



Access Panel Network

Training Guides

What is an
Access Panel?



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An Access Panel is a group of disabled people, carers and people with a genuine interest in equality for people with disabilities. Access Panels work towards improving equality in its widest sense for disabled people at a local and national level. Some of the earliest Access Panels have been operating for nearly thirty years, whilst new panels are being formed across Scotland on an ongoing basis.

Access Panels are often the first point of contact for Local Authorities and other Public Bodies on disability related issues in the area. They can be involved in issues such as reviewing Planning Applications and developments from an access perspective, improving services and providing a source for the views of disabled people to be heard on many other things. They are also often involved in providing feedback to Local and Central Government on policies and frameworks which affect disabled people and the wider community.

Access Panels publish guides, leaflets and posters to raise awareness about social inclusion and about their work. They also provide information to local businesses, organisations and tradesmen, and promote award schemes in recognition of good practice.

There are many benefits to having an Access Panel. These include raising awareness of equality issues, encouraging social inclusion and helping create an accessible environment for all. Access Panels also have a real input to the decisions and policies of statutory bodies and other organisations, concerning access and other issues which affect disabled people.



What is expected from an Access Panel Member?

The amount of time that is spent on work for the Access Panel is entirely up to the individual, as each member of the Panel is a volunteer. Any time that you contribute to your Access Panel is greatly appreciated.

The Access Panel will always use the skills and experience that its volunteers are already in possession of. However, training and funding is available through the Scottish Disability Equality Forum to provide volunteers with the opportunity to further develop their skills and knowledge.

Your time with your Access Panel should be enjoyable, so it helps to have a genuine interest in such topics as disability, equality and accessibility. The most important thing to remember is not to feel overloaded with work. An Access Panel works as a team, growing and developing along with its members, with the common aim of promoting equality for all disabled people in the community.

Visit us at accesspanelnetwork.org.uk



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