

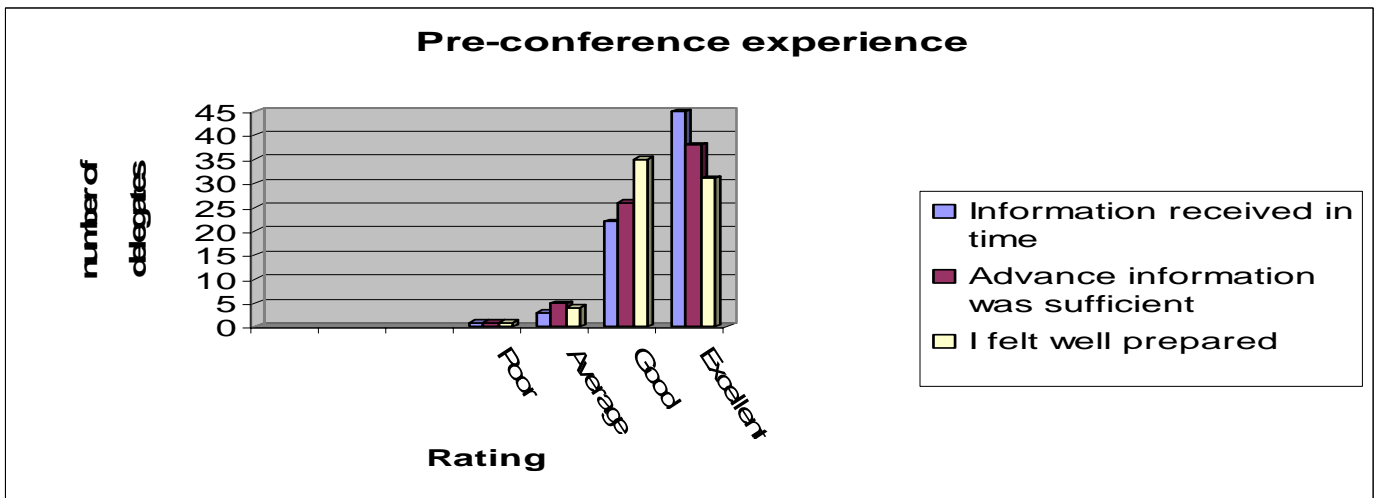
Safeguarding the Future Conference Report

Who made up the audience?

On Tuesday 16th June 143 delegates attended Children Matter East’s Annual Conference; there were 5% no shows, an outstandingly low number for the event. The audience was drawn from an equitable mix of VCS and Statutory partners which included representation from; strategic planners, support services and frontline provision. 50% of delegates returned their feedback forms, which for the first time enabled a more comprehensive analysis of what worked and what did not.

Overall

The day appeared to be successful; however there were some concerns about the temperature in the auditorium, and placing two workshops in one room.



The returned forms indicate that the presentations were well received and in the main appropriate, a majority of the scores were in the good to excellent rating. However, the excellent ratings did benefit disproportionately from Simon Morrison’s contribution. As Simon himself confirms he has provided similar presentations to over 25,000 people, and as a former Communications Director for the National Trust you might reasonably have expected him to be very fluent.

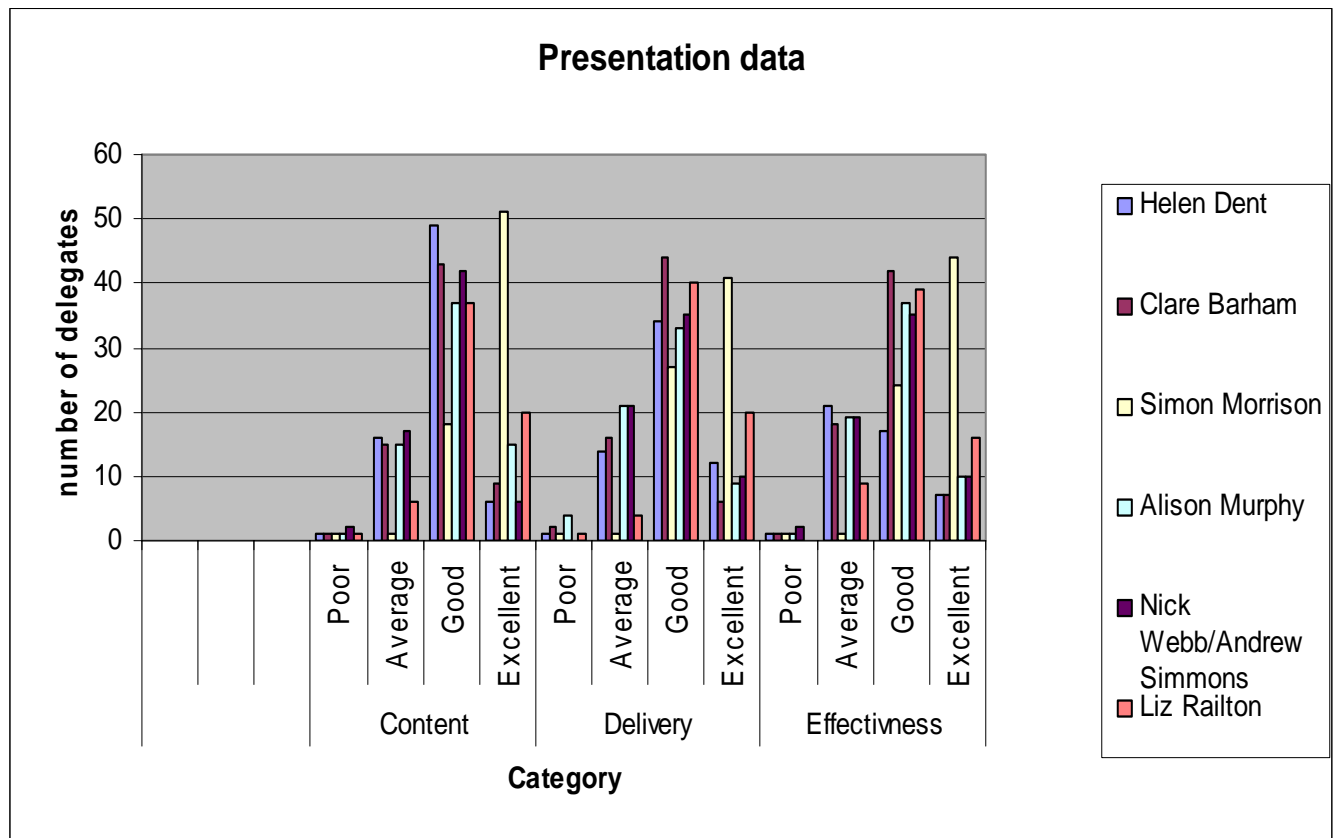
Nonetheless most delegates who responded felt the presentations were relevant and valuable. The presentations have been placed on the Children Matter East website

<http://www.childrenmattereast.org.uk/Meetings.asp>

Delegate's negative comments included:

Many of you felt it was too cold, it was - there were three pre event visits and there was no hint of the problem, it was also hard to decide just how cold it was and therefore get the temperature just right, initial reaction suggested that the low temperature was comparative to a very hot walkway area across the museum.

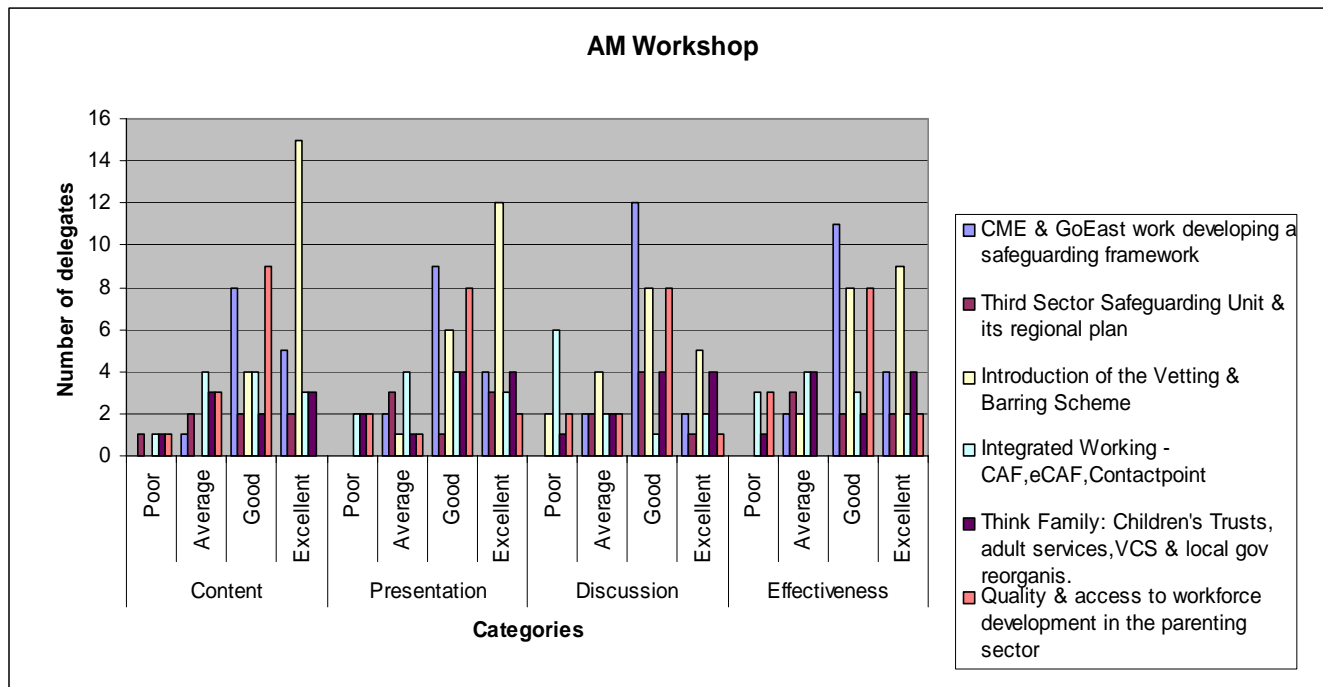
Several attendees commented that the agenda was a little too busy and that there was little time for meaningful questions and debate. We will take these comments on board; achieving a balance between the number of speakers and a good networking opportunity, driven by an agenda that attracts delegates because of the number of contributors, is always difficult.



There were also a few comments about the audience mix, this too is a delicate balance; too many VCS organisations and the event loses its ability to influence partners and impact on long term change, too few statutory partners and the sector spends the day listening to itself.

The feedback for the workshops followed a similar pattern the cold issue was replaced by the cramming together of two workshops in one, albeit largish room, which palpably did not work. However a majority of the workshops were well received, with clear spikes in the good to excellent categories.

The marking was noticeably more positive in the afternoon sessions, whether this was because delegates had a comparative view or because workshop leaders learnt from the first session or a mix of the two is unclear. Perhaps most importantly despite the negative comments around the room combinations the good and excellent scores were in the main attributable to the two workshops (VBS and Safeguarding Standards) In the Airside suite.



From a positive perspective many respondees felt the day was well organized, the venue - including the parking and the food were good and the event provided value and relevance to their organisation and work. In particular it provided an excellent networking opportunity and only one delegate appeared to really feel the day was unsuitable.

