
Redress Scotland Survivor Engagement Annual Report 2024-25



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1. Introduction

Redress Scotland is committed to working with survivors to ensure that their voices are heard and that we continuously take feedback to improve the way we work.

Our values of dignity, respect and compassion underpin everything that we do. Our values drive how we undertake our engagement work. They exist to challenge us and hold us to account, ensuring that we keep survivors at the heart of everything that we do.

Below are highlights from the key pieces of work that have taken place over within our 2024-25 business year. We have also set out improvements that we have made based on direct feedback, and recommendations for next steps.

2. What we did

8 engagement activities have taken place over the past year in various forms including online and in person. We have engaged with a variety of stakeholders including survivors, survivor organisations, and our own members of staff. We have also undertaken informal engagement work on an individual basis with survivors.

2.1 In person meetings

During April 2024 to March 2025, we have carried out 2 in-person (oral testimony) meetings with survivors. Both meetings have taken place physically in person. The survivor, a panel member and the engagement lead attended.

Despite the meetings being an intense experience for survivors, we have had positive feedback from everyone who has attended them. One of the survivors who attended the in-person meeting reflected that the panel member listened to them and they felt it was a safe environment to speak openly about their experience.

The engagement lead also provides pre and post support to the survivors who attend the in-person meetings to try and alleviate any anxieties about the process, and to ensure they are as involved in the process as possible.

The engagement lead will also engage with the panel member before the meeting to speak about the process and keep them informed about information they gather in relation to the survivor and their wellbeing. They will also speak with the panel member post meeting to debrief, speak about any learning or next steps they wish to take.

2.2 Online Joint Engagement Session – Redress Scotland and Scottish Government

We hosted 2 online engagement sessions with Survivor Forum members. These were held jointly with the Scottish Government.

The purpose of these sessions was to give an update on work that was going on across the whole of the scheme and give survivors an opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the process.

We had 22 survivors join across the 2 sessions.

Some of the key things that were discussed during this session were: timescales; records; uncertainties around the process; and what organisation were responsible for different parts of the process. Most of these sessions were focused on questions and answers for the Scottish Government part of the scheme.

2.3 Survivor Forum Face to Face Engagement Sessions

During the year we held 2 face to face engagement sessions through the Survivor Forum. These were hosted by members from across the Redress Scotland team.

One session was held in Glasgow and the other was held in Edinburgh. Overall, 62 individuals attended these sessions, this included survivors and people who provide individual support to survivors. During the sessions we discussed topics such as our communications and people's experiences applying to the scheme. We also gave those attending a session the opportunity to ask any questions that they may have to members of the team.

We split survivors into small groups with 2 members of the team in each group. We had a variety of staff attend both sessions, with members from the Policy and Improvement team, as well as the Operations team.

The session in Glasgow that we hosted in March 2025 was the first time that we had survivors from the deaf community join us. We worked with the survivors and their interpreters before the event to ensure that we made the session as accessible as possible for them. Following the session, the survivors fed back that they felt included and heard in the discussions.

We had a lot of positive feedback from the sessions. Following the discussions on the day survivors told us they felt they were more informed about the panel sitting day process. There was also some constructive feedback from survivors in relation to our communication. Survivors told us the information they received at the session was very helpful in understanding the process

their application goes through when it gets to Redress Scotland, but had they not attended the session they would not know about this. In response to this feedback, we have been developing a leaflet which will go out to survivors and be on our website, which details the process we discussed at the session.

2.4 Small Group Engagement Session – Letters

In February 2025 we held our first 'Small Group Engagement Session.' This was the first engagement session that we carried out using this format and structure. 11 survivors attended the session.

The purpose of this session was to focus on the letters that we send out to survivors and ask for feedback on their content and structure. We brought a diverse group of survivors together to do this.

During this session we broke into 2 groups, with 2 members of staff facilitating. During the morning session we reviewed our 'Receipt of Application' letter and our 'Panel Date Confirmation' letter and in the afternoon, we reviewed our 'Decision Letter.' We received a lot of feedback from survivors during this process and were able to make some immediate change to our letters. Most of these immediate changes were around the content of the letters, specifically the length of them. Survivors felt that they wanted us to 'get to the point' in our letters and that we had a lot of information that was not relevant to the information they wanted to receive.

The 'Decision Letter' was more difficult for us to make immediate changes to as a lot of the feedback was around the process rather than the 'Decision Letters'. For example, some survivors expressed that there should be an option to choose how much detail should go into their decision letter as it may be retraumatising having it reflected to them. Others felt as though they wanted to be more informed about the fact they would receive such a full-bodied letter as although they had heard the phrase 'decision letter' they did not know what this was. In 2025/26 we are going to be running a 'decision letter workshop' with members of the team who attended the session to look at next steps for these changes.

This more focused session was very constructive and allowed us to focus on a specific piece of work. Again, survivors provided positive feedback after the session. A few survivors reflected on the detail that their decision letter had, when panel members mentioned events that they did not feel were 'as important.' They said that it made them realise that panel members read every word of their application form.

2.5 Redress Support Service

Throughout the year it was identified that a lot of survivors who were contacting general enquiries were looking to be signposted to other organisations, such as Redress Support Services, for a variety of reasons.

The engagement lead, and a panel support coordinator, contacted the Redress Support Service to find out more about their service and the support available, how to signpost and the correct information that we should giving survivors about the service.

We organised for the Redress Support Service to deliver an online session for the operations team which detailed the variety of ways in which the support service can support survivors, including one to one support and their Emotional Support Helpline. Following the session the team felt more comfortable and confident in signposting to this service, where needed. We have now established a good working relationship with the service and highlight them when having conversations with survivors.

2.6 Survivor Engagement Working Group

The engagement lead, has established a survivor engagement working group for individuals across the operations and policy and improvement team to come together, develop, plan, and support ongoing survivor engagement work.

The group has enabled additional resource to be used during the planning and preparation of engagement sessions throughout the year. It has also been invaluable in providing support during engagement sessions and for any follow up work and support that has been needed. The group currently has 16 members. The reason for having so many members is so that people who have a particular interested in a specific area or topic can be involved when they want and do not have to commit to attending all group meetings.

We have structured the group so that any work that needs to be actioned is done on the day and no additional pressure is placed on individuals to take anything away with them. The group has supported in areas such as in-person meeting development, the creation of podcast topics and ideas, and the development of policy and guidance for working with survivors.

2.7 General Survivor Engagement

We have undertaken general engagement work with individual survivors throughout the year. This engagement has mainly focused on updating survivors on our work, with a particular focus on our communications, as well

as seeking feedback on where we can make improvements in relation to their experience of Redress Scotland.

We have also been engaging a lot with survivors who have contacted us directly, mainly through general enquiries. We have been offering to provide individualised information to survivors, including those who have requested updates on where they are in our priority queues.

2.8 Monthly Focus

We continued to send out our Monthly Focus communication to survivor organisations throughout the year. We decided moving forward that we will send these focused pieces of communication out 4 times a year, to ensure they highlight key things that are happening across the organisation.

2.9 Videos

We have developed 2 new videos with survivors about their experience of working alongside Redress Scotland after completing their application process. These were presented at our annual conference where they were well received by staff and panel members. The survivors also worked with us to develop a new video to be shown to new panel members as part of their training. This video focuses on what survivors want panel members to keep in mind when reviewing applications for redress and making decisions.

The videos were filmed in Glasgow in one day and were edited with survivor feedback in mind.

Both videos will be made available on our website.

2.10 General Enquiries

Both as part of Redress Scotland's commitment to continuous improvement, and as part of discussions around our legacy, we have been thinking about how to ensure we are capturing and best utilising learning across the organisation. The learning could include, experiential learning, learning from practice, reflections, or feedback from survivors or survivor organisations.

We recognised that there was a lot of learning that could be captured through general enquires. This learning could be positive, as well as negative/constructive feedback we receive. Working with the operations team, some columns have been added to the general enquiries tracker to capture feedback and related learning. The information logged there will be gathered regularly before being collated and disseminated to the relevant teams/through the relevant channels.

3. What we are doing well

Over the last year we have increased the number of engagement sessions, seeking to reach a wider and more diverse group of survivors, and engaging with a variety of stakeholders on a number of different platforms.

We have successfully offered a range of engagement activities for survivors to get involved with, whether this be online or in-person. We have successfully gathered feedback at these sessions which has then informed improvements and work we have carried out.

From feedback, we know we are doing well at creating a safe and open environment for survivors who have engaged with us.

We are doing well at building and sustaining relationships with survivors who we have engaged with us at engagement sessions. We have enabled this to happen by always being open to speaking and communicating with survivors at any point in their redress journey.

4. What we need to do differently

We are looking at ways in which we can make survivor engagement more accessible. This will allow us to engage with more survivors and gain a wider understanding of survivors needs and experiences of the scheme.

We need to look at developing additional ways to engage with survivor organisations and those who support survivors, giving them up to date, relevant and useful information. During 2025/26 we will be working more closely with our Scottish government colleagues to host information and engagement sessions with a variety of organisations. These sessions will enable us to provide information about the end-to-end process.

We need to look at new and innovative ways of communicating, developing this alongside the improvements we will be making to our website to increase accessibility. We will continue to seek feedback from survivors when developing this work. This will allow us to develop a plan for implementation and new materials which are as relevant and accessible as possible.

5. Conclusion and next steps

Overall, we have continued to build on the positive progress we made during 2023/24, however, there is still much more we can do specially in relation to accessibility.

Over the next year we will have a clear focus as we will be responding to our accessibility review report and recommendations. We will continue to be open and transparent about how the feedback we receive during our

engagement work is used, ensuring that it helps to improve the work that we deliver across Redress Scotland.

5.1 Next steps

Throughout 2025/26 we will be carrying out a variety of engagement activities, both internally and externally. In our business plan for 2025/26, we have committed to organising at least 4 direct engagement sessions with survivors. This will be a mix of both large engagement sessions through the Survivor Forum and small group engagement sessions where we will focus on specific pieces of work. We will also continue to engage on an individual basis with survivors and actively seek feedback on their views and experiences of the work of Redress Scotland.

We will be responding to the recommendations made in our accessibility review report, to make improvements, increase accessibility for survivors applying to the scheme and accessing our materials. We will be working closely with survivors and those who support them to explore ways in which we can make our materials and engagement activities more accessible.

We will be starting to host a Redress Scotland podcast, which is a new piece of communication for the organisation. This will allow, staff, panel members and survivors to have conversations about focused areas of work within Redress Scotland. It is hoped that the podcasts will provide support to survivors who are going through the application process. To ensure we get the content right for this, we will be engaging with members of our Survivor Engagement Working Group. We will also host a small group engagement session with survivors to help us develop the podcast content, exploring what questions and areas for discussion, they would like to hear about within each of the episodes.

We will continue to work with members of the Survivor Relations Team in Scottish Government to support the work of the Survivor Forum. The Scottish Government distribute a newsletter to Survivor Forum members, which we will continue to contribute to. This will allow the members of the forum to know what engagement activities are coming up and offer sign up to the sessions.

We will be developing a policy on 'Paid Participation' and seeking survivors feedback on this policy as it develops. Toward the end of 2025 we will be hosting a small group engagement session to seek feedback on the draft policy and its implementation.

We are also looking at more ways to support staff within the team to work with survivors. We will be developing a 'working with survivors' policy which will highlight key areas and approaches we should be focusing on when working with survivors. Alongside the policy we will also be developing guidance to support its implementation. This guidance will include aspects

such as setting boundaries, confidentiality and keeping ourselves and others safe. We will be hosting a joint workshop with members from the Policy and Improvement and Operations teams to build on and explore the policy and guidance.

A 'Learning Log' has been developed to capture learning from different areas across Redress Scotland, including engagement activities and working with survivors. This was developed by our Research and Knowledge Lead but will be actively used now as part of the process when engaging with survivors, for members of our team to reflect on their learning. This learning will also be used, if staff consent, as part of our legacy work.