



SAN: SOCIAL AUDIT NETWORK DECEMBER 2010

Firstly – an apology for the late delivery of your SAN Circular this month. We had hoped to bring you hot-off-the-press news of proceedings at the 2010 SAN Conference. However, the weather defeated us and many inches of snow in North-east England made travel unsafe and in some cases impossible. Rumours of icebergs seen floating in the North Sea off the coast of Whitley Bay, and polar bears roaming the Town Moor have so far not been proven!

It was a hard decision for the SAN Board, but postponement was the only option. I can therefore now announce that the SAN Conference will now be held on 8th April 2011 – still in Newcastle upon Tyne and at the same venue. We hope to bring you the same speakers and the event will feature the new SAN Guide to Social Accounting and Audit, which will be published by then. All bookings for the 2010 Conference will be honoured for April 2011, and should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the SAN Office (see below for new contact details).

Meanwhile, holed up in his snowbound office in Scotland, Alan Kay is working hard to bring you the new Guide.

The new Guide is based on the Social Accounting and Audit Manual (plus CD) published in 2005 by the Social Audit Network. It takes account of the growing experience of social accounting and audit in recent years and includes reference to the range of frameworks and methods developed to help organisations explain and account for their performance and impact. It is a “roadmap” to the social accounting and audit process and has been written for social enterprises, social economy organisations and voluntary sector organisations that wish to regularly account and report on their social, economic and environmental performance and impact.

The Guide will be available from January 2011, and will consist of a paper version with a companion CD. It will also be available via the SAN website for those organisations and people who have taken out membership with SAN. This online version will be regularly updated and include new materials and tools as they become available.

On Friday 19th November, the House of Commons agreed that Chris White MP’s Private Member’s Bill – Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) – should proceed to the Committee stage for debate. SAN will be lobbying for reference to be made to robust ways of procuring and measuring social value, and a briefing note which has been prepared for members of the Committee can be found on the SAN website by clicking here.

SAN believes that this Bill should be seen as an opportunity for the whole third sector, not just social enterprise, in that it promotes the concept of social value, including local-level innovation, direct charitable benefit, broader social, environmental and economic outcomes, and most of all the values which underpin what it does. Social accounting and audit includes these values in its scope and will capture the very passion, ethos and purpose of the Big Society.

Finally, on behalf of SAN, I would like to send you best wishes for the coming holiday period and for a happy and peaceful New Year.

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Me and Bono – are there limits to what I should I measure and report??

Adrian Ashton (pictured)

Well – OK, pro Bono, rather than U2's Bono, but I found myself wondering recently, just how much free support do I actually give?

I've always been very open about saying I'm happy to have an initial chat/lunch/beer with anyone who like to ask me to, without obligation – and that's just because I think that's how the world should work.

But I don't keep track of how much time I spend doing this, and I'm suddenly aware that its probably increasing - there seem to be a growing number of people in different sector bodies who 'pass my name on' to various groups and people (I was tempted to list the sector bodies they work for, but might be a tad delicate if I did....), and I'm happy for them to continue do so.

But very few of these lead to any fee earning work, and although that's not the reason I do it, being self-employed I have to try and drum up enough work to keep the bills paid somehow.

But I digress – I do pro bono for a lot of people and I don't track it. Should I?

But if I did, what would it show? The only reason I measure or record anything I do is because I think it generates useful management information, and anything I record about myself I tend to be pretty open about in sharing what they show (see previous posts on my blog about my personal social accounts and why I do this). As a freelancer, what useful management information would I be generating by recording how much of my time is spent doing pro bono stuff and openly reporting this (other than to gratify my ego).

This is not a hypothetical question – it's something I really am trying to work out. I'd appreciate any comments you'd like to share with me.adrian_ashton2@yahoo.co.uk



SAN on the move

On Monday 13th December 2010, the national office of the Social Audit Network will be moving.

The new contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 01902 877565
Fax: 01902 877531
Email: info@socialauditnetwork.org.uk

Postal address: Social Audit Network, The Workspace, Community Centre, All Saints Road, Wolverhampton, WV2 1EL

SAN Website problems

As you may be aware, the Social Audit Network website has recently come under attack from hackers intent on sharing a malicious Trojan virus with our users. We are not sure why this happened, but I can deny any rumours that SAN is using the site to leak Coalition spending plans or to campaign against planned increases in University tuition fees.....

In order to protect users, we took the website offline whilst the situation was dealt with. The site has now been cleaned and made safe for you to use. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience that this may have caused and can reassure our users that we are being vigilant to prevent this happening again.

Chris White's Bill to Committee stage

SAN was pleased to hear that Chris White MP's Private Member's Bill - Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) has proceeded to the Committee stage in the House of Commons. We have drafted a briefing note for Committee members, which can be found on the SAN website by clicking here: [Social Enterprise Bill](#). Over the coming weeks and months, SAN will be lobbying hard in support of the Bill - should you wish to add your support, please contact the SAN Chair Mike Swain (mikeswain@asan.org.uk) or Anne Lythgoe (alythgoe420@btinternet.com).

Social Accounting in Nepal

Martin Butterworth is the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor at the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). He has sent the following message about his work:

Here in UMN I'm continuing our work on environmental and economic aspects of the SAN model, but having a rethink about the social. UMN isn't a Social Enterprise by your definition, I think the UK would describe us as a charity.

For me the strength of a Social-Environmental-Cultural model of social accounting (rather than social-environmental-economic) isn't just the acceptance that economic or financial is what we in the charity world call a "means of verification". The real step forward is splitting the Social part of SAN's original concept into Social and Cultural. I'd like to come up with a "P" for cultural because I already use "People-Planet-Paisa", paisa being the Nepali word for money.

The other comment I'd make from my perspective is the recognition that we are looking at impacts in two different spheres. One is the impact outside our organisation, but we're also looking at the same things internally, within our organisation. I'm not sure how important this is for a social enterprise but it is a big issue here where there is no implemented legal framework.

Alan Kay, author of the new Guide to Social Accounting and Audit has also been looking at the concept of cultural value, explaining that 'economic' is one way of measuring impact – be it social, environmental or cultural – rather than a discrete impact in its own right. Cultural impacts are around collective behaviour and are often thought of as being 'charitable', ethical or sociable. No doubt there will be further debate on this matter over the coming months.

For more information and Alan Kay's recent article on the future of Social Enterprise please click here to access the SAN web site.

NEWS & DEVELOPMENTS

SAN Training Programme

SAN runs two types of training event: the two day Social Accounting 'master-class' and the one day Social Auditor Workshop.

The master-class (MC) works through the Three Steps of the Social Accounting and Audit process and is designed for people who either wish to use social accounting in their own organisation or wish to assist other organisations prepare social accounts..... for more information and list of upcoming events,

SAN practice Case Studies

SAN is always looking for organisations to feature as Case Studies in both this newsletter and on the SAN website. A number of these have been prepared following the SAN research project.

There are now 23 Case studies on the SAN website, and these will shortly be accompanied by a handy directory feature to help you select the best for your needs.

Register of Social Auditors

Anyone wishing to become approved as a SAN Social Auditor should contact their Regional Co-ordinator in the first instance - see end of Circular. Prospective auditors are required to attend a SAN Social Auditor workshop and to have attended at least two social audit panels and written a set of notes before being mentored, when they chair a first panel for themselves. To see more about Social Auditing

SAN MANUAL & CD

Should you wish to purchase a copy of the interactive Manual and CD, please contact your Regional Co-ordinator in the first instance, who may have some in stock.

Larger orders should be placed via the SAN office in Exeter - contact details at the end of this newsletter.

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The planned Social Auditor Workshop planned for 7th October in Edinburgh was postponed for a number of reasons. It will now take place in Edinburgh on 12th January 2011. If you require further information or wish to be registered for this one day course in becoming a Social Auditor then contact Alan Kay alan.kay20@gmail.com. Note that this is specifically for auditors - those that chair social audit panels not for people wanting to know about social accounting.

COORDINATORS & CONTACTS

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