

Equalities Participation Network – 26 June 2025

Present: Myshele Haywood (GREC), Matt Carter (ACHSCP), Roslynn Fowler (Aberdeen Action on Disability), Carol Hannaford (Sheltered Housing), Linzi Harrow (ACC), Ells Mchaffie (Guide Dogs), Marion McLaughlin (Aurora Autism Consulting), Mary Rasmussen (Guide Dogs), John Whitfield (Deafblind Scotland).

Speaker: Alison Stuart, NESCAN

North East Scotland Climate Action Network – NESCAN

Website: nescan.org

Email: Alison@nescan.org

Alison gave a presentation (attached) about NESCAN's work, including:

- local festivals like Climate Week, Envirolution and Go Torry
- advice and funding for community groups to improve sustainability and biodiversity
- online and in-person resources
- workshops, training, community assemblies, events and more

The local hub is one of 24 across Scotland. She invited folk to get involved and spread the word in their communities, emphasising that they have funding available to help with projects large and small. Some small examples included planting flowers, building accessible paths or adding benches to encourage people to spend more time outdoors.

Q&A:

Funding

Mary – does NESCAN provide help for older people to get outside more?

Alison – yes – there was a project in Lord Hay's Court to create an outdoor space for residents, and to connect with the local school.

John – is the Just Transition Fund only available for Aberdeen City?

Alison – it's available for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray.

Roslynn – is funding available for groups that don't own their space?

Alison – yes – with permission from landlords. Previous projects have included adding paths and improving garden spaces.

Roslynn – AAD will look into what they can get permission to do – it would be good to improve garden access at the AAD offices.

(discussion about universal design, difficulties with cobblestones in public spaces, lack of grab bars in social/sheltered housing, etc).

Ells offered pyrography (wood burning art) – Alison will get in touch.

Accessibility at NESCAN events

Marion – what was done for accessibility for autistic people at Envirolution?

Alison – there was quiet space available, maps of where everything was located, etc, but organisers would welcome help and advice on making the event more accessible.

John – communication for all is very important – more than just words – deafblind awareness week (22-28 June) coincides with Helen Keller's birthday.

Alison – absolutely – the person in charge of communications at NESCAN can be emailed on communications@nescan.org

Marion highlighted Alison's openness to improve accessibility – often, people get defensive about it.

Alison invited anyone with questions, suggestions or wanting more information to please get in touch: Alison@nescan.org or 0777 927 9583.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 28 August, 4-5pm, online (no meeting in July).
Topic: TBC.