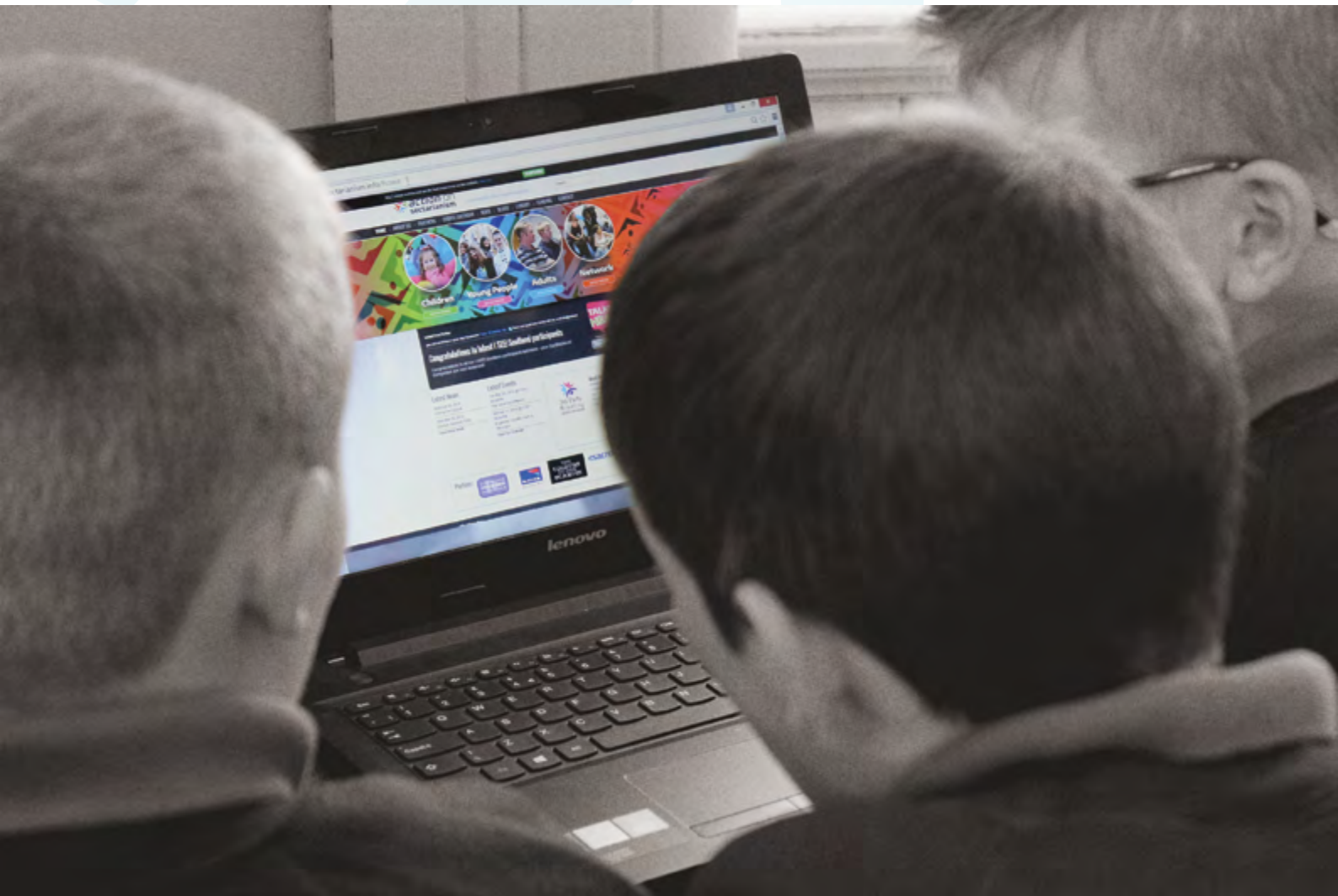


Action on Sectarianism

Report 2014-15



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WHAT?



Action on Sectarianism is a website providing information that inspires action on sectarianism in communities across Scotland. It has four channels with tailored information for children, young people, adults and the fourth login channel for practitioners, activists, professionals and anyone wanting to tackle this issue in their community.

AoS supports and promotes the work of other organisations and projects tackling sectarianism and is the central space to share resources and best practice. It provides access to the latest research, news and information on events both local and national.

CHILDREN

YOUNG
PEOPLE

ADULTS

NETWORK



- Children, young people and adults are better informed about intra-Christian sectarianism in their local area and throughout Scotland.
- Children, young people and adults are enabled to be the providers of information on the nature and effect of intra-Christian sectarianism as it impacts them.
- Children, young people and adults are enabled to have an open dialogue through the AoS website and accompanying social media platforms on the issue of intra-Christian sectarianism and how it impacts them.
- Practitioners and activists have a VLE platform to share and reflect on policy, resources and practice, leading to improved interventions with children, young people and adults.



AoS provides a central space for information on an often taboo or unacknowledged issue. Providing an accessible safe online space makes this information available to everyone across Scotland. Not only can information be accessed by all, the discussion forums, polls and surveys enable children, young people and adults to be the providers of information on sectarianism and how it impacts them. Practitioners and activists also have access to a Virtual Learning Environment where they can share and reflect on policy, resources and practice leading to improved interventions with children, young people and adults. It enables people to interact and engage with this topic, addressing it in their communities as the first step towards getting rid of it.

HOW?

New Content Creation

Action on Sectarianism engages with funded delivery partners, local organisations and communities to fill information gaps through the creation of interactive and rich content data e.g. videos, blogs, animations, news, webinars, etc.

Working with organisations to film or record their work allows AoS to promote it and inform the wider community in Scotland about what is happening to tackle sectarianism. AoS has worked with a wide range of organisations and projects such as SACRO, Xchange Scotland, Supporters Direct, Conforti Institute, Youth Scotland, Sense Over Sectarianism and more. This can be seen in the photographs throughout this report and throughout the website.

In addition to these photos, the films made by AoS, which include interviews with the **Minister for Community Safety Paul Wheelhouse MSP** and **Duncan Morrow, Chair of the Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism**, can be found on the website in the interactive zones of each channel. AoS team members also attend workshops, conferences and other events to film promotional and informative videos addressing the various aspects of sectarianism and showcase the work of other projects and organisations tackling this issue.

Digital content also includes the many different types of resources used by projects, organisations and practitioners to deliver their work in communities. These resources include the videos and photographs mentioned but also the latest research reports, activity packs, case studies, news, music and podcasts.

From the launch of the website on 30th October 2013 until 31st March 2015 139 resources were uploaded directly onto the website and 135 videos were embedded. In that time these resources were downloaded 12,270 times, a **108% increase** from the total downloads at the end of September 2014. Similarly there was a **124% increase** in

the number of views of videos on the Youtube channel in the same six month period.

These statistics indicate that people are recognising the value of sharing their reports, activities, videos and other resources on Action on Sectarianism and that they are being downloaded and used by people across Scotland. It is a demonstration of how resources and best practice can be shared and transferred across Scotland and this has been primarily made possible by their availability on Action on Sectarianism.

Action on Sectarianism has also been a conduit for individuals working on different projects together to form partnerships. For instance the account from Sara Stewart-Lindores, PhD Researcher at Edinburgh University;

"Meray Diner freelance documentary film-maker called me about my Master's Research in Community Learning and Development on Women and Sectarianism - having found my CERES briefing paper on the AOS library. We talked about making an educational documentary to share the findings. Using insight from this and my PhD research in Sociology at the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at Edinburgh University - the focus will be on a gendered angle on sectarianism grounded in women's everyday lives and the importance of peer and family relationships when talking about sectarianism based on academic findings from my previous narrative ethnographic work."

HOW?



HOW?

Research Function

The research functions of the website have been used in a variety of ways including hosting surveys, polls to discover different opinions on various elements of sectarianism and the discussion forums have been a place to ask questions.

Looking Forward Not Back (another anti-sectarian project) has also used private discussion forums for practitioners across the country to discuss their research results and plan events.

The Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism also used the website to gather feedback on their working definition of sectarianism.

There are a number of different types of polls on the website, **18 general poll** questions, **36** questions relating to Talking Head videos and finally feedback polls about the website itself. All of these polls are used in conjunction

with the **AoS twitter** account to encourage users to answer them but also to further engage with the website. Using images in the tweets also stimulates more of a response. The use of social media has been key to the research functions of the website. By the end of March 2015 AoS had a following of **744** on **Twitter** which is steadily growing. Sharing the surveys and polls on social media allows for a **wider perspective** to be gathered than just the readers of the monthly newsletter and other AoS network members. It provides reach across Scotland to many different groups thus providing a deeper and broader insight into the issue.

Public Co-production Group

This was a small group of young people who completed their **Participative Democracy Certificate (SCQF Level 5)** while actively putting together a page of their own on the AoS website.



Action on Sectarianism worked together with **Parkhead Youth Project** to deliver this work and create a new page specifically about Parkhead Youth Project's work on sectarianism. The young people involved researched the topic, delivered presentations on their research and then as a team used what they had found out to create content and design a webpage. It provided them with an overview of the **Nae Excuse Project** they had taken part in but it also enabled them to be the providers of information on sectarianism rather than just the recipients. The completed page can be viewed at: actiononsectarianism.info/nae-excuse-for-sectarian-abuse-2

HOW?

AoS Network Engagement and Evaluation

Action on Sectarianism staff attend a number of different networking, discussion and information events throughout the year, which have proven to be crucial in connecting with organisations and projects already tackling sectarianism in Scotland but also those who would like to do something but needed a connection to get started.

At these events AoS has information stalls and the Digital Development and Participation Officer will regularly speak to participants introducing the website and demonstrating how it can be used in different situations to support the work of communities across the country.

Additionally, AoS has offered **training for project workers** to learn how to use the website more fully and be able to upload their own stories, events and resources. **Online webinars** are also available to support anyone wanting to share their anti-sectarian work on the website directly.

Together with the support of staff when it is needed website users are fully enabled to use and, where necessary, adapt the resources available on the website as well as sharing their own.

The importance of access to a range of resources to practitioners is growing, in a conversation with one of the **Looking Forward Not Back** practitioners they said they did not know where they would have started without going to **Action on Sectarianism**.

Hi Paul,

I've had a look and they look great! I really like what you've done with the hover graphic over the young people's names - makes it look really modern and current. And I agree with the music making it upbeat - fantastic job!! Thanks again for all your and Sarah's hard work in doing this!

Thanks again!

Paul Hayward Social Marketing Officer Community Links (South Lanarkshire)

Hi Sarah,

I just want to say thank you so much for doing a fabulous job on the video and footage.

The feedback has been very good and we are in the process of sending this to Alan Mairs (Communication Officer) to ask if this can be used at the Sacro Staff Conference in Edinburgh.

Once again, from everyone at Sacro, thank you so much for providing us with your time and making the footage for us.

Rachelle Walker, Criminal Justice Worker, SACRO



HOW?



Thematic and Local Hub Development

Action on Sectarianism provides the opportunity for projects, organisations and community groups to have their own page or hub. These can be based on themes or on location, it is up to the individual group who are interested in having their information hosted by Action on Sectarianism. Some examples of these follow:

Social Media and Sectarianism

Community Links (South Lanarkshire) run a Social Media and Sectarianism online campaign via social media websites Facebook, Twitter and Google. They feature advertisements on the sites that link back to their main campaign page on **Action on Sectarianism**. It was launched on 12th March 2014 and is designed to incorporate both their own brand identity and that of AoS. The page provides information about the **consequences of posting sectarian material online** and also incorporates polls about how individuals use social media and what they know about sectarianism.

Action on Sectarianism and Community Links have now developed this page further in partnership to include

videos filmed and edited by AoS staff looking more in depth at young people's thoughts on **online anonymity**, the **consequences of posting sectarian comments** online and what Police Scotland advise about any individual's **digital footprint**.



HOW?

Deaf Connections

The **Deaf Connections** hub is not one that is in one place on the website but rather can be found throughout it. Action on Sectarianism staff provided Deaf Connections access to all of the videos, talking head and web pages in order to translate these into **British Sign Language**. This has allowed certain parts of the website to become more **accessible** for more people and where the BSL video may not be directly available there is a clear link to one.

The decision for which parts of the website and which talking heads to translate was made by staff at Deaf Connections and AoS staff worked closely with them to ensure that the translations were clearly visible and accessible.

This is an ongoing project and AoS staff are now discussing with Deaf Connections what further pages and videos should be translated.



Looking Forward Not Back

This project used the AoS thematic hubs in a distinctive way. As their participants were based across Scotland they used a **private discussion forum** to communicate and discuss the different aspects of the project as a whole. This allowed them to come together in a digital space despite being based far from each other geographically.

Now that the first stage of this project is completed AoS staff are working with LFNB to create a hub which will publicly share their findings, videos and toolkit as well as the experiences and thoughts of the young people taking part in the project. Sharing their work in this way has allowed the project to create a **sustainable product** that can be used to inform other work tackling sectarianism with youth work approaches.





Marketing and Communications

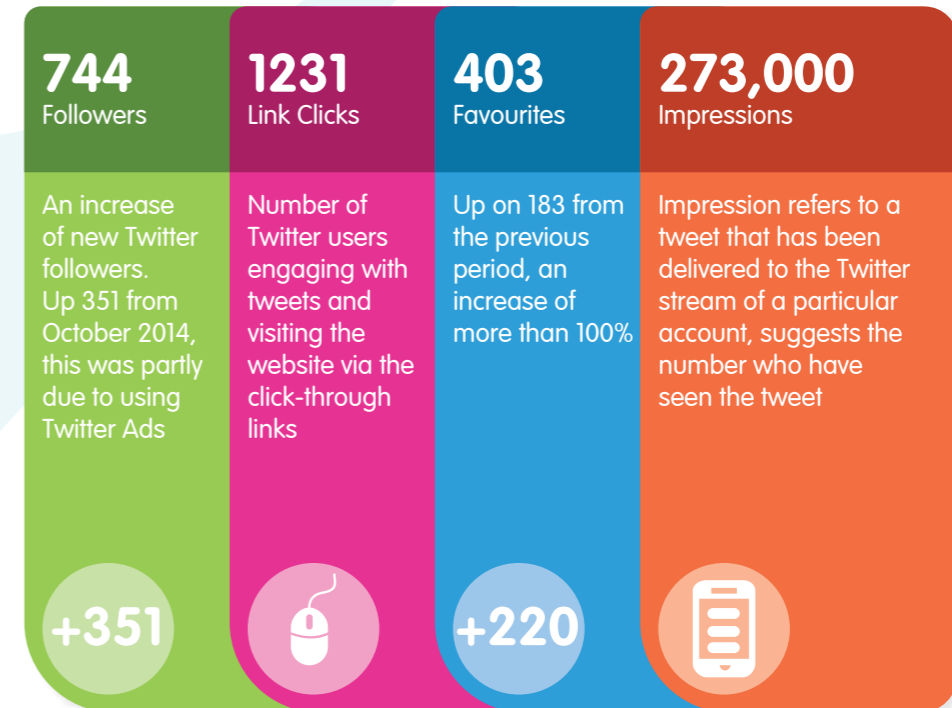
Action on Sectarianism has a number of marketing materials such as flyers and custom made stylus pens, which are distributed at events, workshops and meetings. The pens are particularly popular and have been used and distributed by other projects for their participants and in their communities.

The AoS Newsletter captures relevant national, local and project news and sends this out to interested parties. It is used to promote resources, events and general articles about the work taking place throughout the country. It has also been used and continues to be used to collect data for research by featuring links to surveys/polls etc.

In order to gather content for the newsletter each month AoS staff send out a call to partner projects each month as well as any other potentially interested parties. The Newsletter also features shorter articles, which link to the full story on the **AoS news page**, generating more traffic to the website. It is also distributed via the **AoS twitter account**, once again generating more traffic to the website, which can be identified when looking at the statistics from the September 2014 issue. The link to it was clicked on **268** times, suggesting that approximately this many people read the Newsletter via social media and therefore had access to further information on the website.

At the end of March 2015 two twitter Ads campaigns were run to gather more followers and to generate more web clicks through to the website. These were both very successful generating 615 clicks through to the website, 151 new followers and 30,630 impressions (the number of times tweets appear on twitter streams and are viewed by users). Over the next financial year the Digital Development and Participation Officer will now be looking into how this tool can be used most effectively to generate traffic to the website and bring the information available to the attention of more people.

In addition to the online marketing, AoS staff have been invited to have information stalls and/or speak at a number of different events throughout Scotland. These stalls and events provide the opportunity for conference delegates, practitioners or members of the public to get a first look at the website by using laptops and the iPad that are provided to get on and have a look or have a go at the interactive activities.



The above info-graphic illustrates the AoS twitter statistics from 30 October 2013 up to 31 March 2015.



From 19 March 2015 to 31 March 2015 AoS ran a Twitter Ads campaign, the above illustration depicts the key statistics for that period.



Outcome 1

Children, young people and adults are better informed about intra-Christian sectarianism in their local area and throughout Scotland.

The number of new and returning users of the website is increasing, suggesting more people are seeking to be more informed about intra-Christian sectarianism.

There has been a steady increase in the number of people using the Action on Sectarianism website and in particular in the number of returning visitors. Between the end of September 2014 and the end of March 2015 there was a 135% increase in the number of visits to the website and when compared to the number of users it can be determined that 40% were returning users. This suggests that not only does the website regularly host new visitors but almost half of users are also returning to use the website and the information available on multiple occasions.

Outcome 2

Children, young people and adults are enabled to be the providers of information on the nature and effect of intra-Christian sectarianism as it impacts them.

Discussion forums, polls, talking heads and blogs allows members of the public to be the providers of information about sectarianism and how it impacts them. Working with other projects and organisations to create videos or pages on the website allows for the sharing of learning.

While it has been demonstrated that the website is being used by members of the public and practitioners to find out about sectarianism it can also be shown that Action on Sectarianism is enabling people to become the providers of information as well. The young people's co-production group at Parkhead Youth Project for example have worked together to create their own page on the website talking about the work

they have taken part in looking at sectarianism in their community through drama work, football and peer education. The information on this page came directly from their experience and research.

Similarly the blog page, online polls and talking heads provide the opportunity of people for people to share their own experiences, opinions and thoughts about this often controversial topic in a safe environment. These blogs etc. can also drive more traffic to the website for instance the blog by John DC Gow when posted triggered a significant increase in website visits thus providing the opportunity for more people to find out about sectarianism and how they can combat it in their communities.

Outcome 3

Children, young people and adults are enabled to have an open dialogue through the AoS website and accompanying social media platforms on the issue of intra-Christian sectarianism and how it impacts them.

The AoS twitter account encourages dialogue on social media as well as the website about sectarianism. Twitter followers are engaging with AoS posts as well as recommending them to their own networks.

Action on Sectarianism also enables children, young people and adults to engage in open dialogue about sectarianism in Scotland and how it affects them. Using social media to ask questions; send out information and encourage dialogue AoS provides a space for this dialogue to take place. The twitter account increased its follower numbers by 89% in six months between 2014 and 2015 and the tweets sent out received over 270,000 impressions (the number of times a tweet appeared on a twitter feed and was viewed) in the same period. The engagement rate for tweets in this period was 2.1%, which works out at about 5731 direct engagements (link clicks, follows, retweet etc.) and demonstrates that not only are people simply following AoS on Twitter but they are also engaging and passing on the messages to their online communities. Providing this space for dialogue allows individuals to understand a topic that is often taboo and to talk about it in a safe space.



SO WHAT?

Outcome 4

Practitioners and activists have a VLE platform to share and reflect on policy, resources and practice, leading to improved interventions with children, young people and adults.

More practitioners are sharing their materials, news stories and events on the website. Sharing their learning, resources and best practice allows for others to use tried and tested resources in their own work with communities across Scotland.

By the end of March 2015 the AoS Network had 131 registered users sharing and using the resources, news and events on the website. With support available from AoS staff practitioners, activists, teachers and other professionals are able to actively share their work with each other and the wider public, creating a VLE platform.

The importance of access to the VLE platform and the resources within it is growing for communities groups, projects and organisations which was demonstrated in conversation with a number of practitioners taking part in the Looking Forward Not Back project who stated they would not have known where to start without access to the website and the resources there.

There are 139 resources (reports, activities, research etc.) uploaded on the website which, by the end of March 2015 had been downloaded over 12,000 times, a 108% increase since the end of September 2014. This shows that practitioners are sharing their resources but also using those of others and therefore knowledge and practice are being shared across Scotland digitally. Additionally, the website features 179 news articles, 181 events, 135 videos and 20 blogs, demonstrating the sharing of very valuable individual opinions, personal experiences and more that can all be used to learn and adapt from.

WHAT NOW?



With further funding for 2015/16 Action on Sectarianism continues to provide an online space to share resources and best practice. AoS staff supports other projects and organisation to promote their work and create sustainability and legacy for that work. By having an online library of resources and working with partners to ensure that these are accessible and have advice with them on how they are best used or adapted, AoS will provide a legacy which allows these resources to be used beyond the end of the funding period.

The 'Action on' model provides an opportunity to address other issues in a similar way, by providing information that inspires action, sharing resources and best practice and allowing individuals to voice their opinions and tell their stories for others to learn from. It is a tool which allows for adaptation of resources to suit different communities and is a place where practitioners and activists come together to find new ideas, resources and partnerships.

We are now looking into how this model can continue to be used to its full advantage, creating a legacy for Action on Sectarianism to evolve and develop to address intolerance in Scotland.





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