communication support needs.

Lois highlighted that in order to understand what we do not know and enable others to communicate their thoughts, we have to go through the difficult process of changing our own ways of communicating and programming. Talking Mats can give a structure to support this change by affecting the pace of the conversation, focusing attention on a third space (the Mat) and encouraging holding silences, which then allow the people with communication support needs more time to reflect and respond.

Lois also mentioned work they are doing with the Scottish Learning Disability Observatory in setting up a Citizens Jury to give their views on health. Learning from this ongoing project strengthened the messages already heard in the day: reaching out to new people and diverse people requires time, resources, hard work and creativity in finding new routes.

"Help Scotland be the world's first inclusive communication nation"

Derek Todd *(BSL consultant, deafscotland)* started his presentation by defining 'deafness': it includes people who are profoundly deaf, sign language users or hard of hearing. One in five people in Scotland have hearing loss of some form. It is an invisible condition, as people may not wish to disclose it or identify as deaf. Deaf people are four times more likely to struggle with mental health or anxiety and depression than the rest of the population.

Derek then continued with an invitation: let's work together to help achieve Scotland being the world's first inclusive communication nation. His tips for being more mindful of the needs of deaf people were:

- Deaf people want to be involved and contribute from the beginning, as everyone else, instead of being last to know about an opportunity because the inclusive communication resources were not there.
- By joining desfscotland, organisations can liaise with local deafness groups across Scotland or access training in deaf awareness and communication tactics.
- Establish good, inclusive communications from the outset rather than retrofitting, where possible. Always have subtitles or signed voiceover for videos and social media.
- Start afresh: work together and remember communication is a twoway process.
- Small steps matter: if you learn the basics of deaf awareness and communication tactics, you will make your organisation more approachable, so deaf people will be more likely to want to work with you.

"Start where you are and do what you can"

Clare Duncan *(Employability Development Officer, Fife Voluntary Action)* opened the afternoon discussions by talking about Delivering Differently, a project which aims to improve employment outcomes for people with mental health problems in Fife. It was started when data from 2015 highlighted that mental health and behavioural disorders were the biggest factor for social security claims in Fife, but only about 10% of employability resources were spent on this client group.

They chose a whole system approach, not fixing one element, but improving at all levels. They created a 'Team Experience' group, made up of people with lived experience, to look at solutions. In workshops, they aimed for a 50/50 split of staff and service users. In the end, 124 people participated and 40% had lived experience or were carers.

Some of the learning points Clare shared with the audience were:

- On occasion, boundaries were set to protect the participation of service users, such as not allocating places to professionals where there was a risk of them being outnumbered.
- The volunteers had ownership of their collective identity, choosing their own name and rules.
- There was appropriate recognition of the volunteers, with roles and boundaries, training opportunities and travel expenses paid.
- In meetings, they were invited as equal partners and if they could not attend, they had input by email or phone.
- Professionals let go of their labels to remove barriers to engagement: no PowerPoint, no lanyards, no badges.

"The plural of stories is culture"

Owen Fielding *(Business Operations Manager, Compass Brain Injury Specialists)* then ended the round of formal speakers by looking at how we might assess the impact that our services are having on the

people they are intended to serve. Starting from the acknowledgment that "it is usually the implementation, not the idea, which causes failure", Owen shared some tips from his experience of redesigning their service (including frameworks, pathways, outcomes) in partnership with service users, their families and commissioners:

- Listen in order to understand before you listen to respond.
- Know what you are trying to measure: finances, resilience or meaningful and inclusive engagement?
- Ask yourself: "what does it look like when it is working well" and work backwards from there. What is an ideal service?
- Collect impact stories from clients and make them visible.
- Hand over power and control, make it mutual so that it fuels the change eco-system.
- Implement yearly reviews and reflection sessions for your staff and communities. Practice with your staff what you practice with your service users.

Bonus speaker: audience contribution

Ross McIntosh, a student at the Glasgow School of Art, also offered to share insights from his own experience and 4th year project. Ross' self-initiated brief through the Robertson trust self development board allowed him to develop a project to explore communicating his own Asperger's, as well as autism as a spectrum. Until the development of the project, Ross had never told his classmates that he was autistic, so the project also functioned as an auto-ethnography which allowed him to achieve a positive personal outcome.

Ross developed a multi-dimensional tool and communication kit, which showed that autism is in our DNA - it is who we all are. It allows communication with other people and building a bridge between neurotypical and autistic people, through progressive conversations. It led up to a public awareness campaign for autism awareness week. Anyone can try the tool and see how autistic they are and if they are pleased with it, they can embrace their autism.

More information on Ross' project can be found at: https://mastermcintosh.myportfolio.com/spectrum

Audience discussion

The ensuing audience discussion following on from all the speakers was centred around how we might, as individuals, challenge exclusionary practices when we come across them. Advice from the speakers was to collect and present objective evidence that shows the organisation / service is failing its mission to serve society. However, this requires courage and you might be seen as a 'trouble maker'. To avoid this altogether, we need to initiate a management process where we flip service design to an asset-based participative model, where the people with lived experience have first say on what an ideal service looks like and how it functions.

Summary

Looking back at the audience expectations, captured at the beginning of the session and summarised in the following word cloud, we believe the event addressed some general needs.

Participants told us that they learned about:

- Embracing design as "common sense"
- Professional development and networking opportunities
- Importance of small steps and sharing stories
- "Diversity within diversity" / Intersectionality
- New ways on engaging and communicating
- Transparency with stakeholders whether positive or negative views
- The value of setting boundaries to protect citizen participation and reaching beyond lived experience

They also told us that they will take the following actions in the future:

- Look at own project plans and embedding more inclusivity to increase ability to participate for seldom heard people. Use co-creation and production approaches, as well as other existing resources to gather different perspectives. Will think about what people can do, not what they can't do, considering people's strengths first.

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- Take time to access the tools and websites mentioned by the speakers.
- Accept it is okay to get it wrong. Will be more open to making mistakes and learning from them.
- Work together across organisations, departments etc and share learning and good practice (i.e. IRISS toolkit for co-creation and production: https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/tools/co-production-project-planner). Will seek clear leadership and equality in authority of partners.
- Will aim for more clarity in communication; clear messages linked to ethics / values. Will consider own and other people's language too.
- Establish more organic processes to suit diversity in our communities. Will work closer with funders to improve tender processes and help embed collaboration culture.

However, we have also identified additional gaps and questions to be tackled in the future. Participants told us they needed further advice on:

- **Service design generally**
  - What are services? How do they link in with systems?
  - How do we map the benefits of service design? – determining what is negotiable and conserving energy for where we can best make an impact?
  - Where do we find advocacy support, within our organisations and externally?

- **Building our capacity to do service design**
  - How do we find time and prioritise this work, in the context where people are doing outreach and engagement on top of their day jobs?
  - Where can we access training on service design?

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- **Supporting participation in service design**
  - How do we establish clear processes and frameworks for participation? Which are the tried and tested approaches we could draw on?
  - How do we ensure compassion, dignity, respect when supporting people with difficult lives to contribute to our projects?
  - How do we ensure we get and different experiences in the room and facilitate the meeting sensitively? Do we need to limit group sizes?
  - Can we help people get advocacy support too? (this again sounds like two separate points in different sections?)
  - What is the impact of monetary payments for participation?
  - Can we access financial support for travel, accessibility etc?

Next steps

Having considered the learning from the day, the group conversations that took place and the feedback from participants, we feel that it is important to continue this work. By providing further opportunities to discuss service design and the inclusion of diverse communities, we hope to be able to establish a community ourselves, of like-minded people committed to aligning our values and building a culture of equity of access and inclusion.

As mentioned at the beginning of this document, we are committed to take this work forward, by:

1. Connecting with the Scottish Government service design community platform to ensure the expertise of the third sector plays a part.

2. Organising future learning and networking opportunities for people in Scotland from any background to engage with design.

If you would like to join us on this journey and take part or host any upcoming events and learning opportunities, please do get in touch with us at:

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