



navca

local focus national voice

evaluating NAVCA

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Analysis of Evaluating NAVCA 2008 and NAVCA's stakeholder survey

Introduction and summary

Every year NAVCA asks all members and local affiliates to complete a survey about how they feel we are doing. We use the findings of the survey to measure our progress in implementing our strategic plan (2006-11) and to influence our workplan. For the first time this year we also invited stakeholders and partners to complete a short survey. This report presents the findings of these two surveys.

1 Evaluating NAVCA

1.1 Who responded

There were 92 responses (compared to 90 in 2007/8 and 97 in 2006). This represents just over a quarter of all members and affiliates. These can be broken down by region and income as follows.

Region	% of total responses	Number of responses
East of England	15	14
East Midlands	7	6
London	9	8
North East	11	10
North West	13	12
South East	14	13
South West	12	11
West Midlands	8	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	12	11

The regional spread this year is similar to last year with the major change being a drop in responses from London. The spread of responses this year broadly reflects NAVCA's spread of members and local affiliates. In most regions between 21 and 30 per cent of members responded. The exceptions are the North East (48% responded) and the East Midlands (17%) responded.

Income	% of total responses	Number of responses
Up to £200,000	23	21
£200,000 to £500,000	28	26
Over £500,000	49	45

Comparing the income of respondents to last year, the percentage of respondents in the £200,000 - £500,000 band has dropped from 40% to 28% and risen in the lower and upper bands by 5 and 7 % respectively.

1.2 Contact with NAVCA

Contact	% of total responses	+/- from last year	Number of responses
Very frequent	4	No change	4
Frequent	39	+5	36
Occasional	51	-1	47
Rare	5	-4	5
Never	0	No change	0

These figures make good reading for NAVCA but it is important to consider that members most likely to fill in the survey will be those who have contact with NAVCA.

As last year, the figures tell us that contact with NAVCA increases with income but the percentage of members with income below £200,000 who frequently or very frequently contact NAVCA has risen from 6% to 29%. However this is still below comparable figures for members with income between £200,000 and £500,000 (31%) and income over £500,000 (58%). This is probably due to the capacity of organisations with fewer staff. The comments from members in response to being asked about their relationship with NAVCA would seem to bear out the fact that time is a key factor.

“I find it hard to focus on national bodies because I have so much to do locally.” **Large Urban Northern LIO**

“OK- I have not had the time for full engagement.” **Small Midlands LIO**

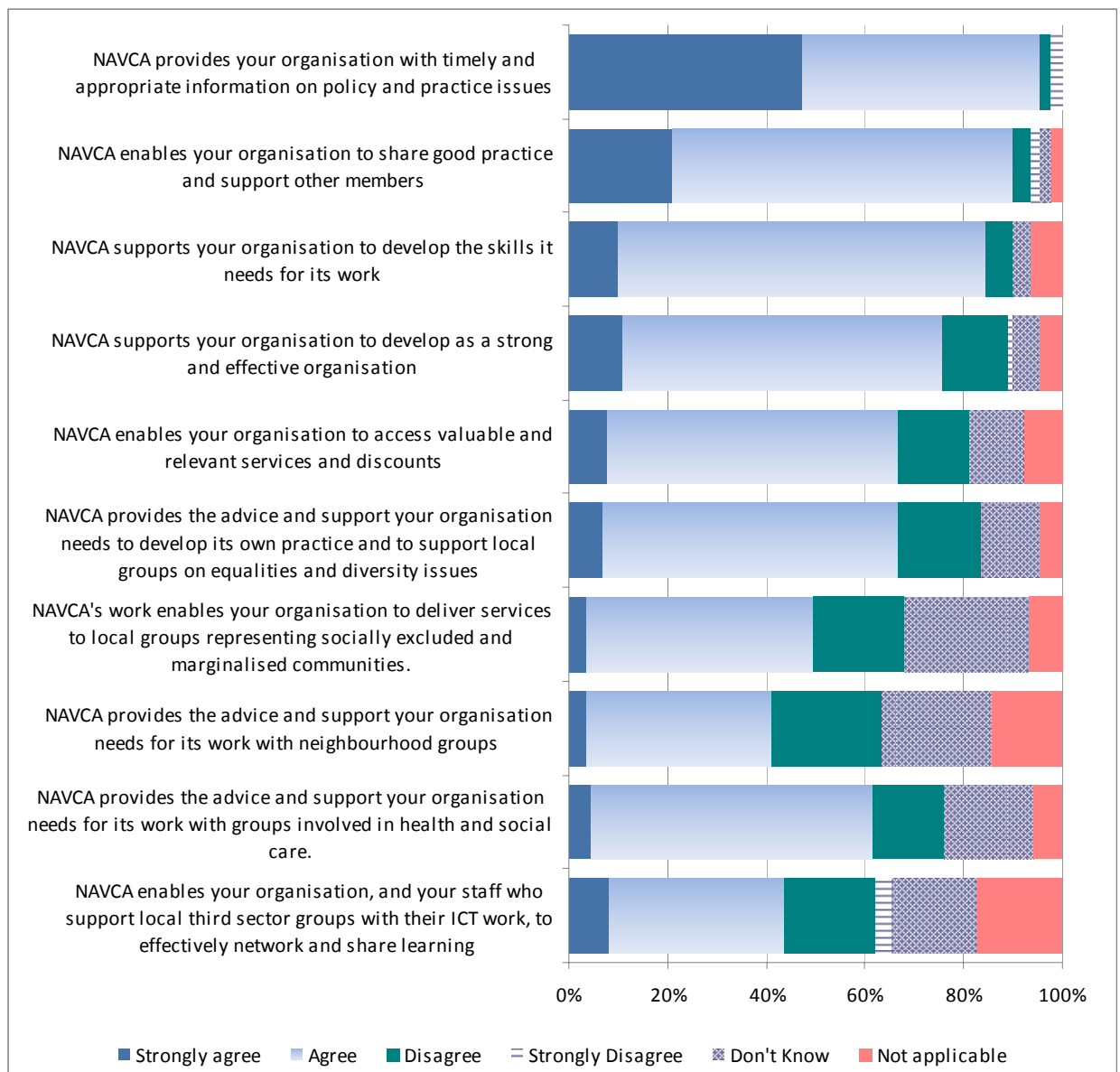
“Limited - as much due to our limited capacity to engage with you as you with us” **Large urban Southern LIO**

*“Not that close probably due to our time/work constraints” **Medium sized Midlands LIO***

*“OK - time pressures don't allow us to benefit as much as we could” **Medium sized rural Southern LIO***

1.3 Analysis of responses

Below are charts showing the breakdown of responses to the survey questions.

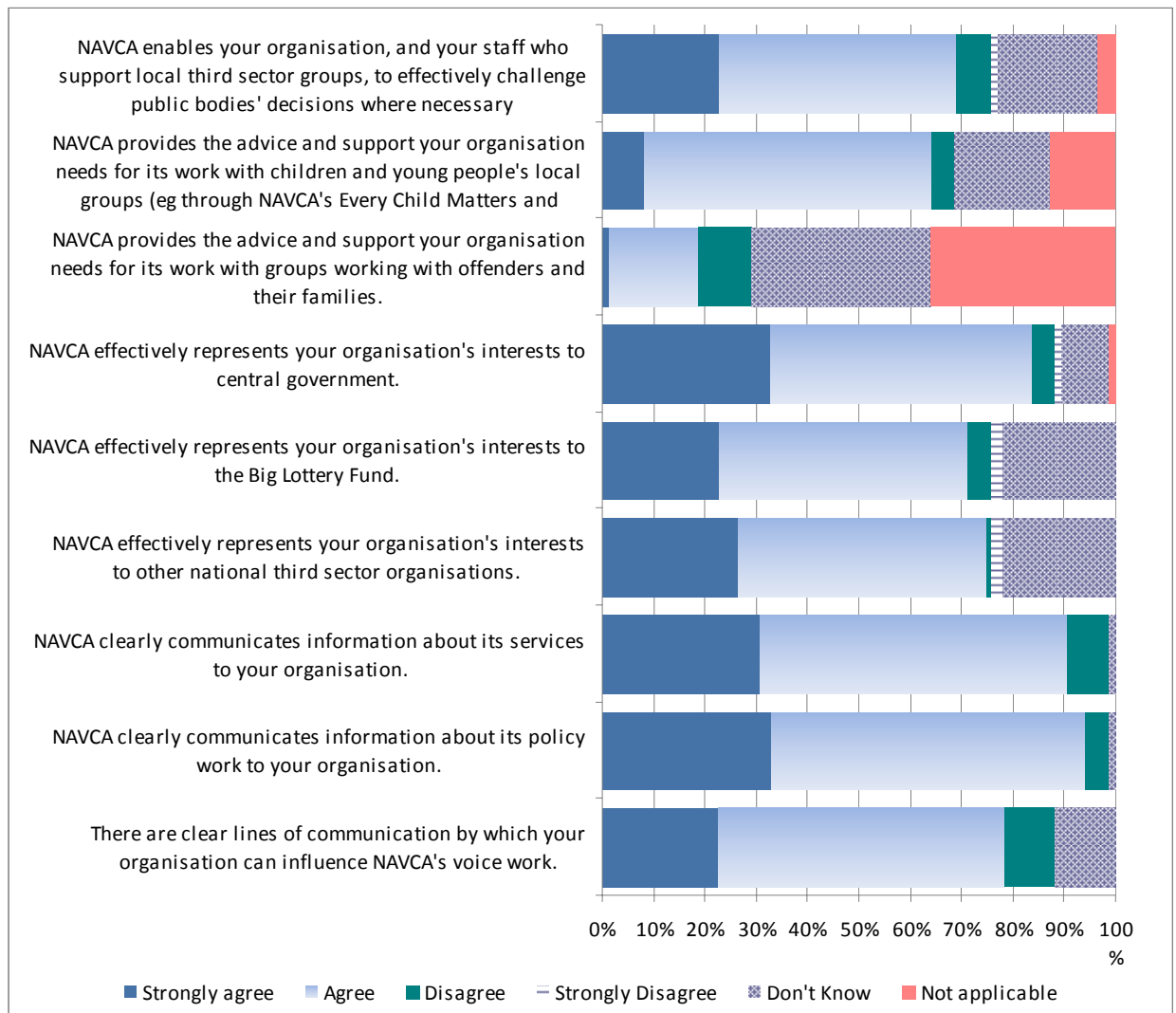


The majority of questions gained at least 60% positive responses (members saying they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement), rising to 96% for providing timely and appropriate policy and practice information.

The lowest proportion of positive responses was for the questions on NAVCA’s work to support socially excluded and marginalised communities, neighbourhood groups and ICT.

There are very few ‘strongly disagree’ responses and low positive responses are usually accompanied by a large number of ‘don’t knows’ or ‘not applicable’

Breakdown of responses to the survey questions (continued)



The low number of positive responses to the question on NAVCA’s support for work with offenders and their families is to be expected as a major aim of the project is to raise awareness of the role third sector groups can play in delivering services to offenders and their families. The high percentage of don’t knows and not applicable reflects the need for this work and the view of the government is that the third sector should get more involved.

Comments were invited on these questions and a selection follows.

“NAVCA is very strong on national voice and big issues but I think needs to look more closely at district challenges and local issues in relation to membership support.” **Large Northern LIO**

“We do not necessarily use all of the services NAVCA offers but it's good to know they are there if needed.” **Large Southern Urban LIO**

“More support on specialist areas of work -such as CVS hosting LINKs- would be useful.” **Large Southern Urban LIO**

“..what I am suggesting is that NAVCA might have more of a local presence and a key worker who contacts us - in person - not electronically to see how things are going etc.” **Medium sized Northern LIO**

1.4 How do the responses compare with last year?

Question	% positive responses	% Change from 07/08
NAVCA provides your organisation with timely and appropriate information on policy and practice issues	96	-3
NAVCA clearly communicates information about its policy work to your organisation.	94	+3
NAVCA clearly communicates information about its services to your organisation.	91	-1
NAVCA enables your organisation to share good practice and support other members	90	-1
NAVCA supports your organisation to develop the skills it needs for its work	85	+13
NAVCA effectively represents your organisation's interests to central government.	84	+2
There are clear lines of communication by which your organisation can influence NAVCA's voice work.	79	+8
NAVCA supports your organisation to develop as a strong and effective organisation	76	No change
NAVCA effectively represents your organisation's interests to other national third sector organisations.	75	No change
NAVCA effectively represents your organisation's interests to the Big Lottery Fund.	71	-3
NAVCA enables your organisation, and your staff who support local third sector groups, to effectively challenge public bodies' decisions where necessary	69	*
NAVCA enables your organisation to access valuable and relevant services and discounts	67	+4

NAVCA provides the advice and support your organisation needs to develop its own practice and to support local groups on equalities and diversity issues	67	-9
NAVCA provides the advice and support your organisation needs for its work with children and young people's local groups	64	*
NAVCA provides the advice and support your organisation needs for its work with groups involved in health and social care.	61	+7
NAVCA's work enables your organisation to deliver services to local groups representing socially excluded and marginalised communities.	49	-7
NAVCA enables your organisation, and your staff who support local third sector groups with their ICT work, to effectively network and share learning	47	+5**
NAVCA provides the advice and support your organisation needs for its work with neighbourhood groups	41	-5
NAVCA provides the advice and support your organisation needs for its work with groups working with offenders and their families.	19	*

*new question not asked last year

** Last years' question concerned the now defunct ICT Hub.

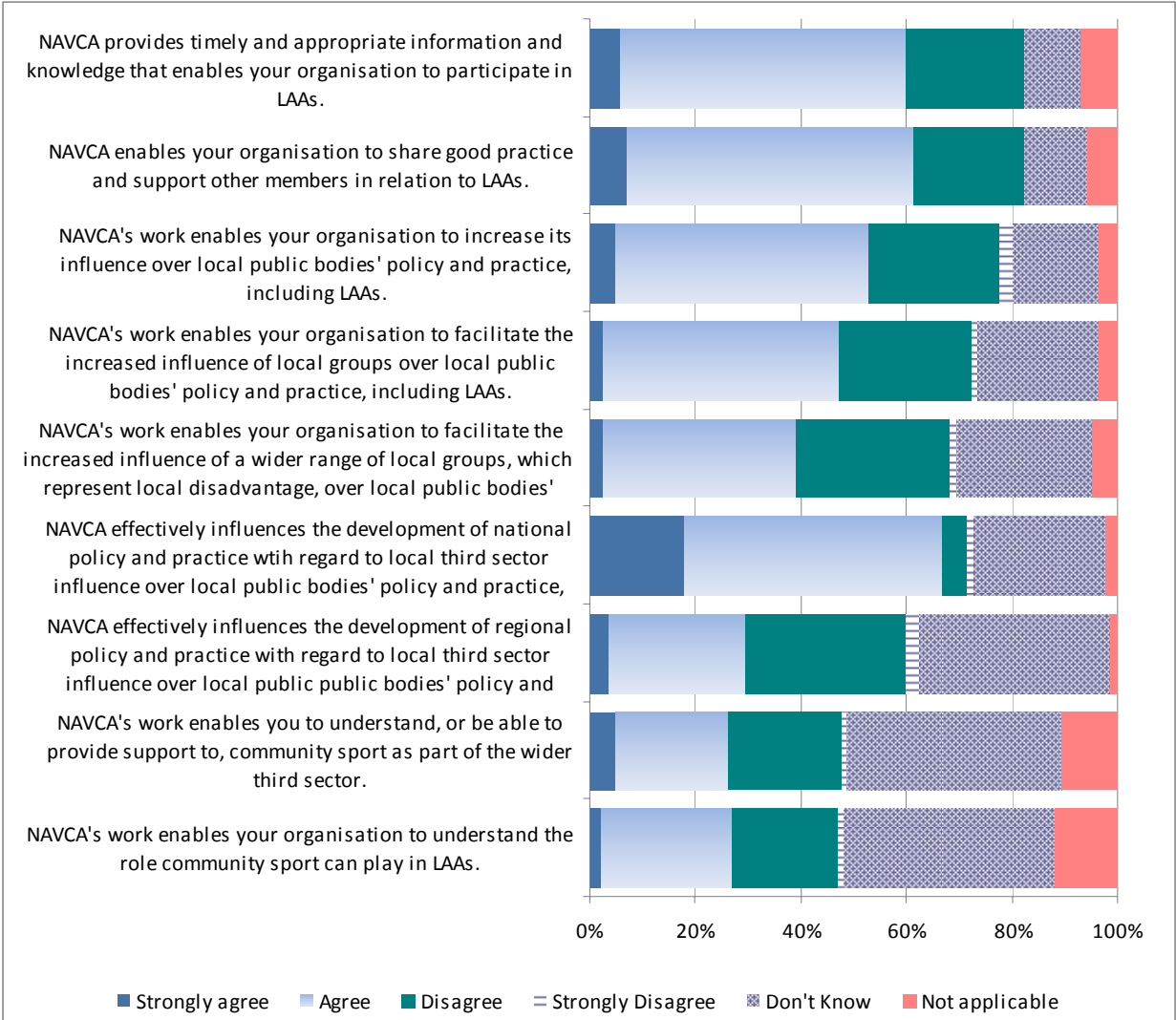
The biggest falls in positive responses are for NAVCA's support for work on equalities and diversity issues (-9), neighbourhood groups (-5) and representing excluded and marginalised communities (-7). For all three of these the drop mirrors a similar size increase in positive responses from last year.

The response in relation to NAVCA's work on equalities and diversity issues is surprising. We have taken a lead role within the National Equalities Partnership. We campaigned to protect *single group funding* for black and minority ethnic organisations with success. We have also been developing resources to support wider community and neighbourhood engagement, some of which have only recently been made available, whilst others are still in development. However, it does, perhaps, reflect a need for us to communicate our work in these areas more effectively. If we are successful in our application to the Department for Communities and Local Government's Empowerment Fund we will have additional capacity to direct towards this work.

The most significant rises are for developing skills (+13) and being able to influence NAVCA's voice work (+8).

Analysis of responses

Evaluating NAVCA asks a set of questions directly related to the work of the Improving Local Partnerships Unit. These questions provide NAVCA with the information we need to give to the Big Lottery Fund and Sport England who fund the Improving Partnerships and Sports Partnership projects. Below are charts showing the breakdown of responses to the survey questions relating to these questions.



The percentage of positive responses is generally lower for than for the other questions in Evaluating NAVCA. However, it should be noted that in this section there is a strong correlation between positive responses and size of organisation. Broadly, the bigger the organisation the more favourably they view NAVCA's work on Local Area Agreements. This may reflect their involvement in LAAs, as smaller organisations will tend to cover districts authorities and less likely to be engaged in LAAs that are agreed by top tier authority areas.

The sport questions have a low positive response. As with the offenders work, our work on Sport is largely about increasing LIO involvement and tackling a lack of awareness of these issues. These figures were anticipated.

1.5 How do the responses compare with last year? (ILP)

Question	% positive responses	% Change from 07/08
NAVCA provides timely and appropriate information and knowledge that enables your organisation to participate in LAAs.	60	-16
NAVCA enables your organisation to share good practice and support other members in relation to LAAs.	61	3
NAVCA's work enables your organisation to increase its influence over local public bodies' policy and practice, including LAAs.	53	1
NAVCA's work enables your organisation to facilitate the increased influence of local groups over local public bodies' policy and practice, including LAAs.	47	1
NAVCA's work enables your organisation to facilitate the increased influence of a wider range of local groups, which represent local disadvantage, over local public bodies' policy and practice, including LAAs.	39	-2
NAVCA effectively influences the development of national policy and practice with regard to local third sector influence over local public bodies' policy and practice, including LAAs.	67	-1
NAVCA effectively influences the development of regional policy and practice with regard to local third sector influence over local public bodies' policy and practice, including LAAs.	29	-7
NAVCA's work enables you to understand, or be able to provide support to, community sport as part of the wider third sector.	26	*
NAVCA's work enables your organisation to understand the role community sport can play in LAAs.	27	*

*new question not asked last year

The biggest drop is in positive responses to the assertion that NAVCA provides timely and appropriate information in regard to LAAs, although the positive response rate is still at 60% this is a sharp decline. It may in part be explained by the increased number of smaller organisations responding, many of which may somewhat distant from the LAA process. However, there have also been internal resource constraints that may have limited our capability to meet members' expectations. We will be devoting considerable attention to improving the position over the next year.

1.6 Future challenges facing LIOs

We asked members to tell us the biggest 3 challenges they think they will face over the next 18 months. We got the following responses.

Future challenge	No of responses
Funding	54
Commissioning	18
Issues relating to the Management of the organisation	13
Staffing (both keeping and attracting staff)	11
Recession	9
Representation, including LAAs and LSPs	8
Buildings/accommodation and relocation	7
Local Government re-organisation	6
Relationship with PCT/LINKs	6
Relationships with other LIOs	4
Having to tender for LIO work	4
Grants	4
Relationships with local Authority	3
Merger	3
Sustainability	3

Funding and commissioning occupy the first two places as they did last year. Accommodation, LAAs, local government reorganisation, mergers and relationships between LIOs were also on last year's list. The recession and staffing are new issues as is members' concerns about managing their organisation. This concern was often linked in responses to undergoing a period of change or a lack of management/chief officer time. Possibly most notable and NAVCA's biggest challenge is that, other than funding, there is a wide variance in what members see as threats.

1.7 The Quality of relationship between NAVCA and our members

Members were asked to comment on their relationship with NAVCA. We received 81 responses of which 77% were positive and just 5% critical. Again this may be a reflection of the fact that members who have a good relationship with us are more likely to fill in a survey. The comments have been passed to the Chief Executive to consider, a representative sample is below.

*“Positive. We don't regularly engage but when we need to they offer helpful advice and support.” **Medium sized Midlands LIO***

“Good; feel they help when we approach them. Much the most approachable of the national bodies.” **Small Southern LIO**

“It is a useful relationship but my feeling is that NAVCA influences the national agenda rather than supporting delivery on a local basis.” **Small rural Midlands LIO**

“Very useful when needed. However NAVCA need a 'louder' voice when it comes to influencing national agendas.” **Medium sized rural Midlands LIO**

“NAVCA are very supportive and I feel understand the issues we face.” **Large Southern LIO**

“I do have reservations however about the lack of local level support for CVS and NAVCA's seeming willingness to go with government agenda's that big is best , competition and mergers are right.” **Medium sized rural Northern LIO**

“As Information Officer I appreciate the news content but was not aware of many of the other areas of work that NAVCA do.” **Small Northern LIO**

“Good. I think NAVCA does an excellent job campaigning and advocating for infrastructure organisations and the sector as a whole.” **Large urban Northern LIO**

“Good. NAVCA is friendly and approachable and we're just starting to make the most of it.” **Large rural Southern LIO**

“We believe we have a good relationship with NAVCA, not very active but we find their publications helpful and know they are there for support if we need them.” **Small Midlands LIO**

“It's good. I find it hard to focus on national bodies because I have so much to do locally.” **Large urban Northern LIO**

“Good but when its going well can tend not to prioritise feeding into NAVCA because of everything else.” **Large urban Midlands LIO**

“Our impression is that performance within NAVCA is continuing to improve and we are getting more relevant contact each year.” **Large urban Northern LIO**

“Fine - don't have much contact really but good to know they are there when we need them.” **Large rural Midlands LIO**

“Excellent - often feel though that an annual visit from someone at NAVCA or a chance to come to NAVCA to meet the team would be good.” **Large Northern LIO**

“Not close but are so glad you are there. Rely heavily on info received. Feel assured re representation at national level.” **Medium sized Midlands LIO**

2 Stakeholder survey

At the request of NAVCA's Trustees, for the first time this year we surveyed stakeholders and partners to find out what they thought of NAVCA. Nearly 100 people were asked to fill in our survey, ranging from civil servants in government departments, politicians, national affiliates and major funding bodies. We received 33 responses. The responses were as follows;

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable
NAVCA is a strong voice for local third sector infrastructure organisations and local third sector groups	13	18	0	0	2	0
NAVCA is a useful organisation for two-way communication with local third sector groups	6	20	2	0	4	1
NAVCA is a well run professional organisation	7	20	0	0	5	0
I can easily understand what NAVCA does	7	22	3	0	1	0
I value NAVCA's input to the work of my organisation	14	14	2	0	3	0
NAVCA's work influences my organisation's policy and practice	3	18	3	1	3	5
NAVCA's representatives are articulate, constructive and well informed	6	19	1	1	6	0
NAVCA is a collaborative organisation which works well in partnership	8	19	0	1	4	1

We also asked for comments, a selection is below

"I would like to have a more direct complementary relationship with NAVCA. I still feel we are missing a "trick""

"I think a clearer articulation to the outside world of NAVCA's changing purpose/role/focus would be helpful. The move towards 'LIOs' as members makes sense in a turbulent and complicated ChangeUp world of local infrastructure. Less certain, to me at least, is the focus on being the voice of the local sector. I'm glad somebody is

doing it, and NAVCA does this well, but there might be value in linking this to NAVCA's origins and membership.”

“I value NAVCA's authentic voice on behalf of many small groups and their willingness to put me in touch with that opinion.”