

Scotland's Adoption Register

Awareness Survey Results

July 2021



Introduction

In April 2021 we sent out a survey to all 32 local authorities and the 4 voluntary agencies in Scotland. We wanted to understand how aware agency staff were of our services, which platforms we operate on and how we could communicate more effectively with our service users.

We also wanted to learn which resources agency staff used to access up-to date information on adoption and family finding events in Scotland. 53 participants took part in the survey with 87% of responses from local authorities and 13% from voluntary organisations.

The survey was created to gather information before the release of an online adoption campaign and the results will inform changes in our practice and how we continue to communicate effectively.

We thank agency staff for their participation and suggestions.

53 participants from:

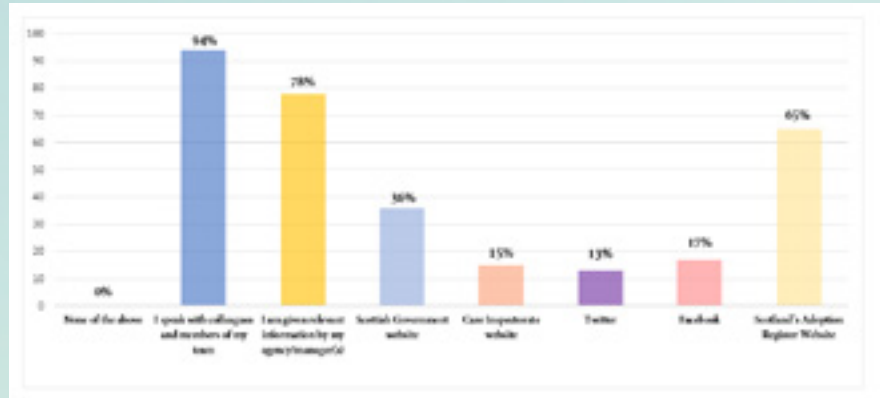
20 local authorities

3 voluntary agencies

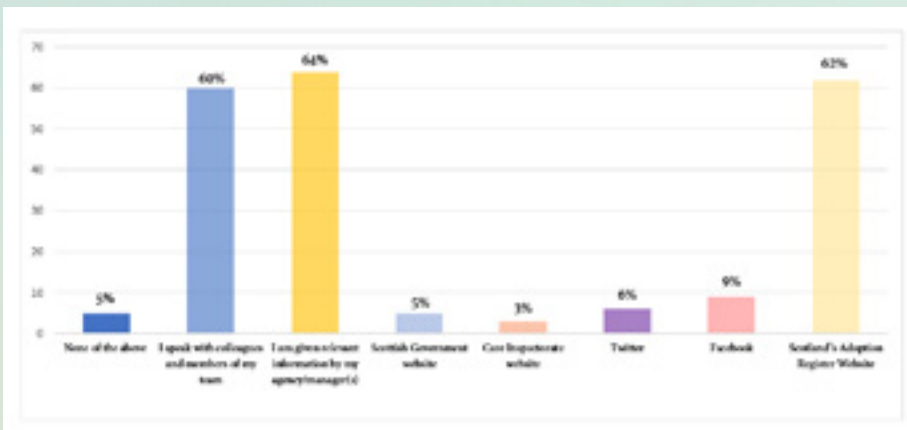
How/where do you access up to date information on adoption in Scotland?

The results show that most participants speak to colleagues to access up to date information on adoption.

We are pleased to note that 65% use the Register website which has up to date information regarding all aspects of adoption in Scotland.



How/Where do you access information on family finding events/events centred around adoption in Scotland?

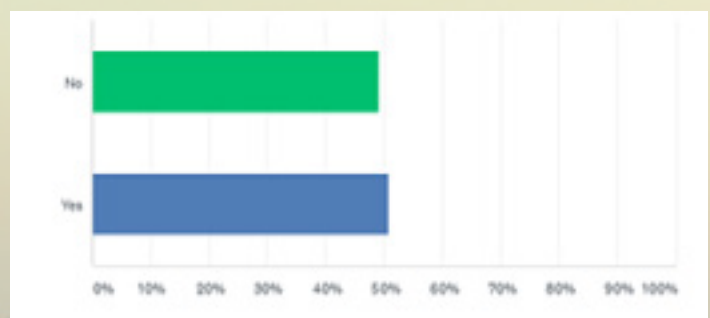


Similarly, the majority of participants feel they are given relevant information about family finding events such as Exchange Days and Activity Day by their agency and/or managers on family finding events/events centred around adoption.

Interestingly, slightly fewer participants used our website for information. We post dates and information on all of our upcoming family finding events and practitioner forums which can be found on our homepage and [here](#).

Have you previously read any of our annual reports?


Just over 50% of participants said they read our annual reports. The reports provide a wide range of statistical information on children and families referred and matched through Register activity each year, including the ages of children, number of sibling groups referred and matched and a break down of families' adoption remits. To read our latest annual reports go [here](#).



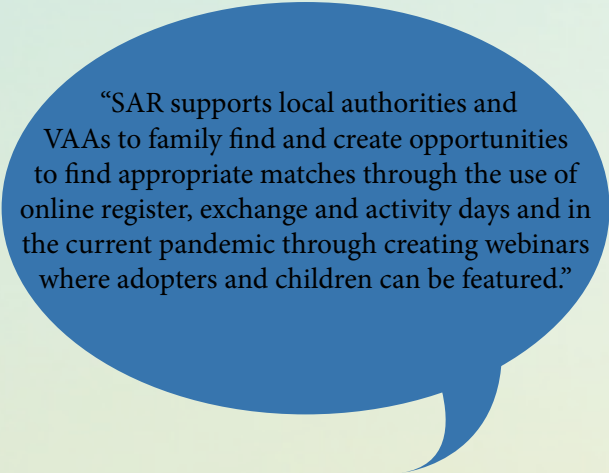
We asked participants to describe what Scotland's Adoption Register's remit was as we were keen to understand what aspects of our service were the most well known and what, if any, we should be publicising more. Many participants were aware that we managed an online register (run through the IT platform Link Maker) and that we held family finding events such as Activity Days, Exchange Day and, more recently, Webinars. Some participants also mentioned the training we provide to agencies and that we advise and signpost agencies to changes in legislation.

A few participants were unsure of our full remit, with some knowing about the online register but not mentioning our other family finding services. Several were unsure about all aspects of the service.

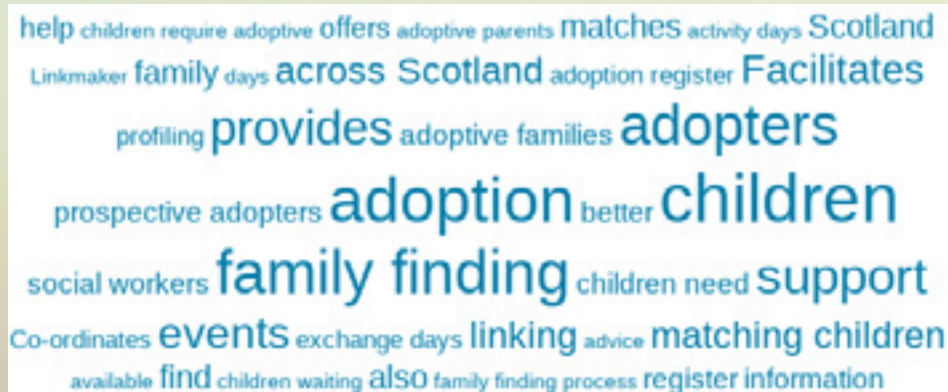
The responses to this question gave a useful insight into how well we are marketing our services and showed that, while many were aware of the work we do, we could also do more to expand our reach.



“Promotes adoption across Scotland in relation to all aspects of adoption, including family finding digitally and via events, access to training, offers support to clients and professionals accessing events and in relation to Link Maker, and updates/signposts to legislation.”



“SAR supports local authorities and VAAs to family find and create opportunities to find appropriate matches through the use of online register, exchange and activity days and in the current pandemic through creating webinars where adopters and children can be featured.”

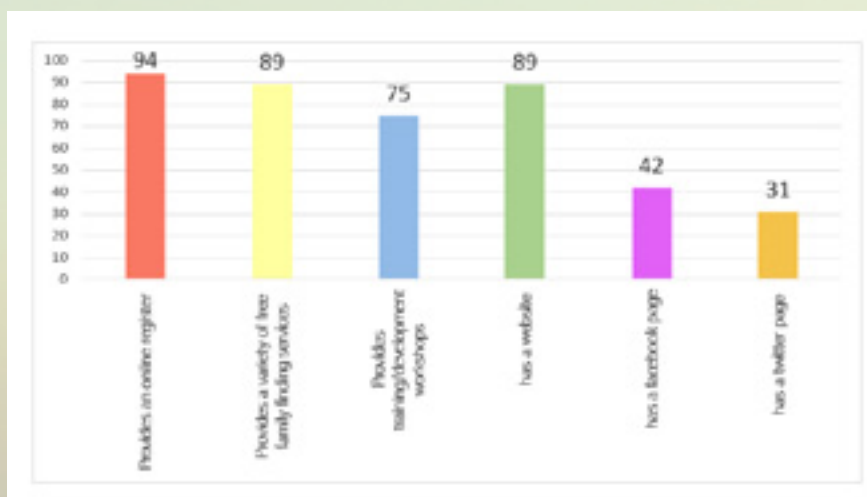


help children require adoptive offers adoptive parents matches activity days Scotland Linkmaker family days across Scotland adoption register Facilitates profiling provides adoptive families adopters prospective adopters adoption better children social workers family finding children need support Co-ordinates events exchange days linking advice matching children available find children waiting also family finding process register information

We wanted to know how aware our participants were of the services we provide and what social platforms we use to publicise our events and the work we do. 94% were aware that we provide an online register to all Scottish agencies and 89% knew that facilitated other family family events. Not as many knew that we provided bespoke training to agencies.

“I feel Scotland’s Adoption Register do really well in this area, I am not sure if this is done already, but maybe linking in with the Universities, particularly for social work students”

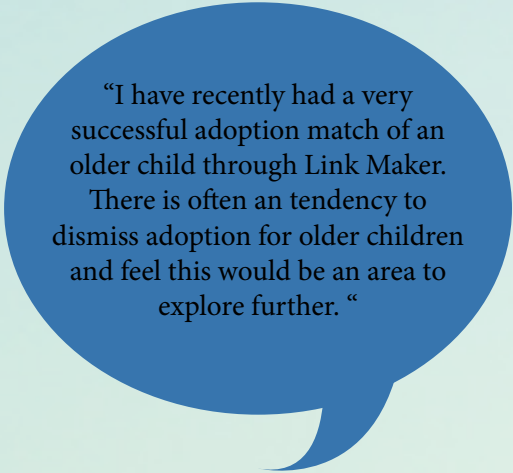
In regard to platforms we use, the majority were aware we had a website but only 43% knew we had a Facebook page and 31% a Twitter page. We have been using social media platforms for a relatively short amount of time but are keen to utilise these platforms more and are working on ways to increase awareness of our online presence. We hope that the upcoming media campaign will help to connect us to agencies via their social platforms.



What would you like to see us focusing on?

The responses to this section of the survey gave us much to consider taking forward.

- Several participants stated they would like the Register to provide ongoing training to agencies. This is a service which we already provide but we will work on publicising this service better on our website.
- A quarterly newsletter via email which we are in the process of developing.
- Several responses related to increasing adopters' remits and publicising the adoption of older children, brothers and sisters and children with additional needs. We have consistently addressed this in our training workshops, with an emphasis on agencies' recruitment focus. We hope to further achieve greater awareness in the public sphere through the release of our online media campaign video which will appear on our website and social media channels soon.
- An annual calendar of events. Due to the pandemic, there has been less need for this, but we are now working with a website designer to add this to our homepage.
- Creating a podcast or interviewing adopters about the process-this is something we have discussed recently - watch this space!



“I have recently had a very successful adoption match of an older child through Link Maker. There is often a tendency to dismiss adoption for older children and feel this would be an area to explore further.”

Next Steps

The responses given by agency staff have been a very useful and a valuable resource for us to develop the SAR service further. We plan to build on these through:

- The provision of a quarterly newsletter which will be circulated via email and available on the website.
- Continuing to provide free bespoke training to all agencies.
- The launch of a media campaign video on our website and through social media with the intention of recruiting adoptive families for older children, brothers and sisters and children with additional needs.
- Continuing to hold a quarterly practitioners forum for agency staff to discuss issues in practice and children requiring placements
- The creation of an 'adoption podcast' or a series of recorded audio interviews with adoptive families about their experiences of adopting.

If you would like to contribute your thoughts and suggests on how the Register can expand its reach or have areas you would like to see us focus on please contact us at sar@adoptionregister.scot