

Recovery Walk Scotland 2014: Our reflections

Introduction

Recovery Walk Scotland 2014 took place in Edinburgh on Saturday 27 September 2014. Approximately 500 people in recovery, their friends, supporters and families met in Johnston Terrace to walk down the Royal Mile and gather in Holyrood Park as part of the event.

Our aim

This year the Scottish Recovery Consortium (SRC) aimed to host Scotland's second national recovery walk in a location that was visible and central to public life. We achieved this aim by deciding to hold Recovery Walk Scotland 2014 in Edinburgh with a route that included the Royal Mile and the Scottish Parliament.

Event planning

A working group that was attended by volunteers from various recovery communities met twice, once in Glasgow and once in Edinburgh. The SRC met with Edinburgh City Council to secure permission to hold the event in Edinburgh and with Crewtec, our contracted event management company, to discuss the various health and safety requirements required.

The event

We know that approximately 500 people joined us in Edinburgh for Recovery Walk Scotland 2014. Participants were asked to gather from 9.30am and the walk began at 10.00am. The walk route led the group down the Royal Mile, past the Scottish Parliament and into Holyrood Park for a short rally. Invited speakers from various areas across the country spoke about both their personal recovery and recovery communities within their local area. The event was brought to a close with the Serenity Prayer before 12 noon.

Were we successful in achieving our aim?

Yes.

Practical matters

We know that the following matters could be improved upon;

- Build in more time for event promotion as this year we worked to a very short timescale
- The provision of limited catering and toilet facilities
- Consider holding a longer event to allow more time for people to mingle.

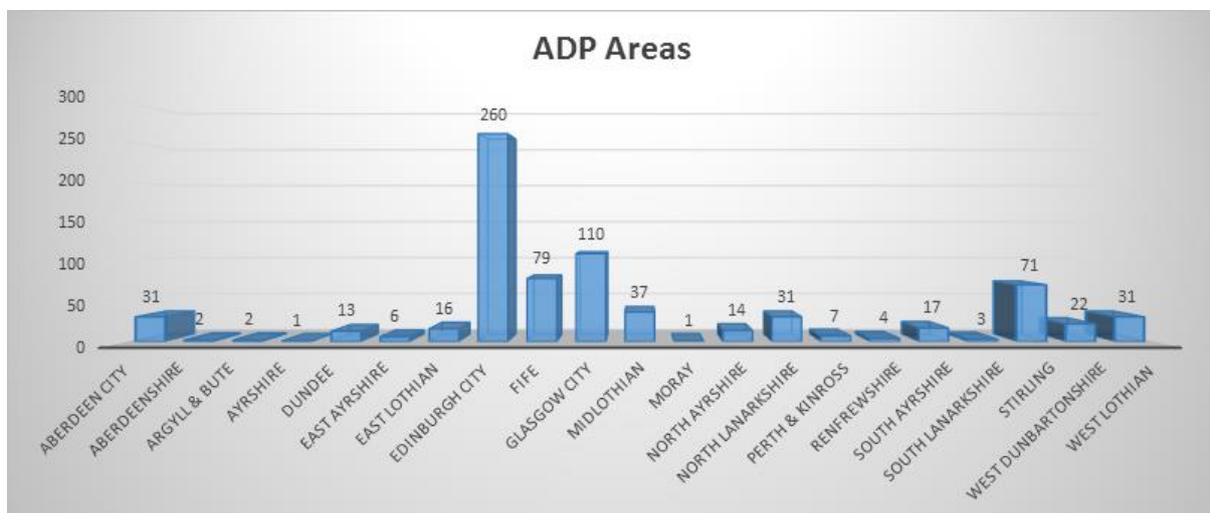
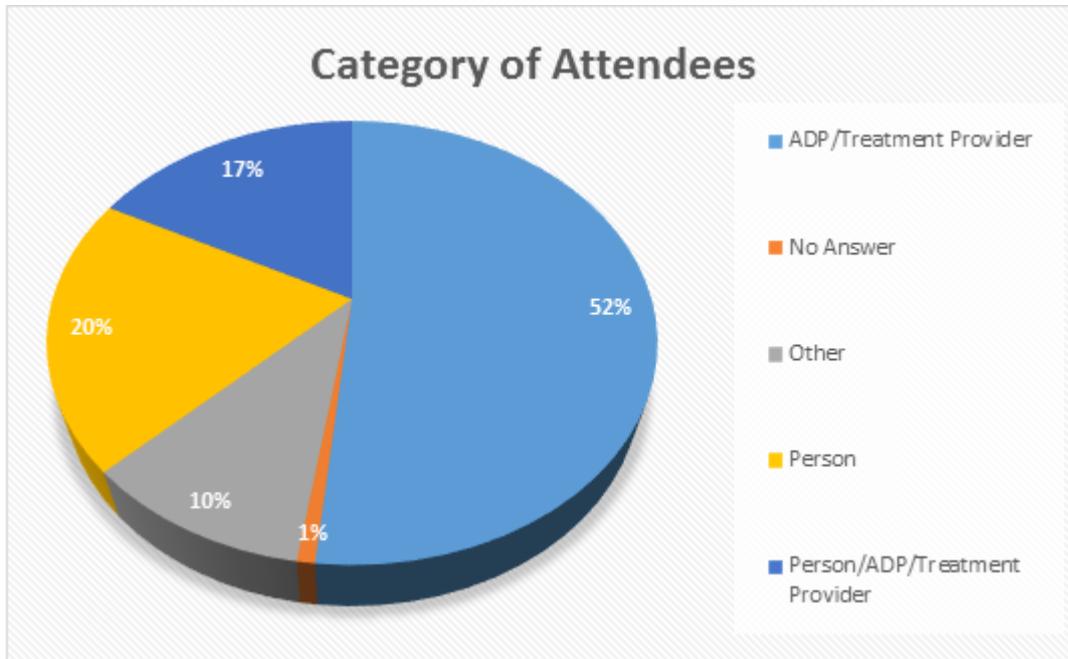
Finances

This year the SRC had a modest budget to host Recovery Walk Scotland and this resulted in necessary changes to the event format that was created last year for Recovery Walk Scotland 2013. The organisation responded to this challenge with determination to host a simple event that would provide the opportunity to celebrate recovery in Scotland.

We are very grateful to the Scottish Government who kindly provided additional funds to support event training for our Team Consortium volunteers and the infrastructure needed to host a professional and safe event.

Attendance

The following graphs highlight the data gathered from the Recovery Walk Scotland 2014 registration form. They show both category breakdown of those who registered to attend the event and registration by ADP area.



Stewards

Team Consortium volunteers acted as stewards for the event alongside a small group of professional stewards who were provided by Crewtec.

Feedback

The SRC created a SurveyMonkey questionnaire and circulated this to the Recovery Walk Scotland registration list for completion. We received 37 responses and a selection of the information that was received is as follows:

Did being part of Recovery Walk Scotland 2014 help your own personal recovery?

Yes	51.35%
No	5.41%
I attended as a friend of recovery	43.24%

How often should Scotland host a Recovery Walk?

Every year	97.30%
Every two years	2.40%

In which Scottish city should the next Recovery Walk Scotland take place and why?

Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee were the most popular answers to this question.

Visibility of Recovery: Initial impact

The initial impact of Recovery Walk Scotland 2014 can be tracked online as we made a conscious effort to share both footage and comment on the day of the event.

Amateur iPhone footage was posted to the SRC Facebook page on the evening of the event and reached over 2000 people. Kuladharini wrote a blog to reflect on the event which was read by 80 people on 27 September and reached 637 people through our Facebook page.

Visibility of Recovery: Developing impact

A professional film of the event was released on 3 October 2014 and it has been viewed by over 3000 people through our Facebook page.

International impact

Scotland has participated in international recovery month by establishing an annual recovery walk in September and reached an international audience through our Facebook, Twitter and website. The work in building recovery in Scotland is attracting attention and recognition on an International stage.

What did we learn?

We learned the following points from planning Recovery Walk Scotland 2014:

- It was a real benefit to have the support of professional stewards who worked well with police to ensure that the event ran to time and that the health and safety of participants was prioritised. Team Consortium stewards were a huge asset to the event and worked well with the professional crew.
- In future we would plan to avoid holding events on days when another national recovery event is taking place.
- We would also build in more time for event promotion.
- Finally, a sense of expectation around catering and content of the event was not met which is unfortunate. We are aware that the majority of participants will be unaware of the cost associated with staging a national event and that the organisation was working with a much smaller budget for this event than in 2013. We will bear this feedback in mind when planning future events.

October 2014