

Analysis of Community Champions Programme -Award winners 2002 and 2003-

**The Scarman Trust NE
June 2005**

Analysis of Community Champions Award winners 2002 and 2003

Executive Summary

This survey of awardees of the DFES Community Champions Award programme 2002 and 2003, administered by GO-NE and managed by the Scarman Trust NE identified the following:-

- The majority of Champions 37(77%) indicated that this was their first time in undertaking a community project. (source. question 1)
- Nearly half of Champions 23(48%), indicated that being a Champion had helped them attend training of which 10(20%), had gained a qualification. (source. question 2)
- Six (12%) Champions had gained employment, a further two indicating they had established their own business or got a better job. (source. question 2)
- Champions reported good levels of confirmation against a range of potential skills they could have developed (fund raising, presentation, organisational etc.) (source. question 3)
- The most frequently recorded skill developed was 'confidence', 41(85%) (source. question 3)
- Under post award activity, Champions reported an increase in their activity in the community with 38(79%) reporting this outcome. (source. question 4)
- Young people had been the main theme of Community Champions awards 12(25%) in 2002-2003 (source. question 5)
- At least 11 different types of project were supported through the programme, demonstrating its support for a wide diversity of activities within the NE community (source. question 5)
- Approximately 50% of awardees accessed further funding.
- Estimated hours invested by Community Champions came to 10,623. (This time, multiplied by ESF guidance on the average cost per hour of volunteer time (£15.00) represents £159,000 of activity invested into local communities, well over a 100% return on the initial award investment.)

- 234 volunteers engaged in project implementation or an average of each of the 48 Champions engaging an additional 5 people.
- The total number of hours committed by volunteers was 9156 representing an average of 39 hours per volunteer.
- Additional funds of £157,471 were raised, or an average of £6841 per Champion.
- Value 'in-kind' of volunteer and Champions time, with additional fund raising represented a total of £453,471 a return of 300% on the initial GO-NE investment of £136,000 (excluding administration charges of £24,000) over two years. (sources. question 6)
- The most commonly reported beneficiaries of Champions' projects were young people, 17(35%). The second most commonly reported group were disabled people, 7(14%) (source. question 7)
- The majority of Champions 35(73%) recalled receiving additional follow up advice and guidance (source. question 8)
- The majority of Champions, 36(75%), indicated that their project was ongoing. (source. question 10)
- In indicating their future plans, 35(73%) Champions were to develop their project further, 18(37%) adding new project activities to their initial project and 11(23%) being inspired to take forward a new project. (source. question 11)
- Follow up support focused on requests for further fund raising advice 23(48%), peer support 18(37%), followed by project development 17 (35%), and book keeping 16(33%). (source. question 12)
- Fifteen,(31%) of Champions indicated an immediate interest in developing their community development skills further, and a total of 22(45%) Champions indicated an interest in being contacted about training opportunities in the future. (source. question 13)
- The age group of Champions over 2002-2003 was predominantly in the grouping 26 – 49 years at 25(52%), the second most recorded age range being 50 – 65 years at 12 (25%) and lastly the 66 years plus at 7(15%). (source. question 14)
- The majority of Champions were either employed part time 9(18%),or retired, 8(17%). The total number of Champions in employment (part / full-time or self employed) was 19(40%). (source. question 15)

Can Do

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- The majority of Scarman Champions, 40(83%) were of white / British origin. The next most common response was that of 'other' 3(6%), which recorded ethnicity of Iranian, black African and middle eastern. (source. question 16)
- The most frequently reported level of qualification was degree or post graduate, 13(27%). 52% of Champions held A levels or higher.
- An aggregation of 'no qualifications' or lower levels (CSE, other, o – levels) showed that 15(31%) of all Champions were in this category. (sources. question 17)

Analysis of Community Champions Award winners 2002 and 2003

Thanks

Firstly our thanks to Ark 19 (Anita and Monica) and the Fiery Souls (Alice, Alan and Carl) who tirelessly helped in carrying out these telephone interviews between March and April 2005.

Background and methodology

The survey was designed to gain an insight into the benefits of the DFES Community Champions programme as administered by the Scarman Trust, in association with Ark 19 in the North East of England for the period 2002 and 2003.

The survey took the form of telephone interviews using a questionnaire. This was supplied by Ark 19, as part of a previous Community Champions survey carried out for the Scarman Trust in 2002. This time round the survey approach was quicker and simpler due to time and cost constraints.

An addition for 2002-2003, was the aim of identifying those community champions who maybe interested in undertaking further accredited training with the support of the Scarman Trust throughout 2005 and 2006.

The 17 questions were drawn from a format successfully previously years using the headings of:-

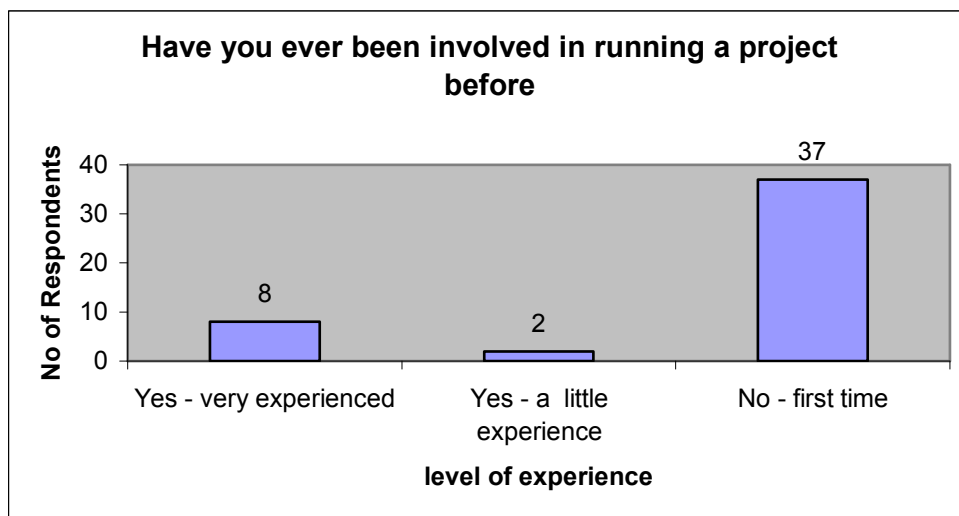
- Individual Benefits and Skills
- Community Benefits
- Project Support and Future Plans
- Personal Details

Interviews were carried out with 48 Can Doers, 43 by telephone and 5 through a postal follow-up.

The response rate overall was a positive 60% of all grants given in the period 2002-03 which gives reliable indication as to overall perceptions of the programme. The respondents who could not be engaged were invariable those where contact details were no longer up to date.

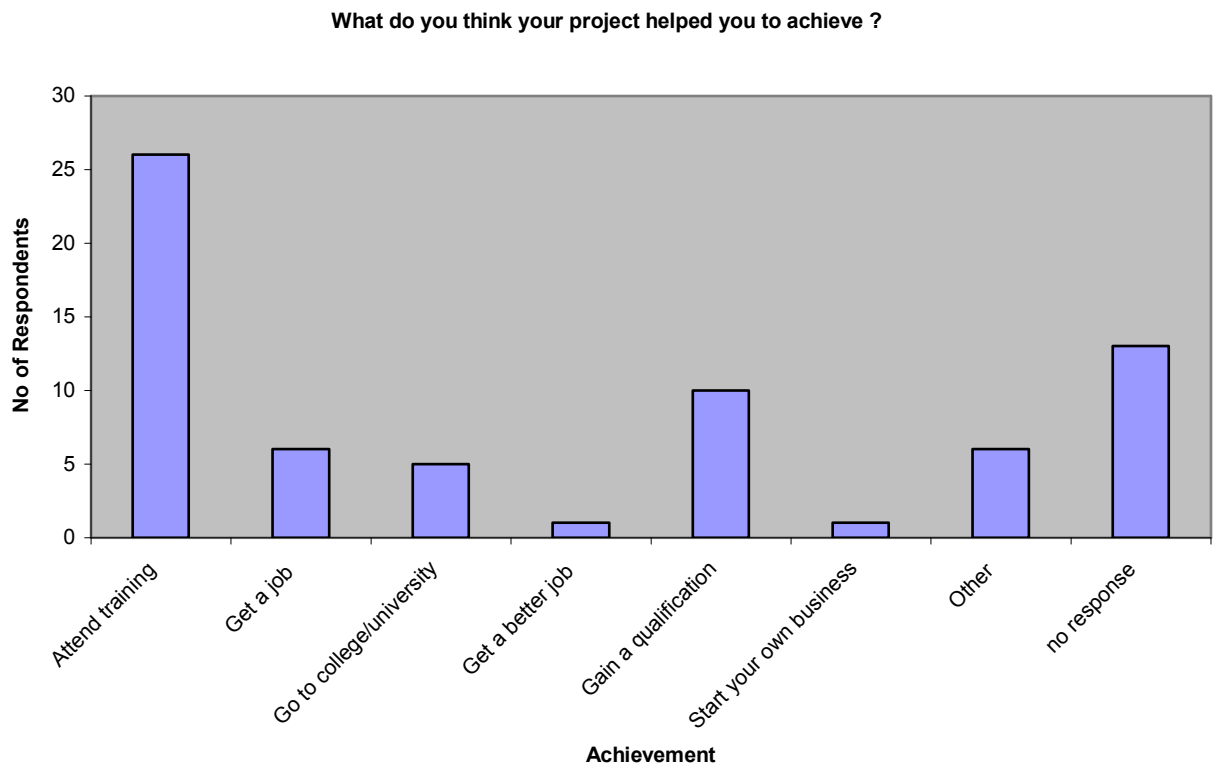
Individual Benefits and Skills

1) Have you ever been involved in running a project before ?



The majority of Champions 37 (77%) indicated that this was their first time. This is an encouraging figure as the programme aims to encourage people to make their first steps into community action. The figure rises to 39 (81%) when factoring in those who said they had a little experience. The questionnaire did not explore the type of experience for those who indicated they were very experienced 8 (17%) and this is a point for future analyses.

2) What do you think your project helped you achieve ?



Champions were encouraged to indicate yes to as many of the above categories as they felt applicable.

The majority of Champions 23(48%), indicated that being a Champion had helped them attend training of which 10(20%), had gained a qualification.

Added to this is the reinforcement of learning within the programme through 5(10%) using Champions as a step into high education. This is a notably positive result as it reinforces the principle of the Champions programme developing learning and knowledge within communities, as one method for civil renewal.

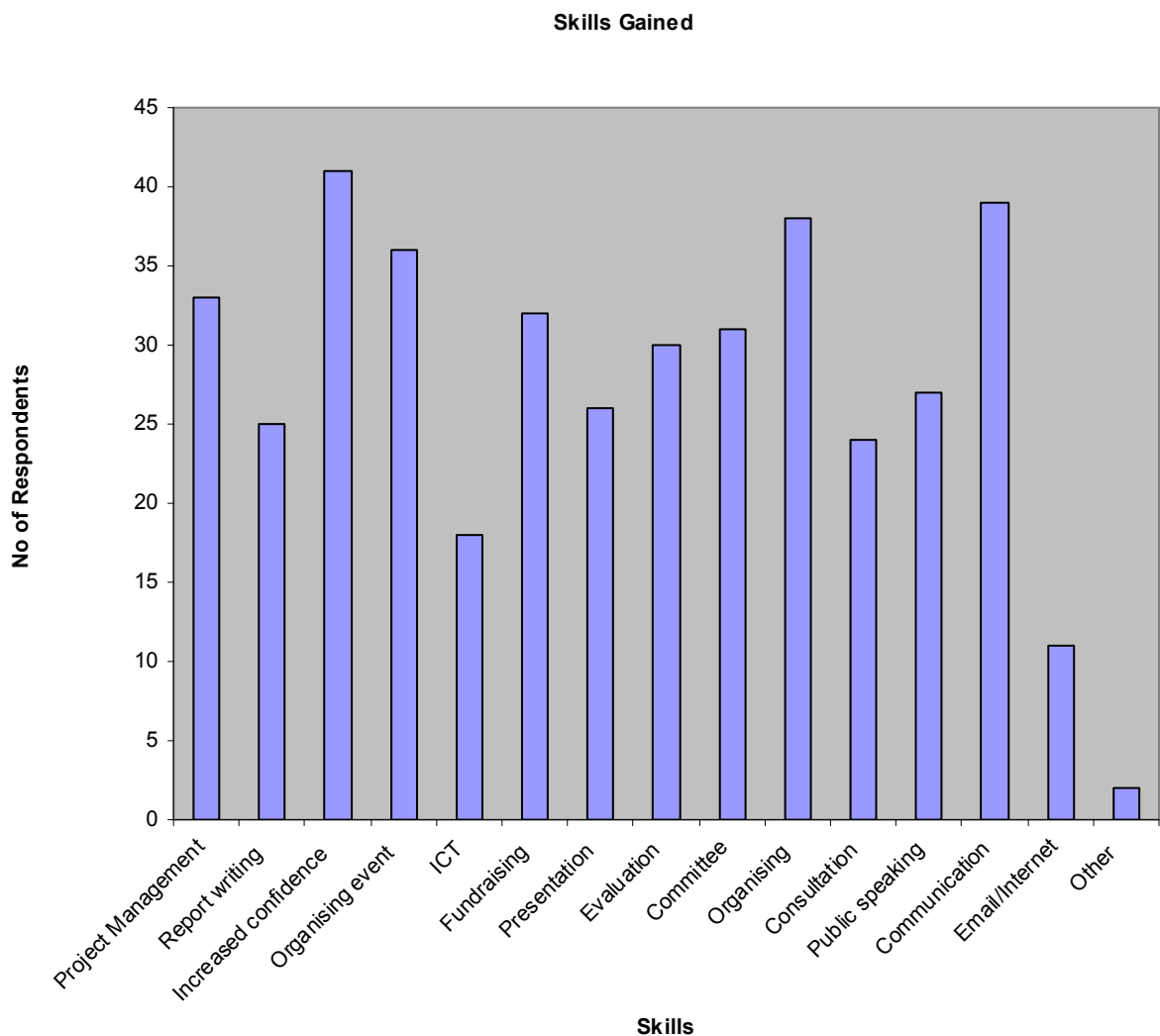
Some Champions had gone on to empower themselves further through their learning with 6(12%) having gained employment, a further two indicating they had established their own business or got a better job.

Interestingly, 13(27%) chose not to respond to the question and this will be a point for further consideration in any future analysis.

Under 'other', 13(27%) gave the following responses which indicates the question generated a more lateral response than the prescribed outcomes.

- media training event
- improved existing business
- support work
- self confidence
- become more involved in community

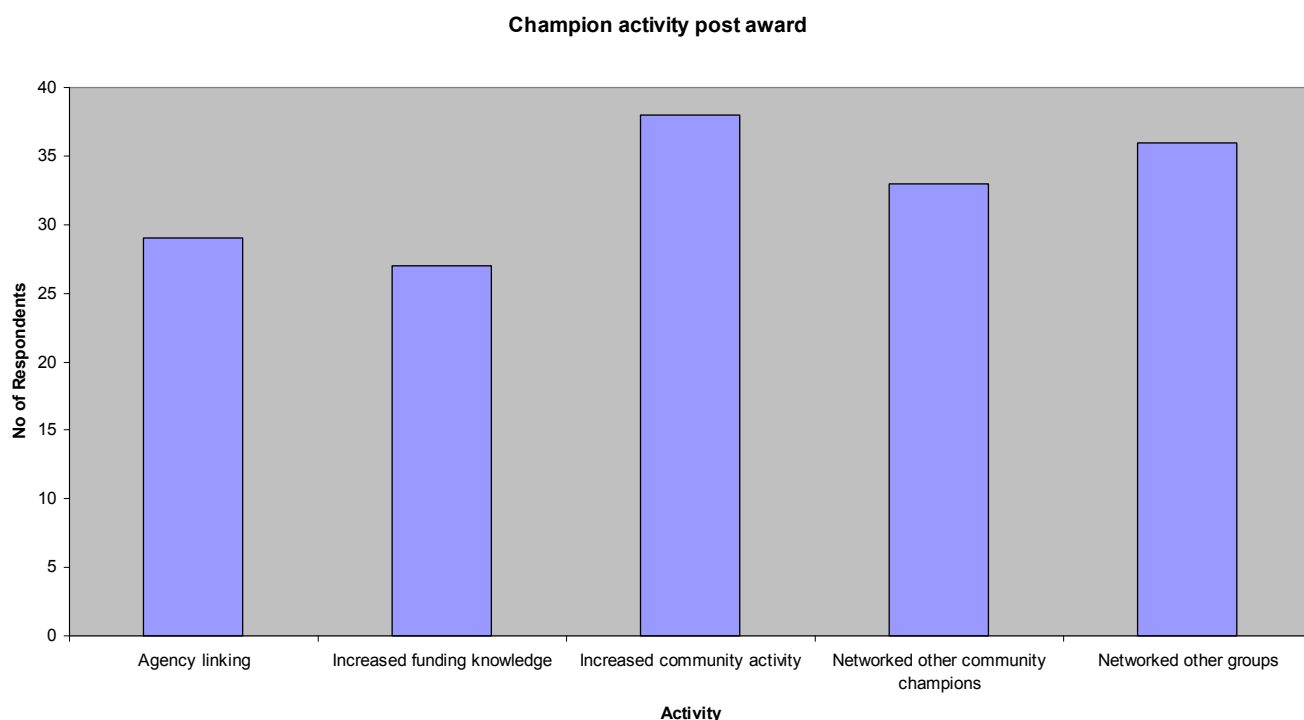
3) What new or improved skills or experience did you gain as a result of your Community Champions Award ?



Again, respondees were encouraged to comment on more than one outcome with high levels of affirmation against skills developed overall. Only, ICT, email / internet and other gained less than a 50% affirmation of skill developed.

The highest recorded was 'confidence' skills, 41(85%) which is an excellent result for the programme's aim to develop mentors and leaders within the community. Communication and organising skills came close second and third at 39(81%) and 38(79%) respectively. Project management, report writing, event organisation, fund raising, evaluation, presentation, committee, consultation and public speaking all registered strong responses ranging between 24(50%) and 36(75%). 'Other' was accounted for by project design and youth work skills 2(4%).

4) What had Champions done since gaining their award ?



This question was designed to elicit an open response to the wider activities that might be expected by undertaking a Community Champions award project. Champions could indicate yes to more than one activity.

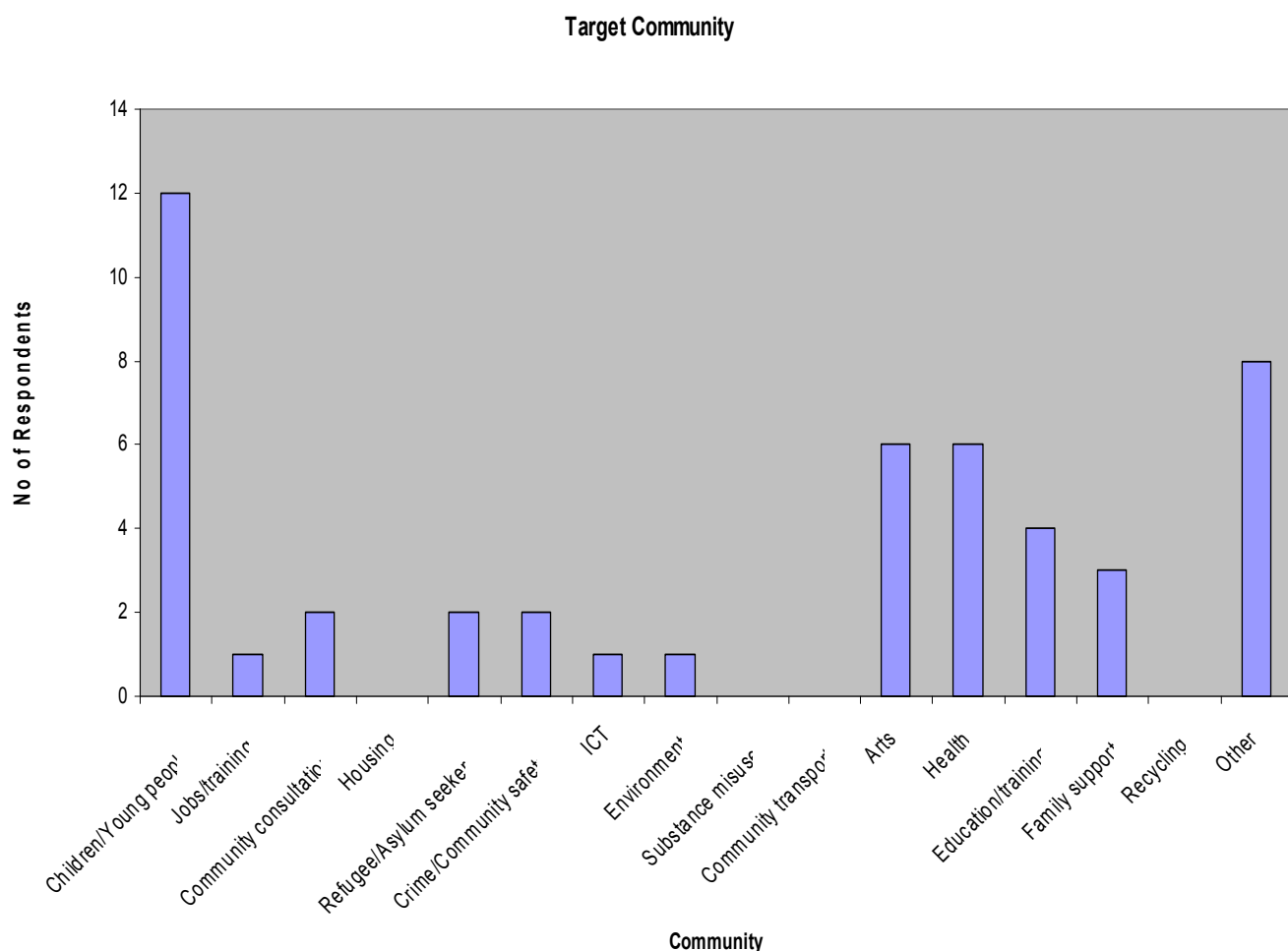
The results show that in the main, Champions had increased their activity in the community, in accord the aim of the programme, with 38 (79%) reporting this outcome.

The high level of responses under 'networked other groups' was typically explained through the Scarman Trust's annual 'Can Do' Briefing Days (supported by DFES), whereby Champions get the opportunity to increase their funding knowledge and access other development /support agencies at an event.

At least half of all Champions answered yes to every outcome which is another positive result of the programme and in accordance with its aims and objectives.

Community Benefits

5) What was the main theme of your Community Champions Project ?



The survey shows that young people were significantly the main theme of Community Champions awards 12(25%) with 'other' coming in second with 8 (16%). The survey recorded these as including:-

- social skills
- people on low incomes
- sport
- activities for older people
- victim support

- luncheon club and
- community newsletters.

At least 11 different types of project were supported through the programme demonstrating the programmes support for a wide diversity of activities within the NE community.

In analysing the survey results, it is felt likely however, that further discussions with Champions may have seen some of the above 'others' fall one or more of the stated target community categories.

6. How much volunteer time did you and other volunteers contribute to the Project ?

Community Champions

The personal commitment in hours of all Community Champions surveyed came to a 10,623 hours over the two years 2002 and 2003.

Champions were asked to give their estimates of time spent over the typical delivery window of 6 months, though up to 12 months is available for completion of projects.

This averages out at 226 hours per person or 30 working days. This time multiplied by ESF guidance on the average cost per hour of volunteer time (£15.00) represents £159,000 of activity invested into local communities, well over a 100% return on the initial investment.

This does not include the additional funding generated through applications to charitable trusts or Awards for All etc. which is discussed below.

Phenomenal energy and commitment therefore goes into being a Community Champion, especially where the person has never done such work before. Many people are also in training or employment and find the time to undertake their projects in their own time, unpaid.

Volunteers

Estimates of volunteer's time involved in the project's activities was sought too. This identified 234 volunteers engaging in project implementation or an average of each of the 48 Champions engaging an additional 5 people, which is approximate to the national average for the scheme.

The total number of hours committed by volunteers comes close to that of the champions themselves at 9156 over a 6 month period, representing an average of 39 hours per volunteer.

Applying the ESF guidance of £15.00 per hour gives a total investment of £137,000 of additional volunteer time. Combining Champions time and volunteer's time represents a grant total of nearly 20,000 hours with an investment value of £296,000.

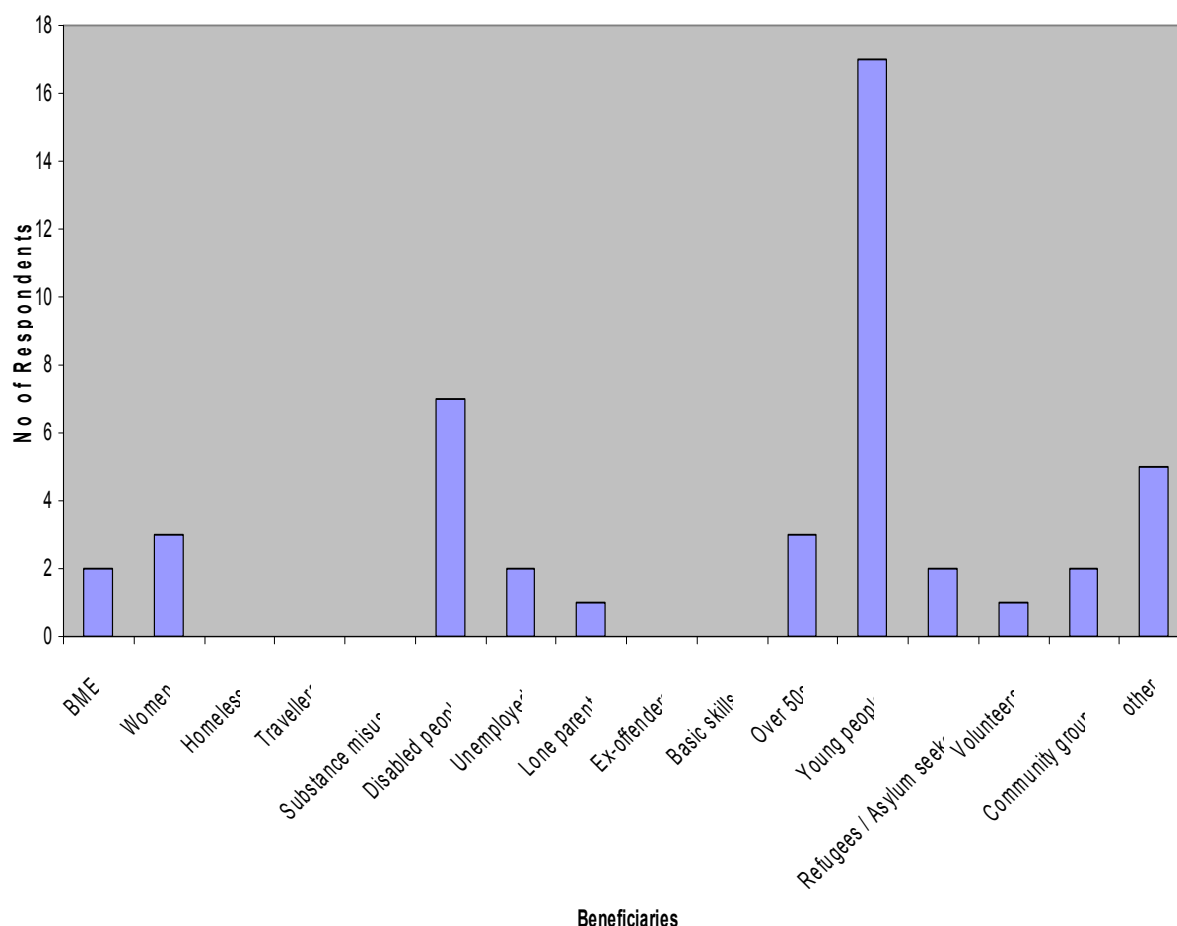
Additional Funding

Champions were asked to identify how much additional funding had been levered as a result of their award and their desire to grow the project beyond its initial investment.

A total figure of £157,471 was raised, or an average of £6841 per Champion. Together, with the value 'in-kind' of the volunteer time, this represents a grand total of £453,471 a phenomenal return of 300% on the initial investment of £136,000 (excluding administration charges of £24,000) over two years.

7. Main Beneficiaries of Champion's Project

Main Beneficiaries of Project

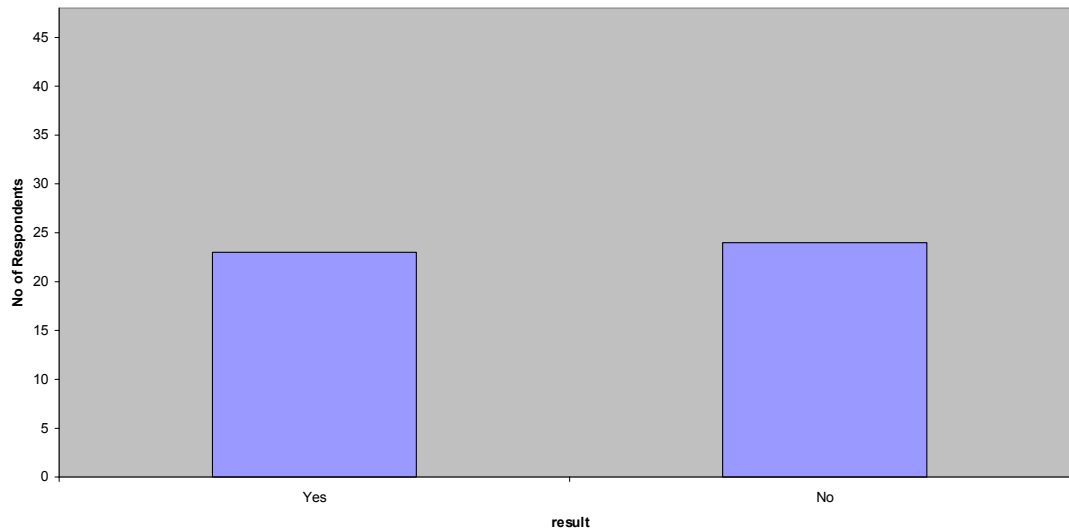


The survey indicated that the most commonly reported beneficiaries of Champions' projects were young people, 17 (35%). This exceeded the second most commonly reported group of disabled people, 7 (14%) by a significant margin. The spread was then across the remaining groups with no reported main beneficiaries within homeless, travellers, substance misusers, ex offenders or basic skills. This is not to say that people within these groups did not take part or benefit from the Champions' projects but that they weren't the main ones.

Importantly, the results do show that projects supported by The Scarman Trust did include those groups prioritised for the NE including, BME, the disabled, over 50's, refugees and asylum seekers. The lead taken on supporting young people correlates with the results of table 5 which shows the main theme of Champions' projects to have been young people.

8. Were you successful in obtaining new funding after starting your Champions project ?

Success in New Funding ?

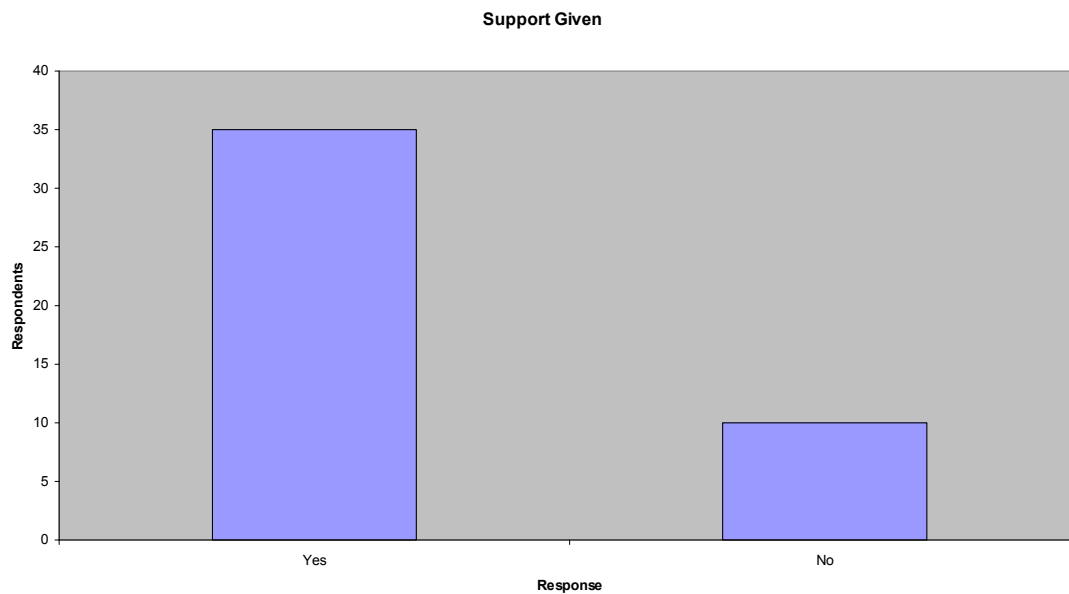


As has been discussed in section 6 above, significant funding was accessed additional to that provided by the Champion's initial award. With one person not answering the question, the results show approximately 50% of awardees accessing further funding. Such success helps to explain the high levels of confidence building reported under section 3, but also the high response rate to fund raising support in section 12 below.

Interestingly, the results of the regional survey carried out by Research Solutions, as preparation for identifying priorities under 'Change Up' main spend, identified fund raising as the number one support aim of the voluntary and community sector in the NE.

Project Support and Future Plans

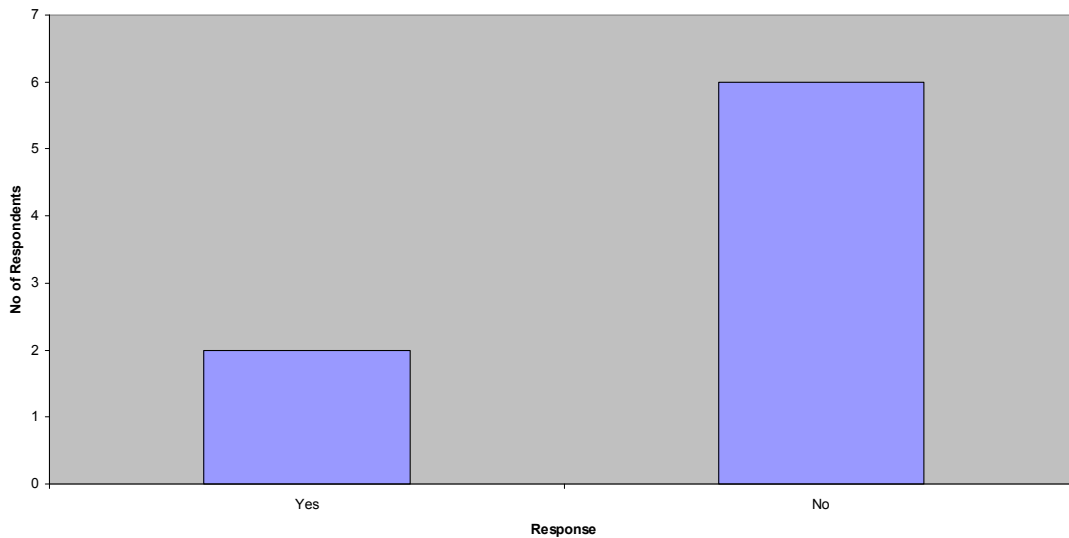
9. Were you given any support, guidance or advice from The Scarman Trust, Government Office or ARK19 staff ?



In response to this question, the majority of Champions 35 (73%) recalled receiving additional follow up advice and guidance which in the main they related to the Can Do Briefing Day run by ARK 19 and The Scarman Trust for award winners. Ten (20%) of Champions did not recall any support and 3 (6%) did not respond. A follow up question to the 10 who said they had not received support, was then posed.

Q. If you answered 'no', would you have liked any support, help or advice for your project ?

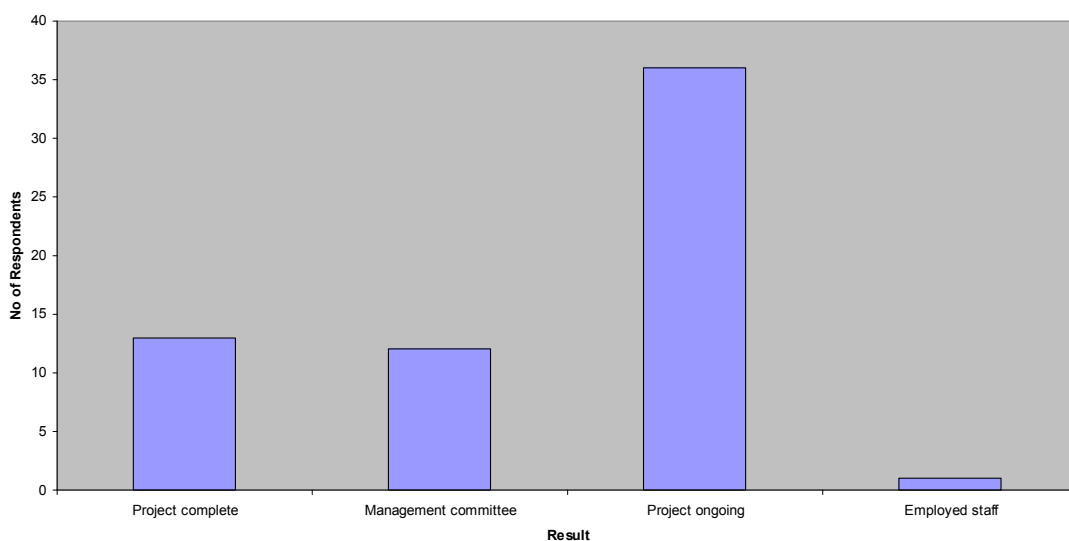
Would you have liked support ?



The 'no' response totalled 6 (12%) and 'yes' 2 (4%) with no response from 2 (4%). Clearly a small number of Community Champions felt capable of taking their project forward in their community on their own, but the majority took up support offered. Additional support needs are being addressed by the Scarman Trust in 2005-2006 through its ESF funded Can Do Learning project

10. As a result of receiving a Community Champions Award, which of the following occurred ?

Result of Award

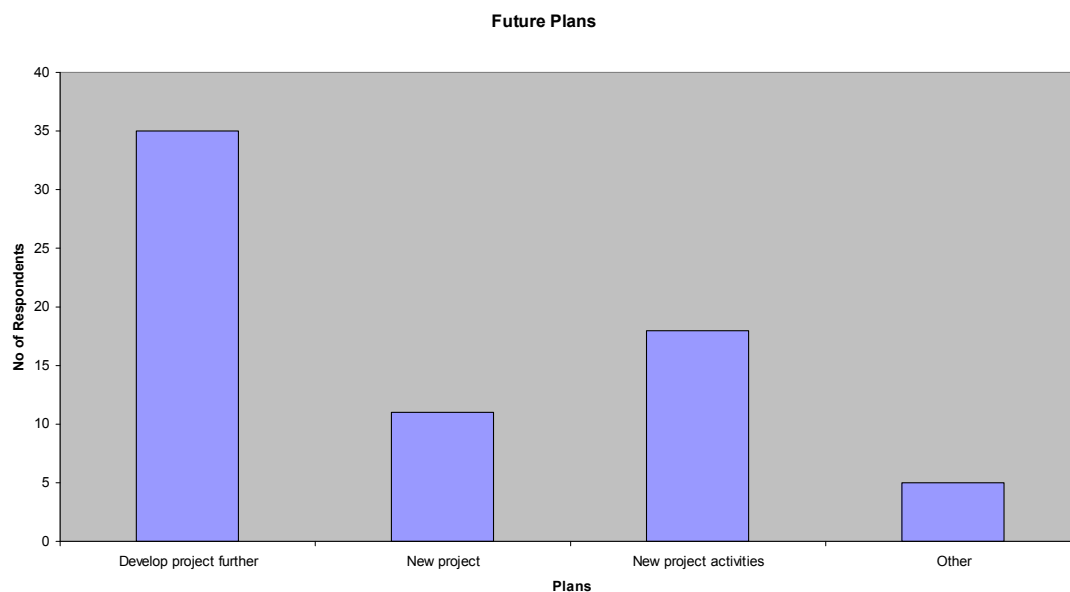


The aim of this question was to identify outcomes of awardees who had received their awards at least 12 months ago and spent their initial award. The respondees were encouraged to answer yes to more than one outcome, if appropriate.

Interestingly the majority 36 (75%), indicated that their project was still going which is a very positive result based on such small initial awards, the average Scarman investment being £1700 over the 2 year period.

Of the remainder, the second highest response was 13 (27%) who had completed their project, 12 (25%) had established a management committee, and 1 (2%) had reported employing a member of staff.

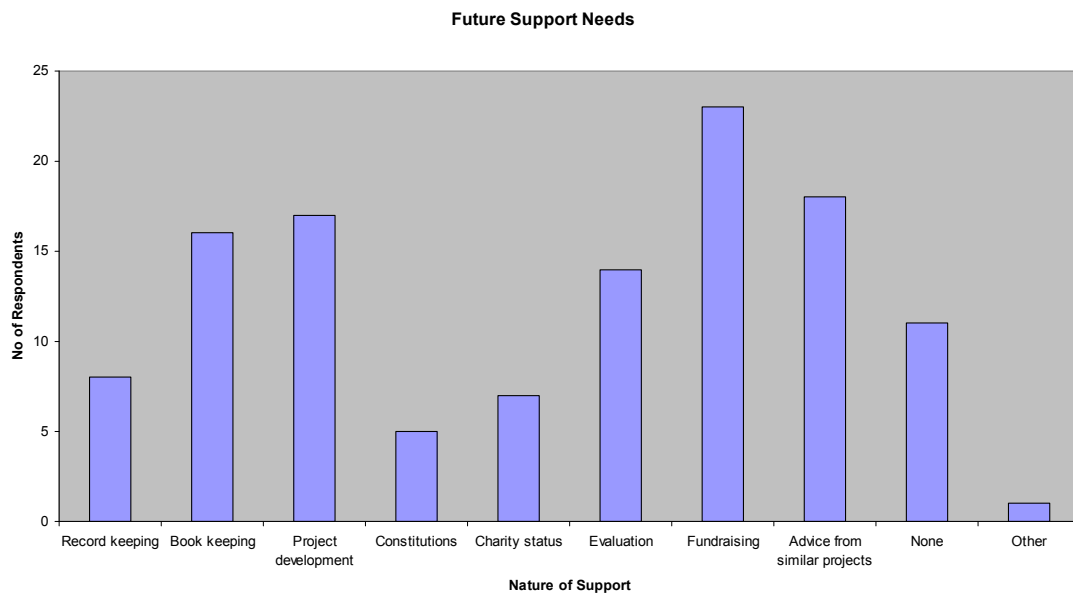
11. What are your future plans ?



The purpose of this question was to look at the ambitions of Champions, people in the main who according to the results in section 1 above, had no experience in such activity, 37 (77%). Again, Champions were encouraged to respond to as many options as they felt appropriate or comment under 'other'

The positive result is that 35 (73%) Champions indicated that their future plans were to develop their project further with 18 (37%) adding new project activities to their initial project and 11 (23%) being inspired to take forward a new project. Under 'other' 5 (4%) Champions indicated that they were undecided at this stage or that they weren't intending to take things forward.

12. What help or advice might you need to support you and your project in the future ?

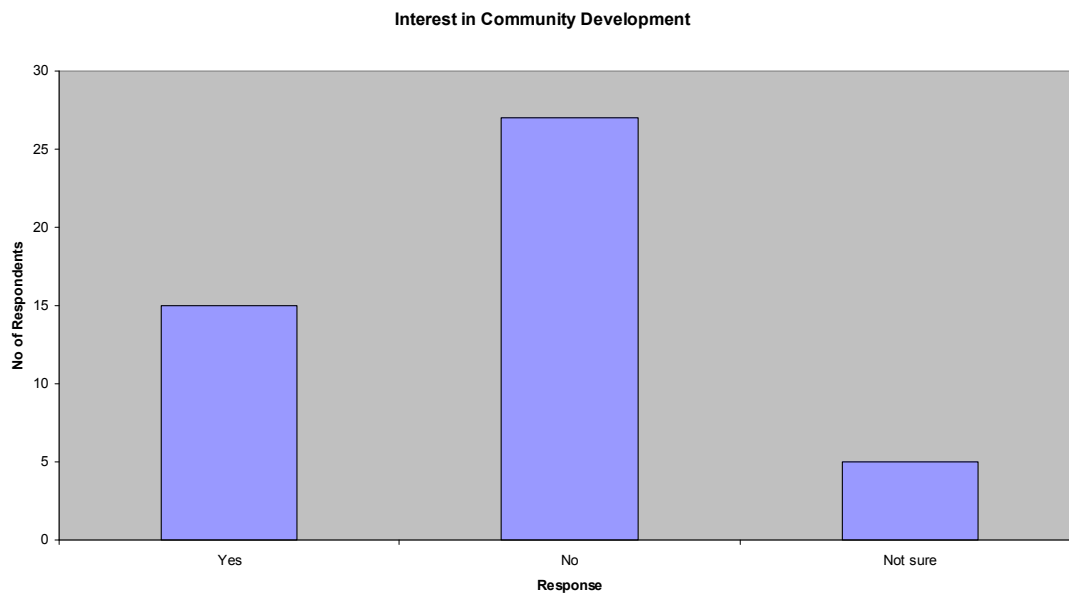


This question was asked in order to ascertain the follow up needs of community Champions. Champions could indicate as many support needs as they felt appropriate. The majority of Champions required further fund raising advice 23 (48%) with a strong response for peer support 18 (37%) followed by project development 17 (35%) and book keeping 16 (33%).

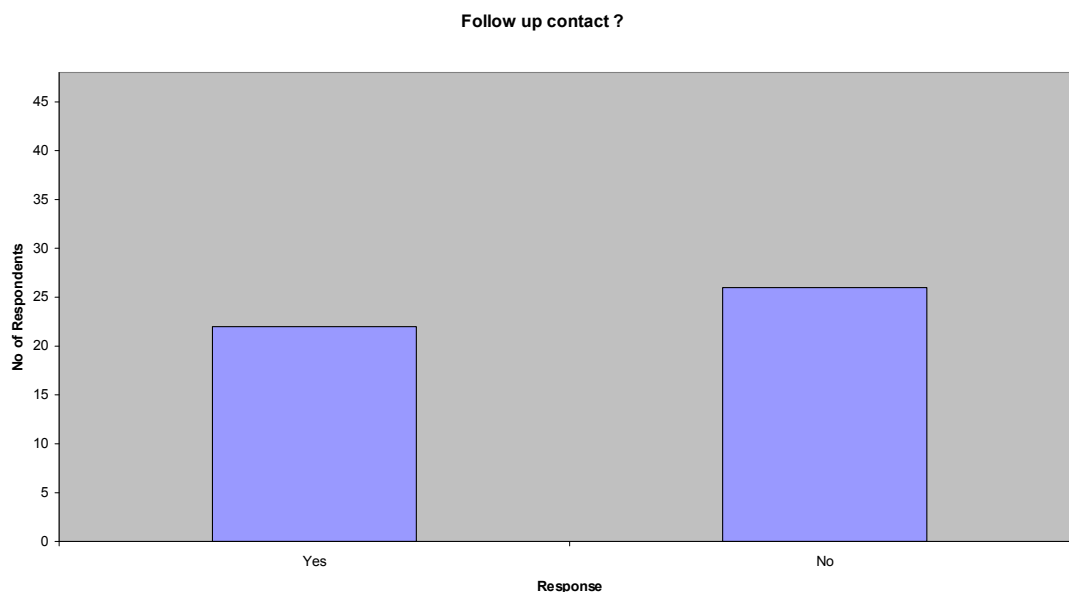
How such support needs can be met is being factored into the development of the Trust's Can Do Learning ESF project 2005-2006.

13. Would you be interested in training to develop your community development skills ?

This question was asked in order to ascertain the possible level of demand for additional training that could be offered with ESF support.



The majority of Champions, 27 (56%) said that they were not interested in developing their community development skills. Positively 15 (31%) did indicate an interest and this will be followed up to identify their needs. A final 6 (13%) identified they were not sure but this is an opportunity to clarify what they may particularly be interested in. A supplementary question asked whether they could be contacted in the future and the responses were as follows.

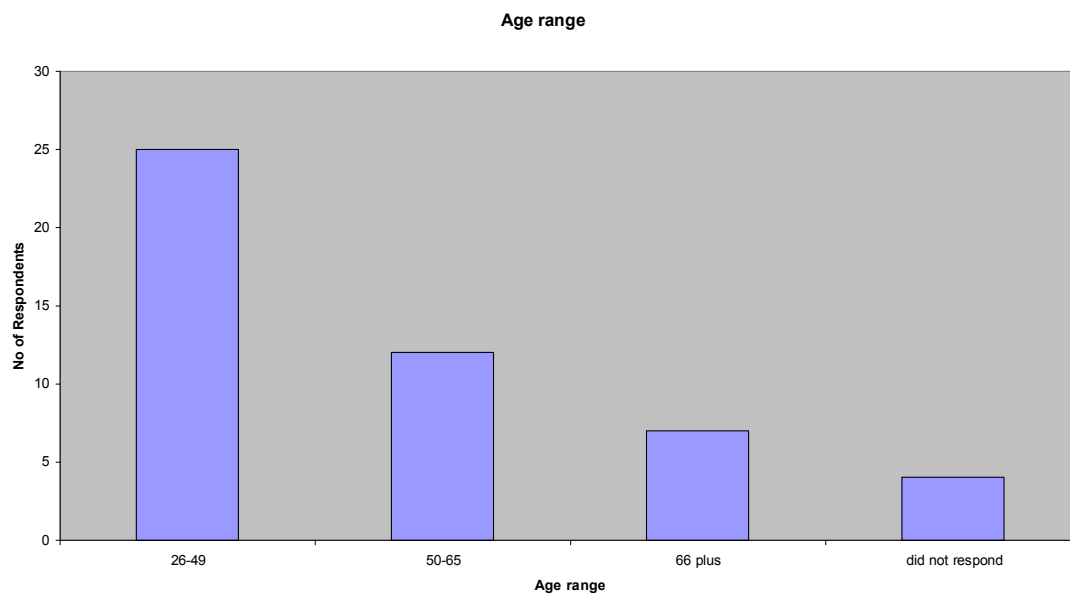


Interestingly, 22 (45%) Champions indicated an interest in being contacted about training opportunities in the future which is 7 more than had said they were interested in undertaking community development now. So there would seem to be latent potential that can be tapped into with further ESF resources.

Personal Details

Responses to these questions were optional but Community Champions were in the main, happy to answer them. They were posed in order to assist in profiling Scarman Champions over the two years and act as comparisons for future years.

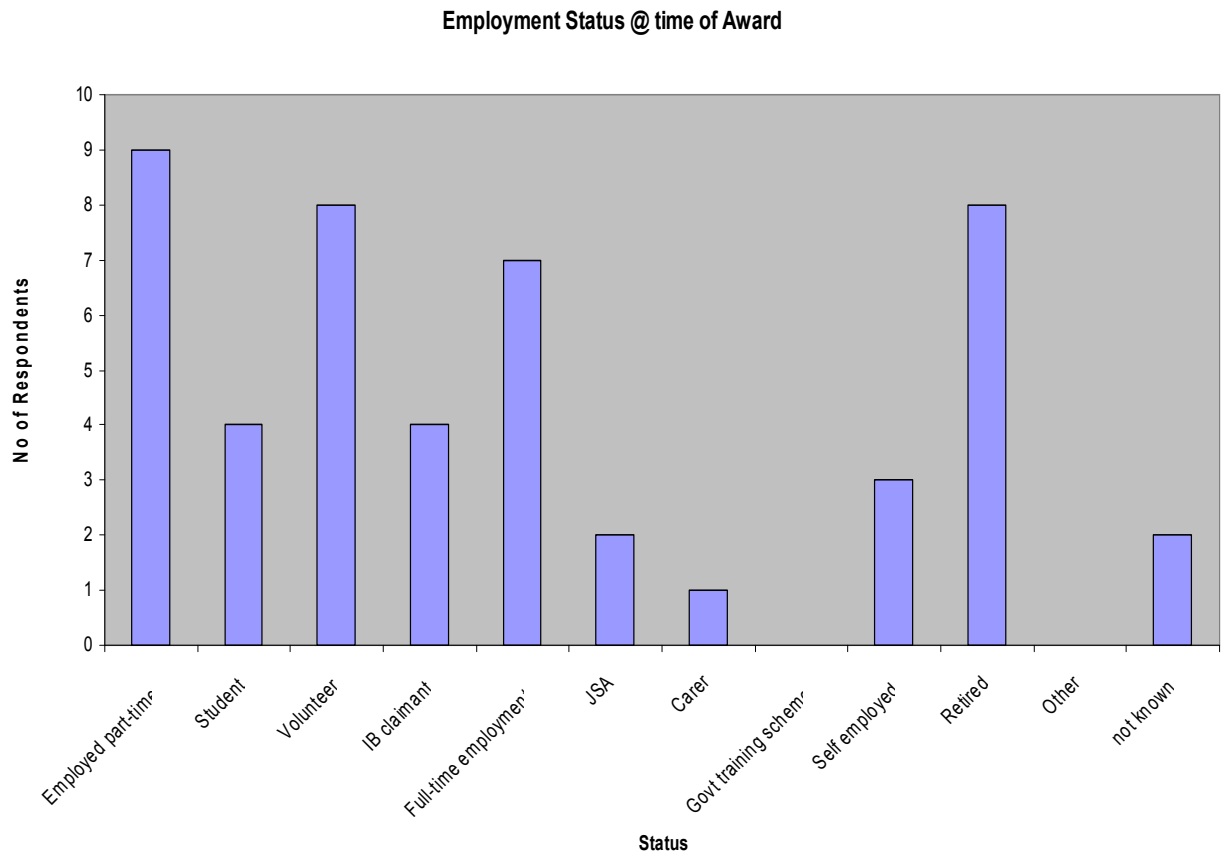
14. Age Group



The age group of Champions over 2002-2003 was predominantly in the grouping 26 – 49 years at 25 (52%), the second most recorded age range being 50 – 65 at 12 (25%) and lastly the 66 years plus at 7 (15%).

A low number, 4 (8%) chose not to respond. Interestingly, over these two years, no Champions in the age range 19-25 were supported according to surveyed Champions responses.

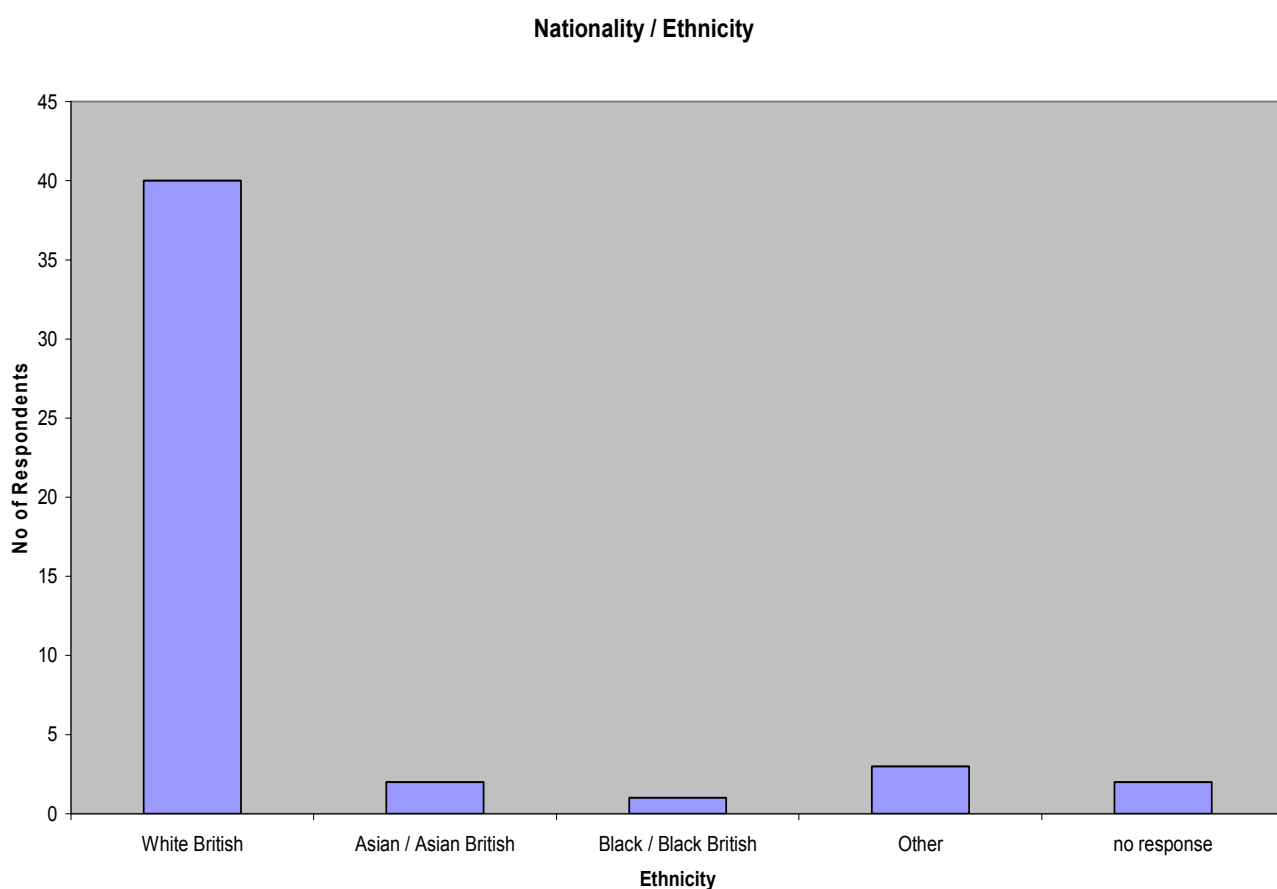
15. Employment Status at time of Award



As shown by this question, the majority of respondents were either employed part time or retired, with results of 9 (18%) and 8 (17%) respectively. The total number of people in employment (part / full-time or self employed) was 19 (40%).

Third highest activity status were people who classed themselves as volunteers 8(16%), though further questioning of this group would probably have seen them fall into one of the other categories. People claiming some form of benefit (JSA / IB) came to 6(12%).

16. Nationality / ethnicity



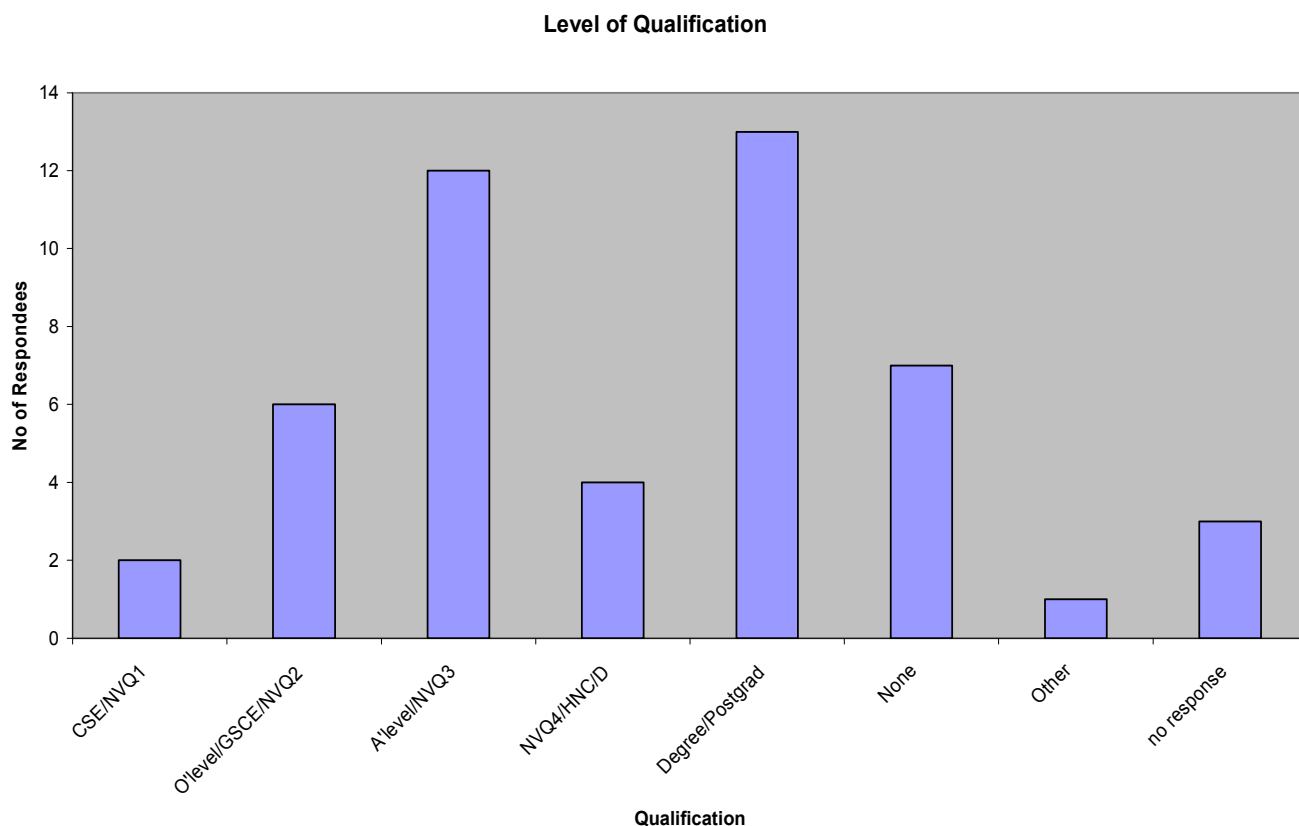
The majority of Champions, 40 (83%) were of white / British origin. The next most common response was that of 'other' 3 (6%), which recorded ethnicity of Iranian, black African and middle eastern.

The remaining results were 2 (4%) for Asian / Asian British, Black / Black British 1 (2%) and 2 (4%) no responses. Deducting the 'no responses' from the total gives a total of 6 (13%) of Community Champions from the BME community.

Whilst the Scarman Trust in the North East makes every effort to engage and support people from the BME community, 13% being far from a poor result, Black and Ethnic Community Organisations Network (BECON) take the lead in recruiting and supporting Champions from this community in the north east.

The two organisations have typically worked closely, as BECON focuses on awards that enable Champions to harvest experience and learn from national events. A number of BECON Champions have then engaged with the Scarman Trust to take forward a project.

17. Highest level of qualification prior to receipt of Community Champions Award



This table identified a perhaps unexpected result for the period 2002-03. The most frequently reported level of qualification was degree or post graduate, 13 (27%). A levels were the next highest at 12 (25%). This giving a total of 52% of Champions holding A levels or higher. This figure rises to 29 (60%) when NVQ4/ HNC/D qualification holders are factored in.

However, an aggregation of 'no qualifications' or lower levels (CSE, other, o – levels) shows that 15(31%) of all Champions who responded were in this category.

So, an interesting mix of Community Champions' qualification and perhaps a surprise, but applicants are not judged on level of academic achievements, moreover the quality and impact of their project on their community and themselves as role models and potential leaders.