

Merseyside Expanding Horizons

Evaluation of the 'Be Inspired' Event

Introduction

Merseyside Expanding Horizons (hereafter referred to as MEH) organised the 'Be Inspired' event to celebrate achievement and to inspire and motivate the people of Merseyside. MEH is a partnership of Merseyside based voluntary and public sector agencies with specialist skills in the direct delivery and commission of services for people facing social exclusion. MEH recognised that issues of exclusion and inclusion are often presented in a negative way and as a problem to be tackled. By altering the focus of the discussion, from negative to positive, MEH wanted to showcase inspirational stories of how local and national faces overcame barriers they faced and achieved their ambitions.

Community Concepts Ltd, along with a number of local and national organisations and funding pots¹, supported this event through sponsorship. Community Concepts Ltd also provided evaluation support and in partnership with MEH, developed and produced a short but effective evaluation sheet. The evaluation sheet was printed on yellow paper (to make it distinct against other inserts within the pack) and was included in each delegate pack.

The purpose of this evaluation was to measure the impact of the event and to find out how useful the event will be to those who attended. In order to aid MEH's development of a series of events/conferences, the evaluation also sought to capture general information about the format of the event including venue suitability, catering, and length.

Questions one, two and five asked attendants to score their answer on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. Additional comments were requested to qualify the answers given and to enable MEH gain a better understanding of any issues arising. All the comments given are listed as appendix 1.

In total, 57 evaluation forms were received.

Question analysis

Question one sought to identify the usefulness of the event; '**On a scale of 1-5, how useful did you find today's event**'.

¹ NWDA, Business Link Greater Merseyside, European Social Fund, Big Lottery Fund, LSC Greater Merseyside, Go-NW and Pulse Regeneration.

61% found the event very useful, giving it a score of 5. Everyone found the event very useful and no score under 3 was given. The comments given underlined the value of the event:

“I found the whole workshop and experience very inspirational and motivational”

“The event lived up to its title and exceeded my expectations. I have been inspired by the speakers”

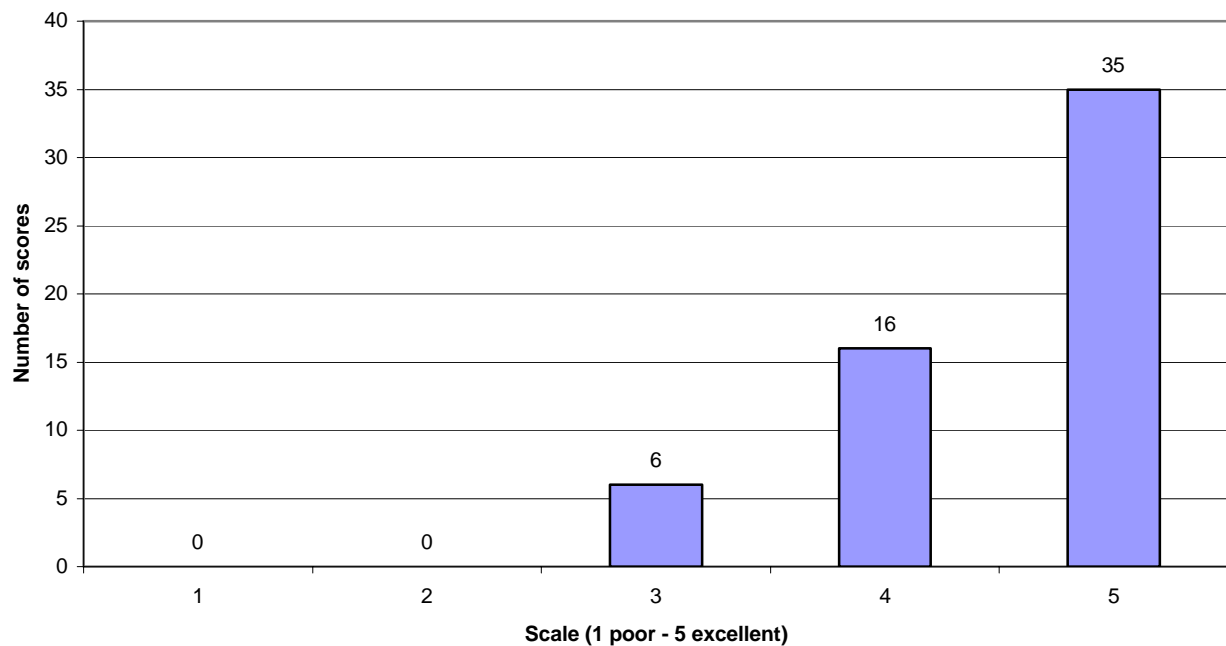
“Enabling me to have the courage to move forward”

“It has been very inspiring”

“Inspiring to all people to achieve in spite of difficult challenges. Would have liked workshops”

“Highly motivating and inspiring”

Question 1: How useful did you find the event?



Question two asked ‘**how inspiring did you find the event?**’ The majority of attendees found the event very inspirational with 82% scoring the event 5. Again the comments reinforce the significance of the stories told by the speakers and the impact that they had upon the audience:

“There should be no excuse for not doing what you feel like doing for yourself to succeed in life”

“I found the event to be an excellent motivator – an antidote to cynicism and jaded views”

“Those people are amazing – real life stories”

“Being with people who have a vision, confidence and shared interest whether women or anyone else. Support very crucial”

“Simon Weston; a living inspiration”

“Simon and Karen being so positive on life was the most inspiring to me, just seeing how strong they are and have been”

“Hearing about other people’s inspirational lives and how they have affected others through their determination”

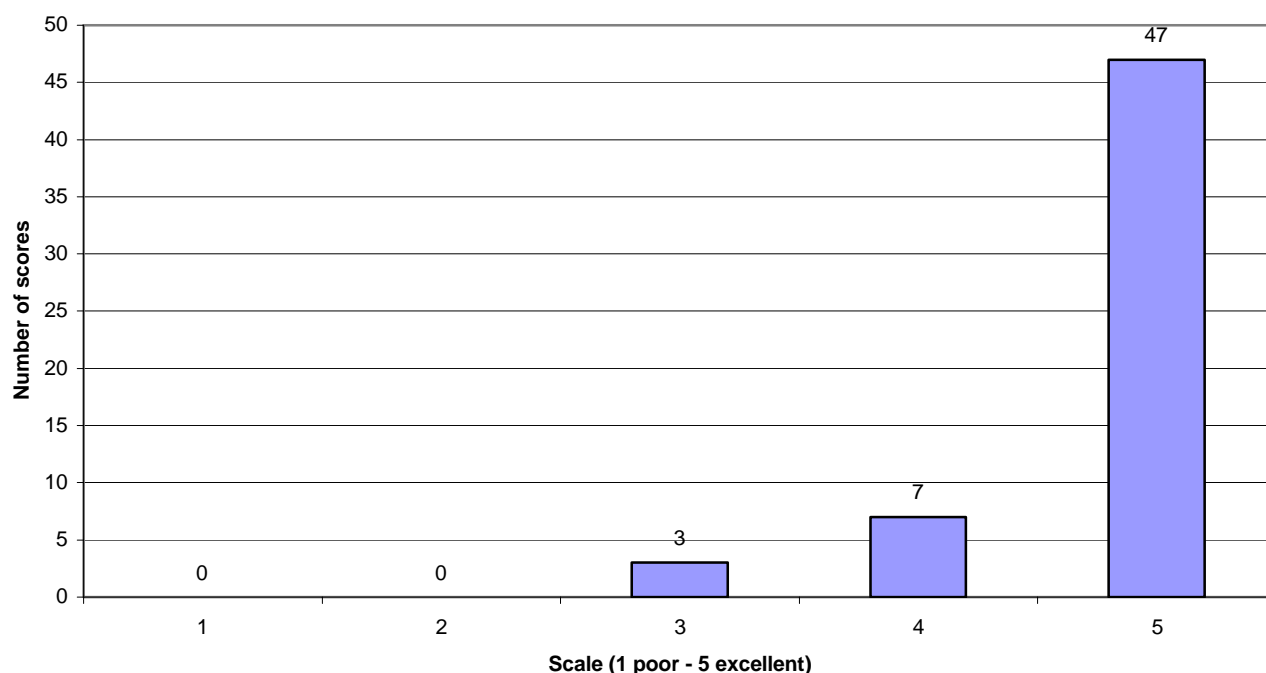
“Was very motivating”

“Meeting delegates who have overcome such difficulties Simon and Karen Darke quite inspirational”

“This was real life people sharing real experiences”

“Each speaker had a positive impact and message to give”

Question 2: How inspiring did you find this event?



Question 3 asked ‘do you think that today’s event will help you in working within your own organisation?’ The majority, 52 out of 57, felt that attending this event would assist them in working within their own organisation. Only 2 said that it would not help them. Some of the examples of ways in which attending the event will help them in their organisation included:

“I will use the experience of the speakers to motivate some of my committee members to stop giving excuses for not achieving our goals”

“A reminder that a bit of motivation/training can re-awaken the enthusiasm that started the organisation”

“I hope so. I feel motivated to do more things & hopefully I can transfer this to my team and children I work with”

“Not directly but will encourage young people to believe in themselves”

“It will make us want to work together as a team, even more than we already do”

“Feel more motivated”

“Reality, focus, determination”

“Re-invigorate my own enthusiasm”

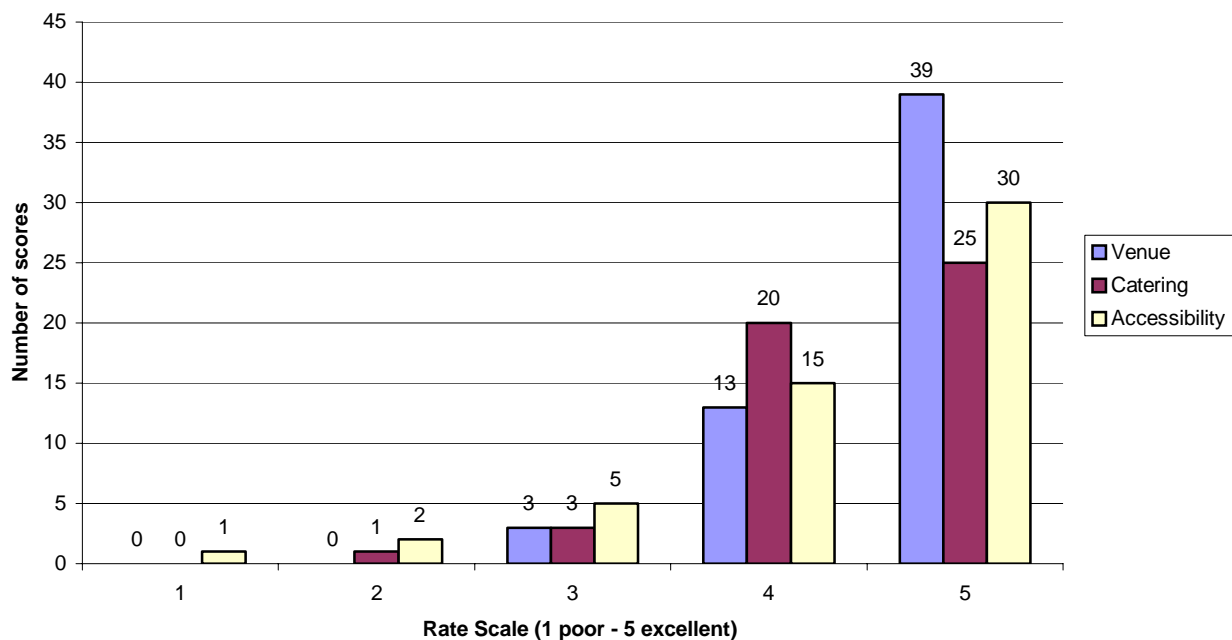
“How Now Wow”

Question 4 sought to identify whether the event was a good opportunity to attendees to network: **‘was today’s event a good opportunity for you to network with members of other community organisations and potential support groups’**. Whilst the event wasn’t intended to be a networking event as such, the coffee break and lunch were an opportunity for individuals to network and to discuss the morning session. Nevertheless, 82% said that the event was a good opportunity to network with members of other community organisations and potential support groups.

As this event is intended to be the first of a series of themed events and conferences, it is important to identify the level of satisfaction with the venue and to ensure that it is accessible to everyone. Question 5 asked attendees to rate the suitability of and the quality of the venue, catering and accessibility; **Question 5: On the scales below please rate the suitability of the venue and the quality of the venue, catering and accessibility.** The venue and catering received, overall, very high scores with over 70% rating the venue and catering either 4 or 5. Accessibility of the venue was however, an issue for a number of attendees with 3 people commenting that parking was a particular problem.

Question 6 gave respondents the opportunity to comment on the structure of the event. **Question 6: ‘Do you have any comments to make about the structure of today’s event’.** 50 answered ‘about right’ with 2 indicating they thought it was too short and 1 too long. The attendee indicating the event was ‘too long’ qualified this with a comment – *“can’t afford 4 hours away from the office”*.

Question 5: Rating of the venue, catering and accessibility



A variety of mediums were used to promote this event and in identifying the most effective medium, question 8 asked attendees ‘**how did you find out about today’s event**’. Most attendees found out about the Be Inspired Event through the leaflet (13), Merseyside Disability Foundation (MDF) or email (5). No body acknowledged the radio advert and only 1 attendee acknowledged seeing the advert in New Start.

To assist MEH in their development of a programme of similar events, question 9 gave attendees the opportunity to make suggestions on potential themes; **Question 9; would you be interested in attending similar events? If so, please state what themes/topics you would find the most useful.** A great deal of interest was expressed in attending future similar events with 30 respondents either stating ‘yes’ or suggesting a potential theme. A variety of themes were suggested which included:

- Social Inclusion/Barriers to inclusion (14)
- BME issues including event on achievement of black led organisation
- Pro’s and con’s of working in Liverpool and the barriers faced
- Governance/Quality assurance (2)
- Social enterprise (1)
- Other inspiring events such as today (2)
- Community development (1)
- Personal development (1)
- Disability (1)

Questions 7 and 10 enabled attendees to comment on the theme and suitability of the speakers; **Question 7: Do you have any comments regarding the theme and suitability of the guest speakers; Question 10: Further comments ...** An analysis of the comment received demonstrates that the event was very well received by all attendees. Most of the comments given were very positive about both the theme and the suitability of the guests. Much praise was given to Simon Weston and Karen Darke in particular. The interactive elements of Karen’s presentation were particularly well

received. Overall, the comments generated by the event were full of praise for the event and the speakers.

“Brill”

“Very good”

“All fantastic”

“Excellent range and diversity”

Other comments made included:

“Good variety of speakers”

“Thought it worked really well”

“I think that everybody especially younger people should be more involved in these events to firstly plant a seed for success”

“A very informative and enjoyable event”

“Thanks”

“Wonderful! I feel totally inspired”

“Fantastic!! Great facilities, great access, great event”

“Our thanks for an excellent morning”

“Thank you”

Summary

This event was very well received by those who attended. This evaluation has shown that the speakers were inspirational and the event interesting and motivating and that the majority would attend future similar events.

Appendix: Evaluation data and comment

Number of evaluations received: 57

1. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent) how useful did you find today's event?

1	2	3	4	5
		6	16	35

Please explain your answer to Q1. What in particular did you find/not find useful?

- *I found the whole workshop and experience very inspirational and motivational*
- *The event lived up to its title and exceeded my expectations. I have been inspired by the speakers*
- *Made me think*
- *Very good speakers, national and local*
- *It has filled my perceptions and given me new targets*
- *Good speakers*
- *Inspirational*
- *Having interesting amusing speakers – the time flew by*
- *The conference and speakers were excellent, a great inspiration to us all*
- *I found the inspirational/guest speakers good – however I found some of the speakers too specific to Blackburne House rather than inspirational in general*
- *I thought Simon and Karen were very inspiring so beneficial for us all. I didn't find Blackburne house staff useful at all!*
- *Everything*
- *Hearing the stories of Karen, Simon and Claire*
- *Has given me direction and the will to achieve fresh goals*
- *The belief I can. Taking the positivity and diversity in the room back 'out there'*
- *Quality and diversity of speakers*
- *Put things in perspective for me*
- *How to be more confident*
- *Networking opportunities – key speakers Simon Weston and Karen Darke inspirational*
- *Enabling me to have the courage to move forward*
- *It has been very inspiring*
- *Good elements in each speech*
- *Motivation and networking*
- *Found it was truly inspirational as promised in the format*
- *Good to see speakers but audience too passive, no interaction*
- *I found the stories motivating and enjoyable*
- *Found it to be very interesting and motivating finding out about the experiences available for women in Blackburne House*
- *Inspiring to all people achieve in spite of difficult challenges. Would have liked workshops*
- *Highly motivating and inspiring*
- *The inspiration of hearing from individuals about their own experiences*
- *Good range of speakers – provoking issues*

2. How inspiring did you find the event?

1	2	3	4	5
		3	7	47

Please explain your answer to Q2. What did you find most inspiring?

- *There should be no excuse for not doing what you feel like doing for yourself to succeed in life*
- *I found the event to be an excellent motivator – an antidote to cynicism and jaded views*
- *The talks from Simon and Karen*
- *Finding out how people have had terrible accidents but got on with their lives and don't dwell in the past*
- *Different stories*
- *Very*
- *Those people are amazing – real life stories*
- *Being with people who have a vision, confidence and shared interest whether women or anyone else. Support very crucial*
- *Simon Weston; a living inspiration*
- *The 2nd student who spoke from Blackburne House; a modern day inspiration*
- *Karen was amazing – excellent*
- *Q&A session*
- *The talk from Simon Weston – excellent*
- *Simon and Karen being so positive on life was the most inspiring to me, just seeing how strong they are and have been*
- *Hearing about other people's inspirational lives and how they have affected others through their determination*
- *Was very motivating*
- *Makes you realise how fortunate we are*
- *Very inspiring – felt privileged to hear all the speaker's journeys*
- *Very inspiring and a chance to focus on oneself and well as think of others*
- *Belief in what everyone can achieve*
- *Simon Weston showed how you can think you are 'rock bottom' but you can fight back and lead a happy life*
- *The speakers – a chance to look at yourself and your life*
- *Meeting delegates who have overcome such difficulties Simon and Karen Darke quite inspirational*
- *Karen Darke and the mountain expedition now achieved and showing anyone can do same*
- *Karen Darke*
- *Karen's speech – models, theories and interaction*
- *Karen and Simon's talks*
- *The speakers*
- *All the speakers particularly Karen and Simon*
- *Encouraging attitudes of all speakers and the commitment they have to inspire others to reach their potential*
- *Personal experience/testimonies*
- *Karen's story and how it is really an issue of mind over matters*
- *Especially Karen – listening to her positive attitude*

- *This was real life people sharing real experiences*
- *Each speaker had a positive impact and message to give*
- *All of the four speakers in their own way*

3. Do you think that today’s event will help you in working within your own organisation? Please explain how.

YES	NO
52	2

- *I will use the experience of the speakers to motivate some of my committee members to stop giving excuses for not achieving our goals*
- *A reminder that a bit of motivation/training can re-awaken the enthusiasm that started the organisation*
- *Yes today’s event has shown me even more that life is worth living to the full and you are the maker of your own success however big or small*
- *It will help us when giving advice and support to members*
- *Giving us the tools to have a more positive outlook on my life and through this enabling young disabled children to make decisions about their life*
- *Hopefully when I return to the office I will inspire all who I work with re the future of our organisation*
- *I hope so. I feel motivated to do more things & hopefully I can transfer this to my team and children I work with.*
- *Not directly but will encourage young people to believe in themselves*
- *It will make us want to work together as a team, even more than we already do*
- *It has helped me to re-focus on what I can achieve and how I can possibly inspire others*
- *I will pass on what I have heard to groups I work with*
- *Will work together to overcome obstacles*
- *Feeling inspired will help me to inspire others to reach their potential*
- *By staying positive and believing in oneself and my students to believe and make a difference*
- *Help people to achieve what they want – at work and at home*
- *I have overcome many obstacles in my life but I now feel inspired to leave the past behind me and move forward*
- *Contacts made*
- *Work for a disability organisation now.*
- *Feel more motivated*
- *Reality, focus, determination*
- *Re-invigorate my own enthusiasm*
- *How Now Wow*
- *Good examples of how barriers (as such) can be confronted and how personal qualities important*
- *Really good*
- *Take a lot of the issues away and look at we can inspire those were work with*
- *It has helped me to refocus on setting achievable goals*

4. Was today’s event a good opportunity for you to network with members of other community organisations and potential support groups?

YES	NO
47	10

Limited – not the purpose if the event

5. Please rate the suitability of the venue and the quality of the:

	1	2	3	4	5
Venue			3	13	39
Catering		1	3	20	25
Accessibility	1	2	5	15	30

- *The agenda was fine but not being able to get parking for more than 2 hours on the pay and display, forced us to leave early as the agenda was for 3 hours+*
- *But it was cold and there were noisy interruptions from latecomers (so start event later)*

6. Do you have any comments to make about the structure of today's event?

Too long	Too short	About right
1*	2	50

- *Could do with a chance to move in between 1st and 3rd speakers. Interactive q's from KD great!*
 - *Excellent*
- * *Can't afford 4 hours away from office*

7. Do you have any comments regarding the theme and suitability of guest speakers?

- *A good balance of experience*
- *Brill*
- *Very good*
- *All fantastic*
- *Excellent range and diversity*
- *Excellent choice*
- *The guest speakers were brilliant. The women from BH were an inspiration to all women*
- *[Although I appreciate that the event was held in Blackburne House, & therefore a brief history of the house I didn't find Clare Dove's speech inspiring or useful although it was interesting]. Inspiring! What more can I say. Great cross-section of people.*
- *I don't think the Blackburne House staff should have been as involved as they were as the only inspiring speakers were Simon and Karen.*
- *Excellent choice of speakers*
- *Excellent*

- *Simon Weston & Karen Darke were promoting inspiration. Blackburne House were promoting themselves*
- *Excellent main speakers*
- *Excellent choice of inspirational speakers*
- *Excellent*
- *Wonderful*
- *Both guest speakers were amazing*
- *Blackburne House speakers were flat against the other 2 speakers*
- *Very good*
- *Inspirational*
- *Very good choice*
- *Good variety of speakers*
- *Thought it worked really well*

8. How did you find out about today's event?

Leaflet	MEH Newsletter	New Start	Liverpool Community Network website	Radio advert	Other
13	3	1	4		1

Other:

Email – 5

Groundwork – 1

MER 1

Blackburne House – 1

MDF – 6

Colleague – 3

MEH staff – 2

Invitation – 2

Whitechapel Centre – 1

Community Group – 1

Word of Mouth - 1

9. Would you be interested in attending similar events? If so, please state what themes/topics you would find the most useful.

Yes (8)

Yes to organise events on the achievements of black-led organisations. The pro's and cons of working in Liverpool and the barriers we have to face. How they can and hopefully gain future financial support from within the VCS

Yes, inspiring events, increasing confidence

Regeneration, community development, BME/Refugee issues, quality assurance

Social inclusion, BME, Disability

All seminars on offer such as disability in part of BME and SI

BME issues, education, personal development

Social Inclusion (13)

Barriers to inclusion

Governance

Social enterprise

Other inspiring events such as today

10. Further comments

- *I think that everybody especially younger people should be more involved in these events to firstly plant a seed for success*
- *A very informative and enjoyable event*
- *Thanks*
- *Wonderful! I feel totally inspired.*
- *Fantastic!! Great facilities, great access, great event.*
- *I feel that a total disregard for such a prominent speaker was shown by the late arrivals. Late arrivals should be made to sit in a separate room with a video link. Mobile phones should be switched off as a number of phones received text etc.*
- *Blackburne House colleagues did not fit in with today's event, their speeches were about their company not about life changing experiences (very self-centred)*
- *Future events should not be about promoting other companies as that's not what we came to listen to, other than that a thoroughly enjoyable and inspirational event. Thank you.*
- *Excellent different type of event concentrating on the positive and not concentrating on the negative. Feel uplifted and motivated to believe in work and my life*
- *Thank you*
- *Thoroughly enjoyed it. Many thanks*
- *Our thanks for an excellent morning*
- *Thank you*
- *Good experience*
- *Room was very cold!*
- *The room was freezing!*
- *Most enjoyable and thought provoking*
- *Very good seminar*