

WDCO Skills Audit Summary Report

Introducing

This initial report outlines the key objectives of skills audit, methodology, skills investigation findings and comments from respondents.

Objective

To investigate and assess the skills and experience of existing WDCO Board members with view to identify areas of knowledge and any potential gaps.

Methodology

Each Board Member was asked to complete a skills assessment, which ranked their experience and knowledge in 13 skills categories, with 1 being low and 5 being a high level of experience and knowledge. In addition to this, they were asked to provide more information about any other relevant experience and knowledge they might have.

The ITLA emailed the 23 WDCO Board members over a period of five months and requested for Board members to complete the assessment. The ITLA also offered to assist with the assessment if individual members needed any help. We supported 3 Board members in completing the assessments. A total of 65% (15 members) Board members completed the skills assessment.

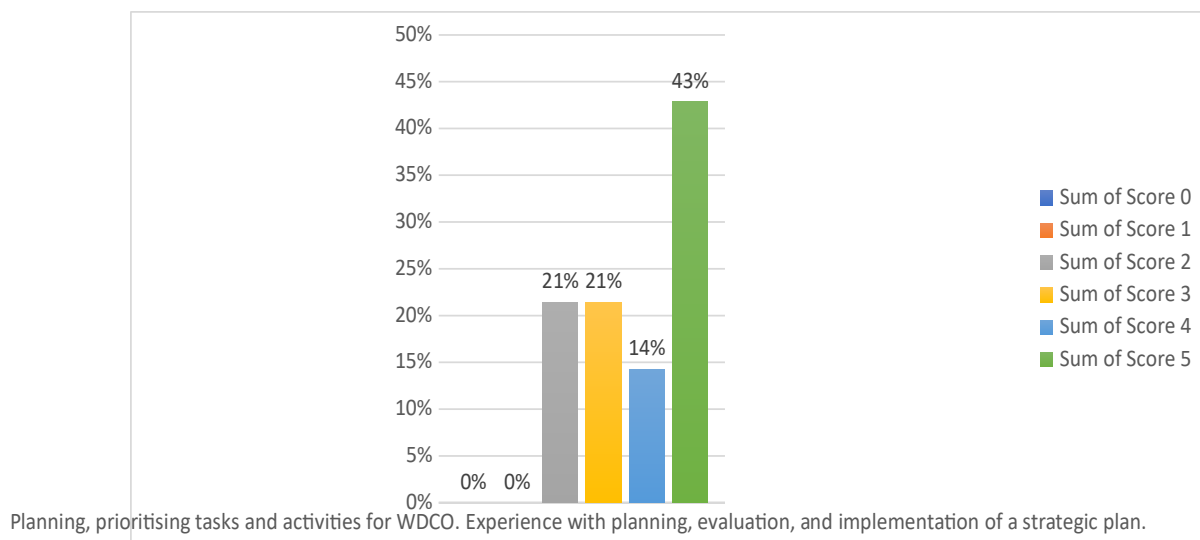
We recognise that the key skill that all Board member bring is the learnt and lived experience of Woodberry Down. Nevertheless, when auditing skills, we identified that it is also helpful to use a competency framework to assess skills. There were 13 skills categories we used for the assessment;

- Project Management
- Leadership
- Communication
- One-to-one support
- IT and social media
- Financial & commercial understanding
- Housing Law
- Planning & running effective meetings
- Correspondence
- Presentation
- Managing relationships
- Problem solving
- Knowledge of Community

Skills investigation findings

1. Project Management Skills: Planning, prioritising tasks and activities for WDCO. Experience with planning, evaluation, and implementation of a strategic plans.

The response to this question demonstrated that a majority of the Board members who completed the skills audit feel they have a high level of experience and knowledge in this area. 57% of the respondents having either professional experience in planning, evaluation and implementation of strategic plans. However, 21% of the respondents felt they had little experience in this category. The remaining 21% falling in the middle with some experience and knowledge in this area.



Comments from respondents;

“Not for WDCO, but directly transferable experience as a Headteacher, preparing School Improvement Plan for adoption by governors, involving all stakeholders (staff, parents, governors, children). Ongoing evaluation and reporting of progress against planned objectives”

“Professional qualification in project management”

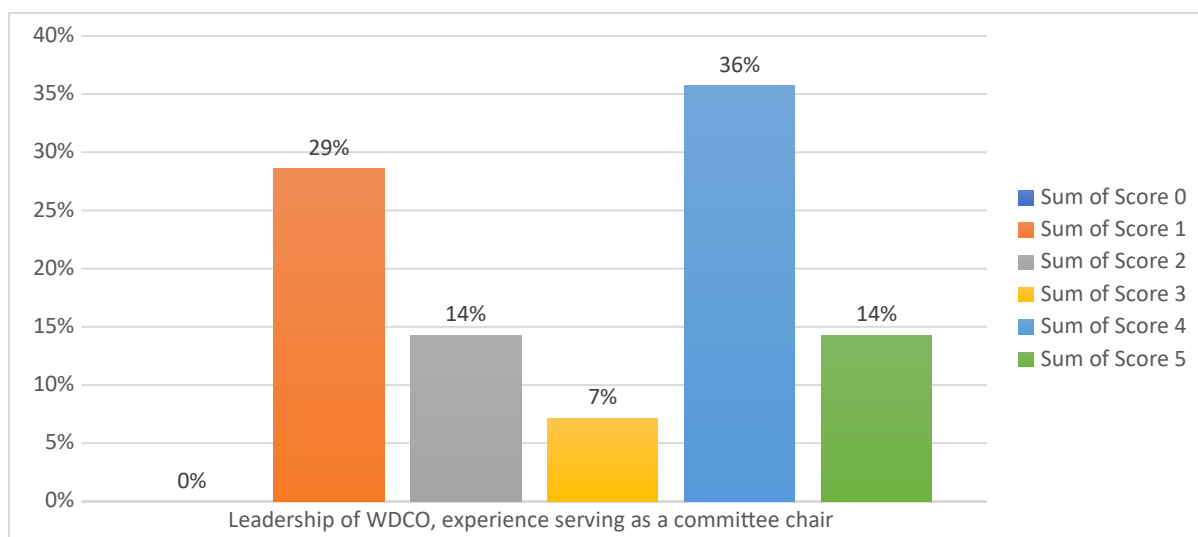
“Not much experience of this”

“None in WDCO. Experience elsewhere, principally through formal education

“Both professional experience in this area and WDCO experience as chair”

2. Leadership skills: Leadership of WDCO, experience serving as a committee chair.

There was a mixed response on the question of leadership: 50% of the respondents detailed that they had strong leadership skills, with specific experience in chairing committee meetings. 43% of the members scored 2 or 3 indicating some experience and 29% had no leadership experience.



Comments from respondents;

“Vice Chair of Woodberry Down Community Garden and chairs meetings in the absence of the chair.”

“I was a project manager. I have had formal training in chairing meetings and have led many meetings in a number of key strategic projects”

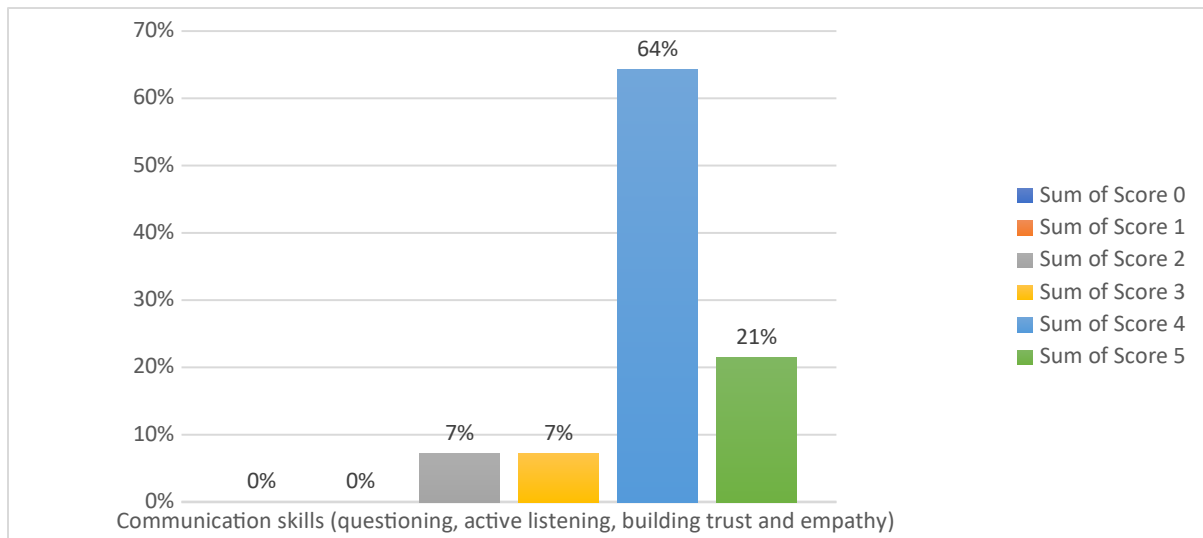
“Formerly board member and chair of arts organisation and charity trustee”

“Chair of WDCO for 6 years”

“Two years as Chair of my 500 member swimming club. Many years of chairing university committees.”

3. Communication skills: Questioning, active listening, building trust and empathy

Most, 75%, Board members felt they have good communication skills. However, 14% felt that they weren't as experienced in this category.



Comments from respondents;

“A business director in the media industry, I have extensive comms skills., gained over 15 years of leading teams”

“Really, I have only one question, which is why? But it is hugely powerful. When I then listen to and understand the answer trust and empathy grow”

“I feel I am a strong communicator and listener.”

“Professional communication management (Team Leader, Marketing and Communication, Newham Leisure Services)”

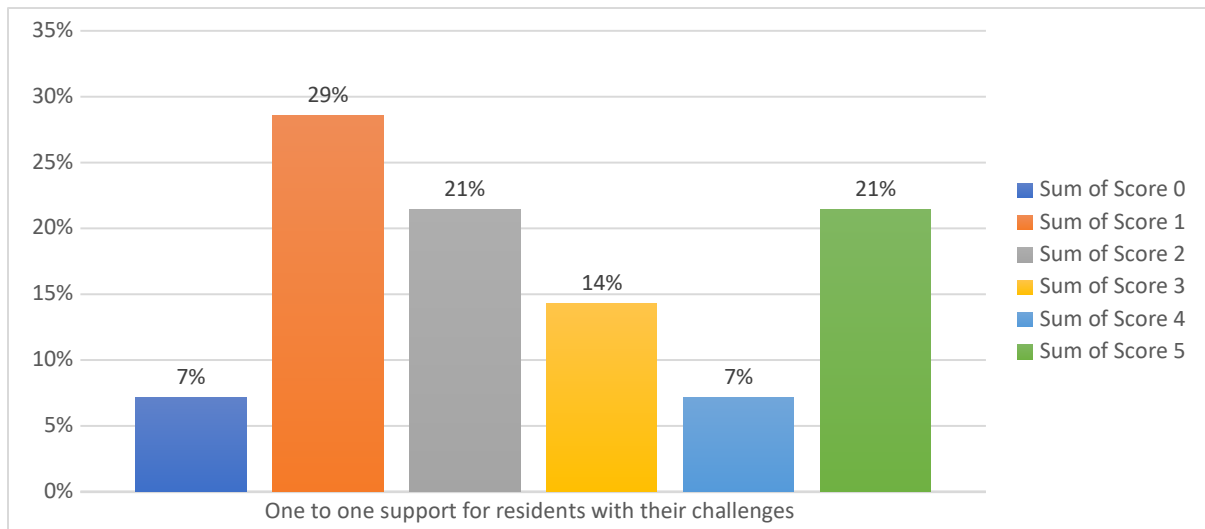
4. **One to one support** for residents with their challenges

36% of respondents indicated that they had no experience or knowledge in providing one to one support to residents.

21% of the Board members felt they had very little experience and knowledge in this area and 14% said they have some experience.

Only 28% of the respondents could confidently say that they had strong knowledge and experience in providing one to one support to residents.

It is important to consider, how and what tools Board members need to enable them to provide one to one support to residents. What is simplest would be information that would enable them to signpost residents to organisations that might be able to help them, e.g. details of Citizens Advice Bureau activities on Woodberry Down or the ITLA service.



Comments from respondents; (this question received very limited feedback, mainly due to respondents' lack of experience.)

“Role as care, relevant to communication & challenges facing elderly”

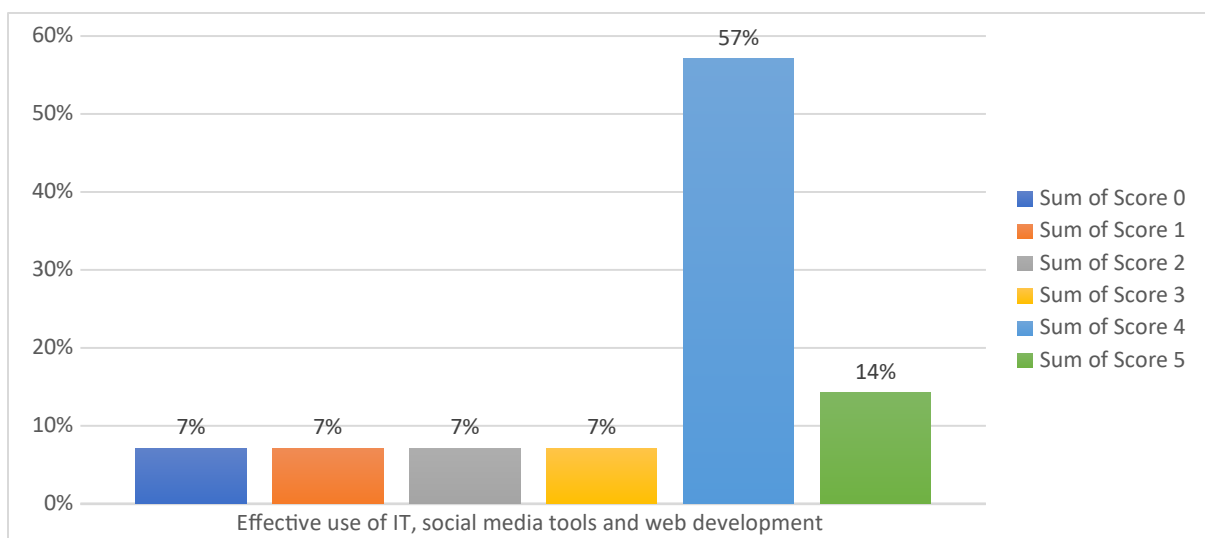
“Been helping some of the vulnerable tenants in Woodberry Down community.”

“I regularly support KSS3 residents with problems”

“Not extremely confident in this area but would sign post them to the relevant organisation

5. IT skills: Effective use of IT, social media tools and web development

The responses to this question show that a majority of the respondents feel they have strong IT skills with 71% scoring 4 or 5. Most respondents who scored high have substantial professional experience in this area. However, 14% of the respondents felt they have little to no experience and felt their IT skills needed updating.



Comments from respondents;

“Worked as a programmer for Abbey National, managed large IT projects in university”

“My project management job was in IT. I have developed a number of websites, key elements of which are to communicate to, with and through social media sites.”

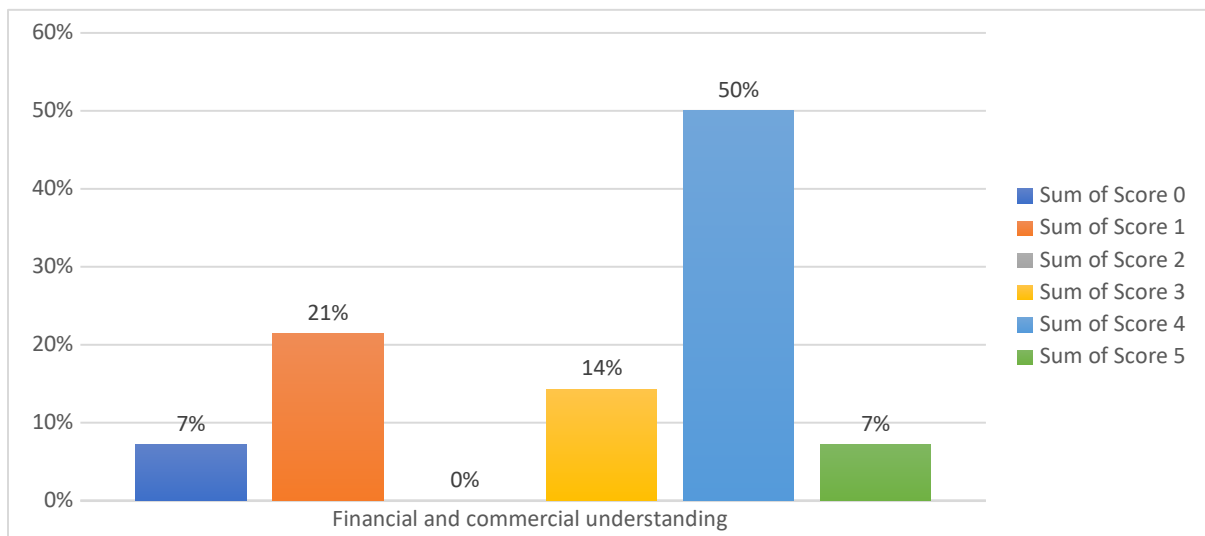
“I have experience of using IT software(i.e. Office suite) but no experience of web development”

“Technology is used daily in my job”

“Skills in this need updating”

6. Financial and commercial understanding:

57% of respondents have substantial professional experience in this area. 28% of respondents indicated that they have no experience in this area.



“My professional experience provides me with financial and commercial skills in the media, retail and financial service categories”

“I have been active in this field most of my adult life. I am a chartered accountant, I have been responsible for budgets and accounts for the bank I worked at and have audited accounts of international quoted companies”

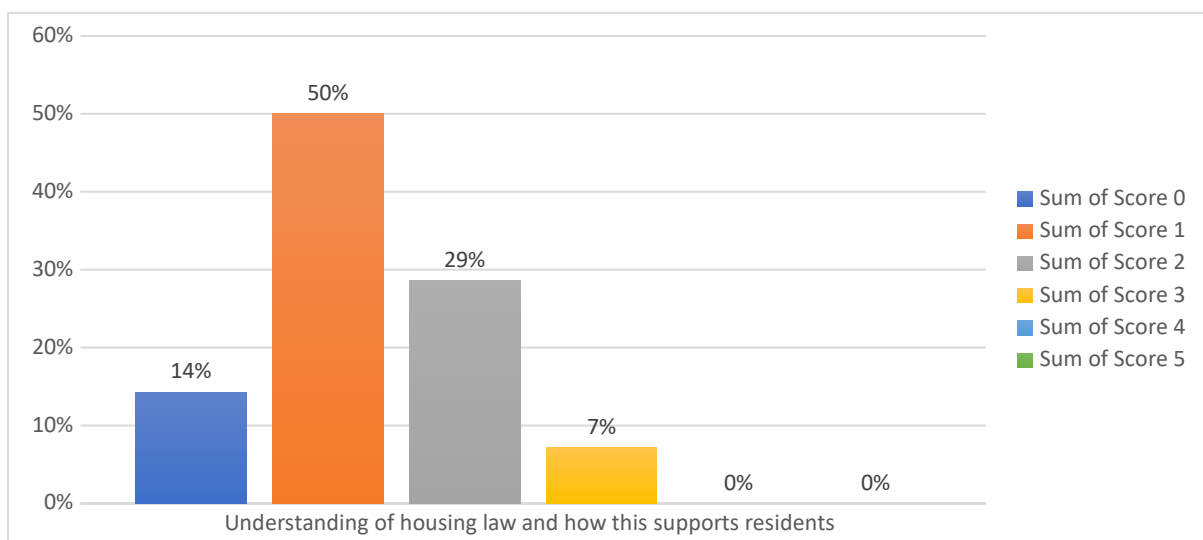
“Trained in book-keeping”

“Financial modelling experience within university strategic planning role. Experience working with external partners on large value bids.”

“Responsible as Headteacher for setting and monitoring £1 million+ school budget, with a number of funding streams, including fees for childcare provision, against background of substantial funding challenges. Prior experience in retail management with John Lewis Partnership, building effective level of financial and commercial understanding.”

7. **Housing Law:** Understanding of housing law and how this supports residents

The responses to this question show that 64% of Board members who completed the skills audit had no knowledge or experience in housing law. The remaining 29% felt they had some knowledge, but this is an area that board members aren't as confident in and everyone would benefit from training.



Comments from respondents;

“Developing awareness of this through individual study.”

“I have no experience in this area but could learn”

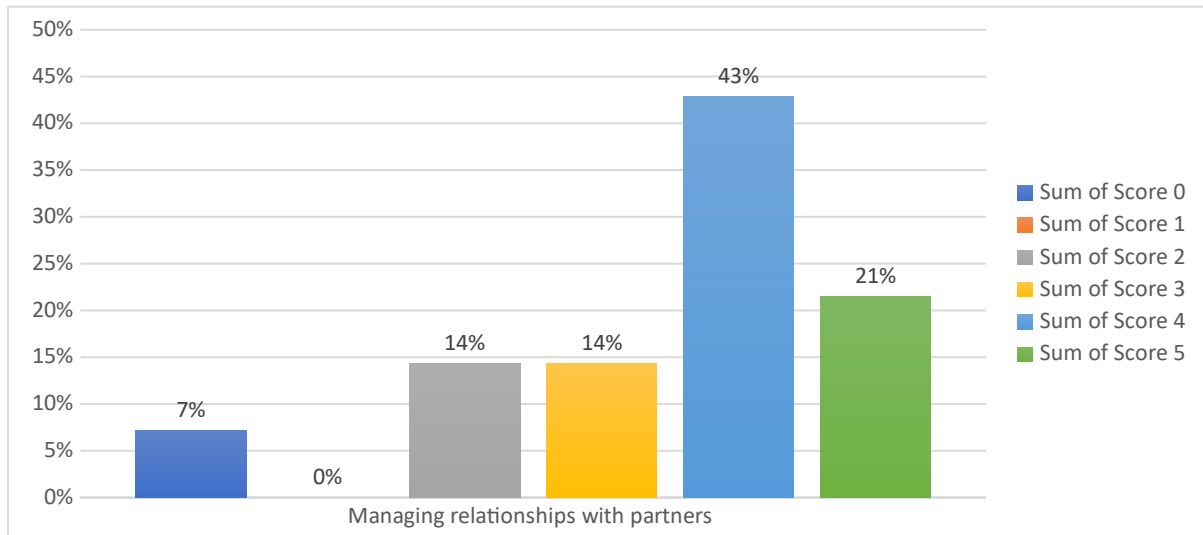
“Not versed in housing law or how it affects residents”

“Basic understand of housing law, e.g. temporary housing, secure tenancies”

“Have some basic knowledge of housing law”

8. Managing relationships with partners:

64% of respondents stated that they had professional experience in managing relationships. However, 7% did not answer this category and a further 28% have indicated they have very little or some experience.



“Experience in setting up multi-partner groups with clear terms of reference and aims, building collaborative and coherent outcomes”

“WDCO experience working with partners and in my professional job”

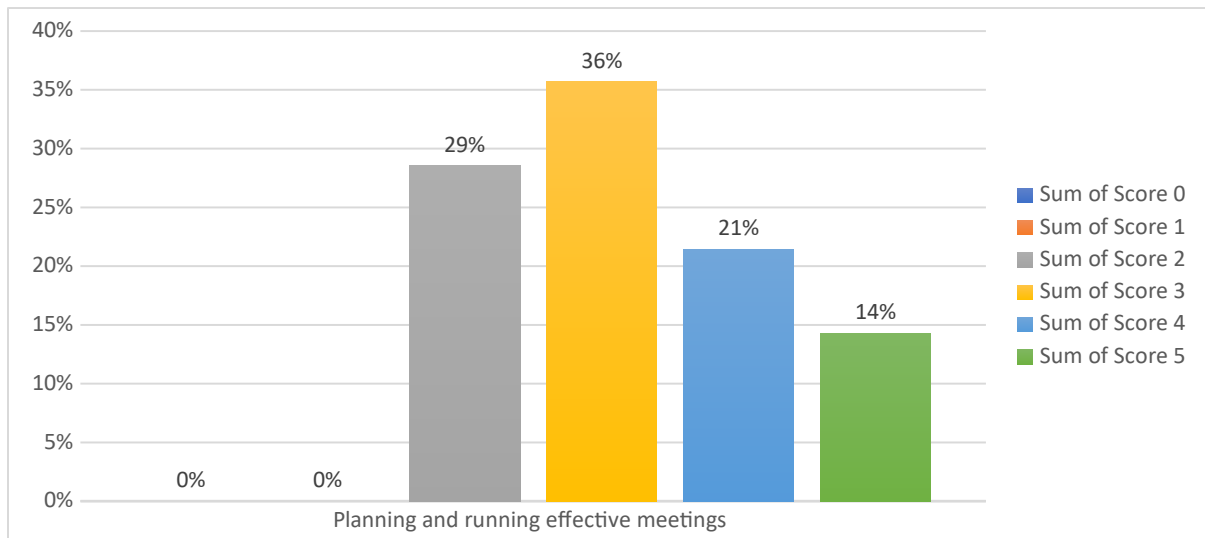
“I see this as not too different from managing relationships with clients”

“Experienced in client servicing, including management of matrix teams and multiple stakeholders”

“Managed a £30m government funded project working with many external partners”

9. Planning & running effective meetings

35% of the respondents could confidently say that they had strong experience in planning and running effective meetings. Although, 29% of the respondents felt they had little experience in this category. The remaining 36% falling in the middle with some experience and knowledge in this area.



“Professional and WDCO experience”

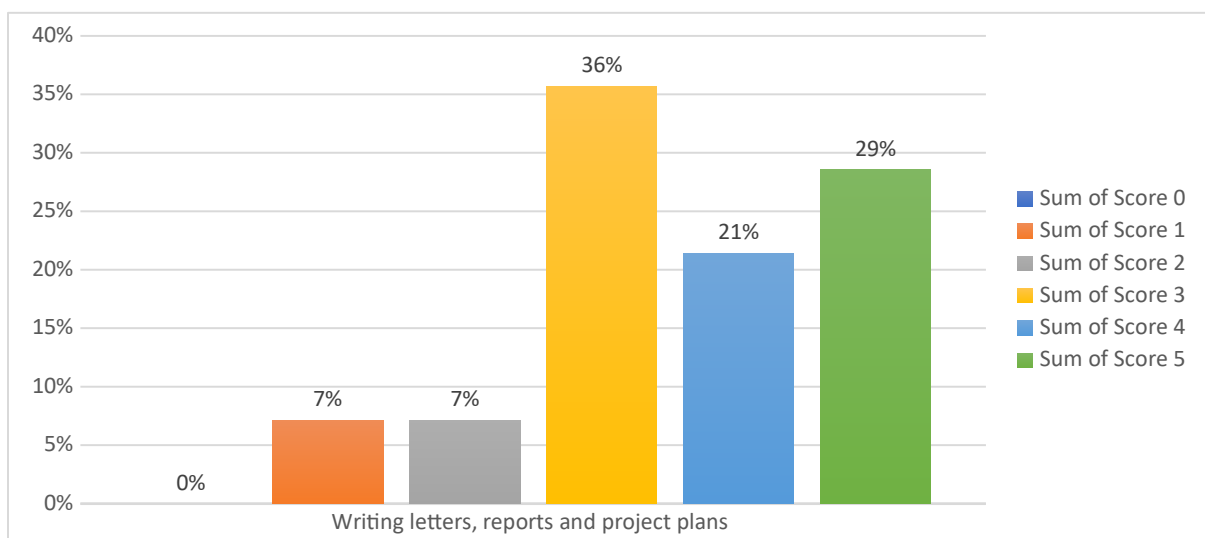
“Organised and efficient, able to steer and guide conversations under tight time constraints with clear objectives.”

“Organise meetings for our community garden group.”

“Better at planning. Re running, as above prefer to be a member than a chair.”

10. **Correspondence:** Writing letters, reports and project plans

50% of the respondents indicated they have significant knowledge and experience writing reports and project plans. A further 36 % specified they had some professional experience in this area. Only, 14% of respondents stated they had little to no experience or knowledge in this competency.



“Professional and WDCO experience”

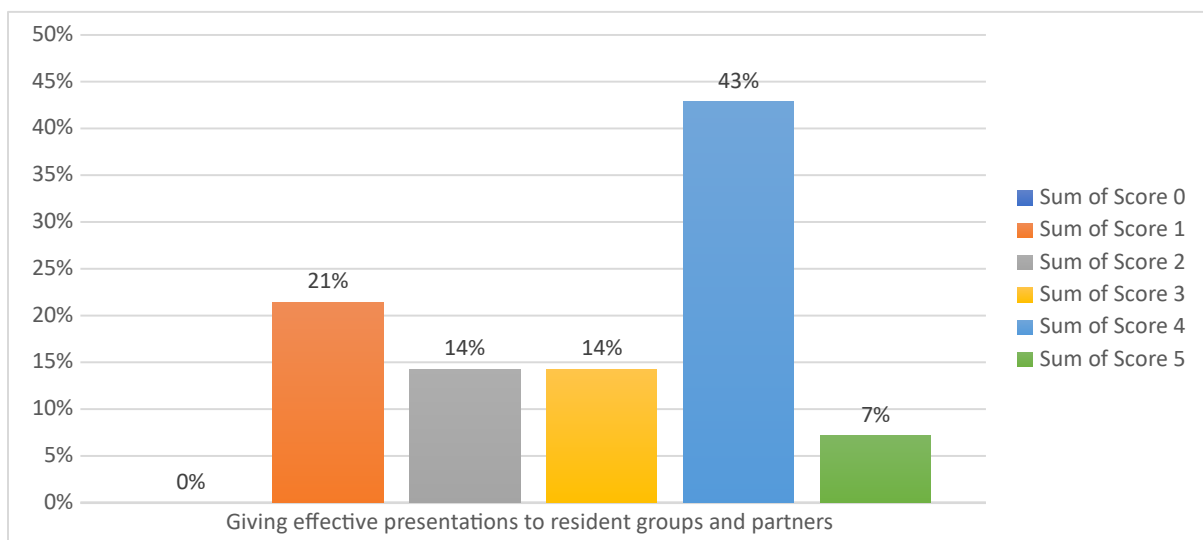
“Writing reports on customers and helping customers with their online applications”

“Some experience in writing letters”

“Have done this most of my life. Evaluating business proposals, writing reports doing due diligence reports on potential acquisition. “

11. **Presentation:** Giving effective presentations to resident groups and partners

50% of the respondents suggested they have considerable experience in giving presentation. Although most indicated they didn't have experience in giving presentation to resident groups, they do have experience in delivering presentations.



“Directly transferable substantial experience as Headteacher through regular requirement to plan and lead meetings for parents/carers, and to various local authority subgroups and community partnerships (as well as to staff).
Can always improve this skill!”

“Experienced presenter in business and public setting”

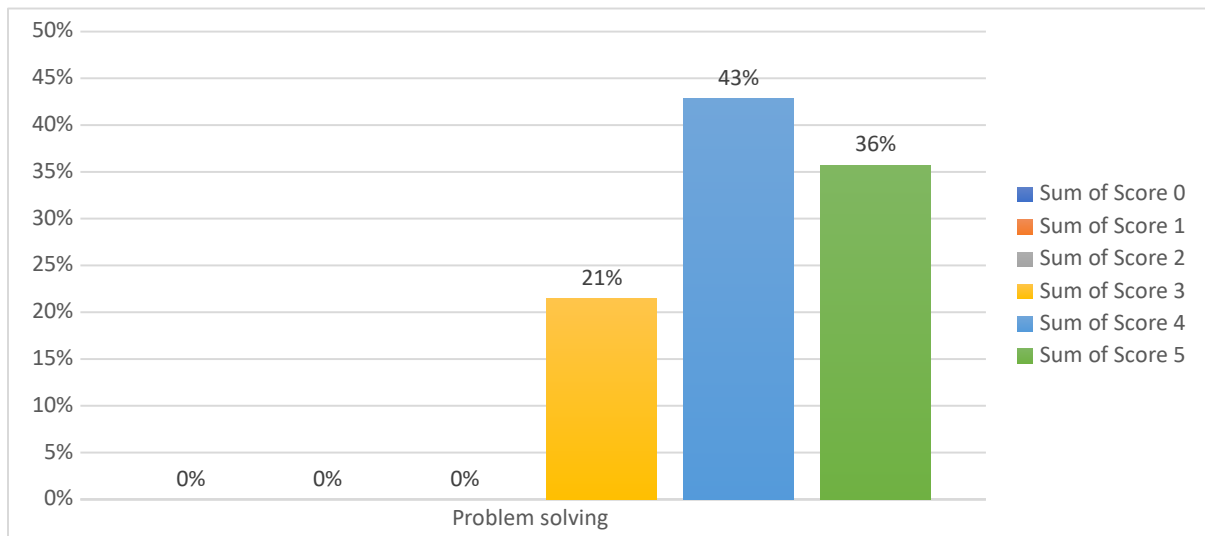
“My work involved preparing and giving presentations to clients, the Board etc. But depends on knowledge of subject.”

“Not resident groups, but lots of experience of giving presentations”

“Professional and WDCO experience”

12. **Problem solving:**

Over three quarters, 79% of respondents indicated that they have strong problem-solving skills. The remaining 21% have some experience in this area. Most have indicated that they have professional experience as it is an essential skill required in most aspects of working life.



“This was essential in my job in retail”

“As business owner this is my daily activity”

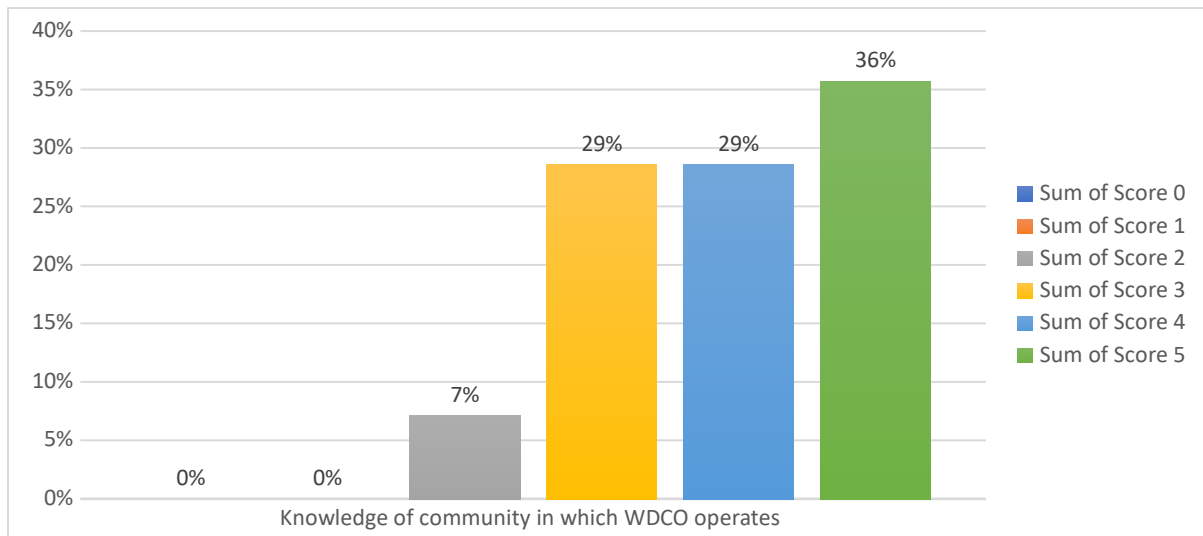
“Professional and WDCO experience”

“Projects are beset with problems”

“Depending on the problem but I have an analytical brain and most problems solving involves analysing the problems. The solution depends on one’s knowledge of the issue.”

13. Knowledge of community in which WDCO operates

The responses to this question show that a majority of the participants feel they have a good level of knowledge of the Woodberry Down Community, with 65% scoring level 4 and 5. Those who scored 3 felt they were gaining greater understanding and are learning more through Board meetings which provide an insight into to the community and regeneration.



“WDCO and historical knowledge”

“Very involved in the community, volunteer for Woodberry Aid and Friends of Woodberry Down. Have lived on the estate over 40 years. Attend both the primary and secondary school.”

“Have lived in WD for over 30 years and have been active in the community”

“Developing understand as a resident. Awareness of estate and its history prior to living on it, through living in Stoke Newington”

“As a life-long resident of WD, I have a long view of issues. Also, knowledge of WD in a wider context. WD is comprised of many communities”

“Have lived on Woodberry Down Estate for over 30 years and acknowledge how much the demographic is starting to change.”

Conclusion.

This report summarises the findings of a skills audit carried out the ITLA at the request of the WDCO Board in December 2021 and is submitted for your consideration.

It shows a broad spread of key skills by the Board members that responded and that there is wide range of skills and experience across the Board. It also indicates that there continues to be a need for IT training and support Board members.

The two areas of skills that were lacking were one to one support for residents and housing law. It is arguable that skills are not necessary for resident Board members participating in a regeneration partnership. However, it would be sensible that a short document is produced that provides Board members with details of organisations active in Woodberry Down and Hackney that they can signpost individual residents to that have particular needs.