

Results of the Ribbons Centre Questionnaire Summer 2007

Introduction

The Ribbons Centre greatly values the contribution and involvement of its service users and actively seeks to involve them throughout the organisation. We always encourage service users to make their views known and welcome suggestions about improving the service. This feedback is essential in terms of gaining insight into how people view the service and how it can be responsive to you as service users. As part of this monitoring process that takes place within the Ribbons Centre, we undertake a review every year to determine user satisfaction and monitor quality standards. We have received some excellent feedback from you making some constructive comments on how services can be improved in the future. There was one questionnaire received with some negative comments about the Centre which have been included, although this is not representative of the questionnaires received.

Our thanks go to all those who took the time to give their views, which will shape how the Centre continues to develop in the future.

Method

A confidential questionnaire was posted to those service users who are able to receive post and are on the mailing list, 88 in total. (Many service users are not able to receive post from the Centre). A stamped addressed envelope was included to return completed questionnaires. The questionnaire was also available in the Centre for people to complete. The confidential anonymous questionnaire invited respondents to comment on the services that they have used and to suggest services they would like to see at the Ribbons Centre in the future. 18 people responded to the survey, out of a possible 124.

Responses and results

The Data returned in the questionnaires is depicted in Appendix A

Who answered the questionnaire?

The majority of the completed questionnaires were from people who have been using the Centre for between 6-18 months (7), with 2 users of less than 6 months, 2 users between 18 months -3 years, 4 between 3-5 years and 1 user of over 5 years. The majority (5) access the centre at least once a month, with 4 people accessing it between 3 and five times per month. Equal numbers of the respondents describe their sexuality either as gay or heterosexual, with one person identifying as bisexual and one as transgendered. Ethnicity was not representative of the people who use the centre, with 12 users who identify as white British and only one black African person, suggesting an imbalance in how representative the data received actually is in respect to the Centre users.

Coming to the Centre

There were a number of different reasons given why people had first accessed the Centre including:

- Help and guidance, living with someone with HIV
- HIV Diagnosis

- medication support + wanted support + counselling + advice + talk to someone in same situation as mine

Comments on how experience from first visits could have been improved included:

- Nothing
- Everybody welcoming and friendly
- Less tension and bad atmosphere at drop ins
- Everything fine. Couldn't have asked for more

Some suggestions for improving later visits included:

- Nothing
- The food situation needs to improve
- More outings and more interactions with other service users

The majority (14 out of 18) are above averagely comfortable with the environment of the Centre, with only one person answering not at all.

15 respondents are above averagely comfortable with mixing with the other people who use the Centre, 2 people indicated they weren't at all comfortable with the other people. 14 people find the opening hours suitable or above averagely suitable and 3 people indicated that the hours were not particularly suitable. One person suggested separate evenings for individual groups, which was trialled last year with a separate evening for gay men but this was poorly attended.

The staff and volunteers

The staff and volunteers are seen as approachable and helpful by all but one respondent
Comments included:

- very happy with all the staff and couldn't ask for more
- Staff always introducing themselves to people they don't know
- It is very interesting listening to all the volunteers' personal problems!
- One of the staff not at all (see Questionnaire 12)

Communications

The majority (13) are above averagely comfortable with the way in which the Centre communicates to its users through texts and emails, although 6 out of the 17 respondents had elected not to receive text messages.

The newsletter was positively evaluated and one suggestion is to "use Arial or another softer font would be easier to read / avoid black print on white paper, for those with certain visual difficulties"

The website was much less clearly evaluated with only 7 people commenting with a range of satisfaction, and 9 people indicating they did not use the site. Comments included:

- It's very clinical. It lacks 'friendliness' and interaction with other SUs
- Very informative, but would welcome any additions

What benefit people get from the Centre?

The majority have gained significant support from accessing the Centre socially, being better informed, more confident, improved self esteem and through more support.

Comments included:

- A place to socialise, a place you want to go, because it goes the extra mile
- Knowing I am not alone seeing other people around + It has helped me spiritually and mentally
- Don't use the Centre very much feel very uncomfortable coming in

Of all the services that are provided from a list of 25, those which scored most highly that people find the most useful include: meeting other people with HIV; counselling; meals; complementary therapies; help with travel; getting information; newsletter; client hardship fund and the resource centre.

What stops people accessing the Centre?

Those people who have not used the Centre recently gave the following reasons for not doing so:

- No time
- Working away from the city centre
- feeling uncomfortable entering
- Trips overseas
- The Centre Manager (see Questionnaire 12)
- Travel to the centre is difficult as I require public transport and I can't afford it; financial hardship.

Service development

We asked people if they would use suggested groups if these were provided.

2 would use an African group; 3 would use a Gay group, 1 said no; 2 would use a Heterosexual group for men, 2 said No; 5 would use more discussion groups, 0 said No; 3 would use more groups run by service users themselves, 0 said no; 1 would use a Partners group, 1 said No; 5 would use a Physical exercise group (e.g. walking / running), 1 said No; 4 would use a course for people who are recently Diagnosed, 2 said no.

Additional suggestions for new services included:

- Peer Support
- Running / Exercise Group
- more 1:1 support
- Social support and intellectual stimulation
- Personal development
- Confidence, self esteem.
- People talking more of their experiences and how they are coping, as this might help someone.

The reasons why people choose to access the Centre when they can access a similar service elsewhere include:

- Very caring and friendly
- Cindy is fantastic
- It's welcoming, friendly and very helpful staff
- Very informative and use of facilities is great.

Services accessed elsewhere which people would like to see provided at the Ribbons Centre include:

- Peer support
- GUM Clinic services
- Personal development events
- Workshops and weekend events

Suggestions for future developments include:

- Meeting other groups
- Importance of counselling with trained counsellors, not just staff or volunteers / maybe regular pamper days, resources and funds permitting twice a month.

Support for new service users

We asked people's views on developing services to offer more support to new service users by developing a mentoring service to pair people up with an existing user. The responses included:

- Importance of education newly diagnosed that they are not 'doomed'
- Good idea
- Fantastic idea – Focussing on HIV until it is understood is really important and should be encouraged, then people want to live their normal lives without thinking about it too much.
- Excellent idea but people must give commitment; otherwise it will be quickly discredited
- Good.
- Good and appropriate training is needed, especially about boundaries and communication skills.

Overall satisfaction with the Centre

Overall the Centre has been rated very highly. On a scale of 1-5 8 people gave the top score of 5 out of 5, 4 people gave a score of 4 out of 5, but one person gave a score of 1 out of 5.

Additional final comments included:

- Your heart is with us
- Ribbons offers a fantastic service for those who use it
- Staff friendly
- Group sessions a little intrusive
- Attachment to previous workers means a loss, for some, of support

- I personally think it's the best group we have in Southampton, as people talk and share ideas and the discussions are very good.
- When you are at the Ribbons Centre, the staff make you feel so good, that you forget your illness.
- The Charlotte Jackson Trust has to get a grip of itself and start to become accountable for the running of the Centre. (see Questionnaire 12)

Conclusion

There have been a number of extremely useful suggestions made regarding service development for the future. The staff will work with the directors and volunteers to try to implement these in due course within available resources. Overall satisfaction with the service remains high and most people who have replied are highly complimentary of the service. It is not always possible to please everyone however and one questionnaire received indicated a level of discontent, but these views are a small minority view. There have been ongoing issues at the Centre recently following an incident with members of Positive Voice and the Centre is taking active steps to try to clarify the situation and to seek ways forward to improve relations.

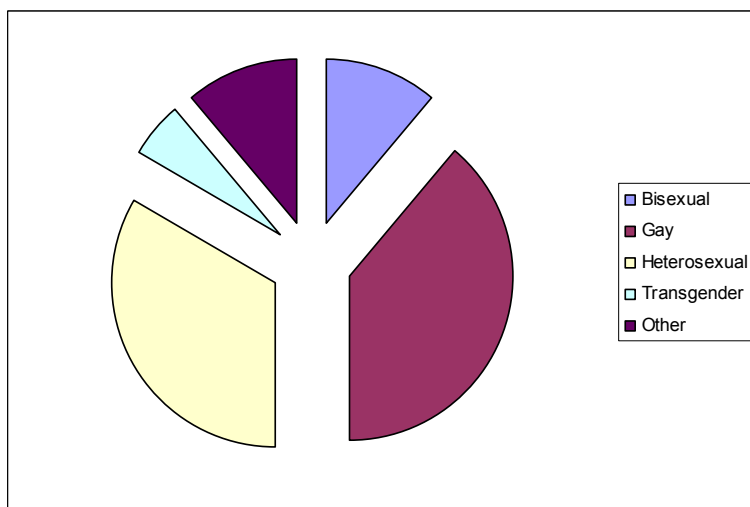
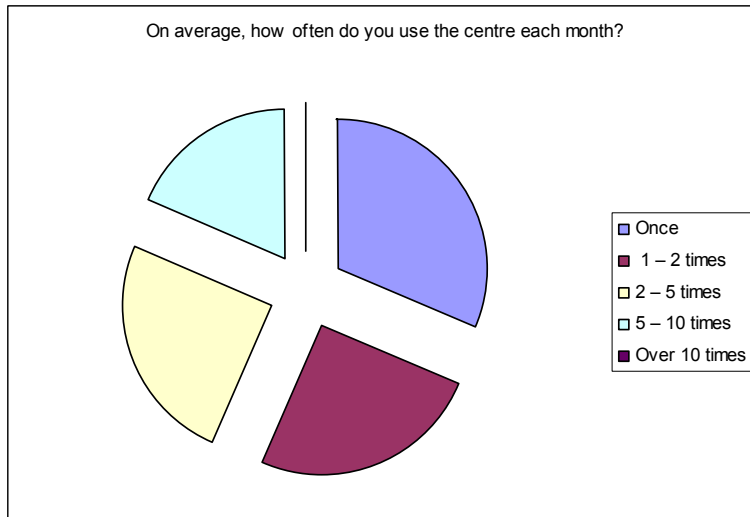
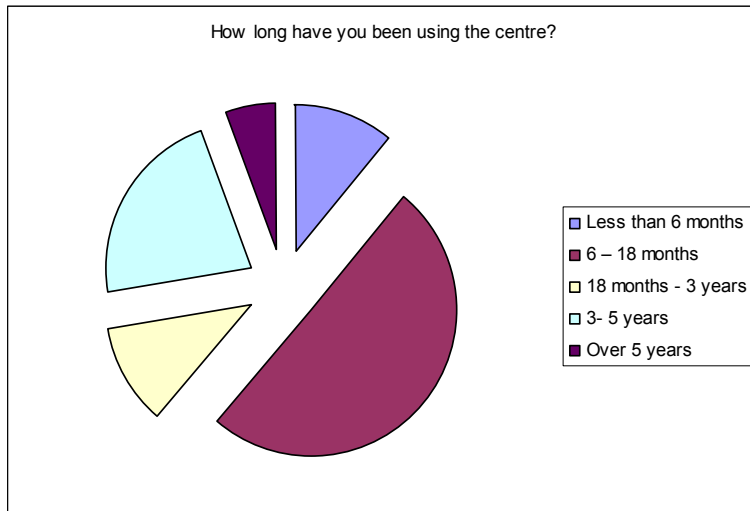
The idea of developing a mentoring service has been positively received and with good training and appropriate support this could prove a useful service. The question of whether to run separate groups has been discussed for a number of years and was piloted last year. The Management team may wish to revisit this idea and re think this possibility. There remains demand for discussion which is provided at the bi monthly discussion forum but this could be extended into the drop ins more.

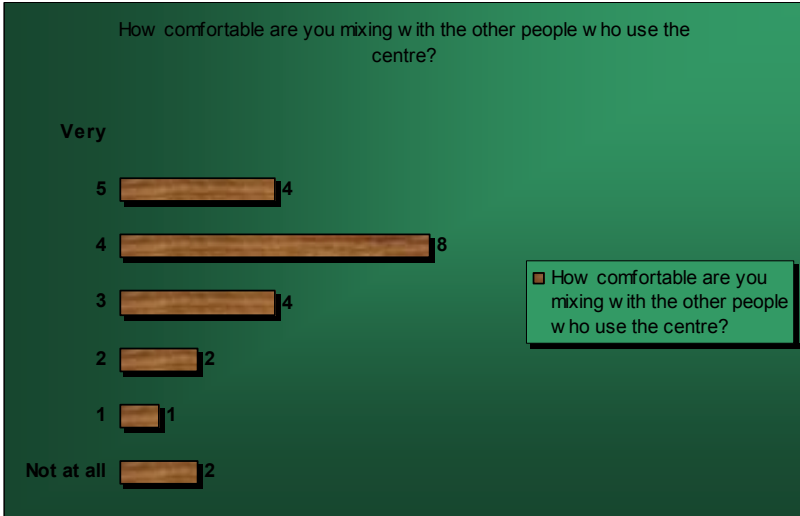
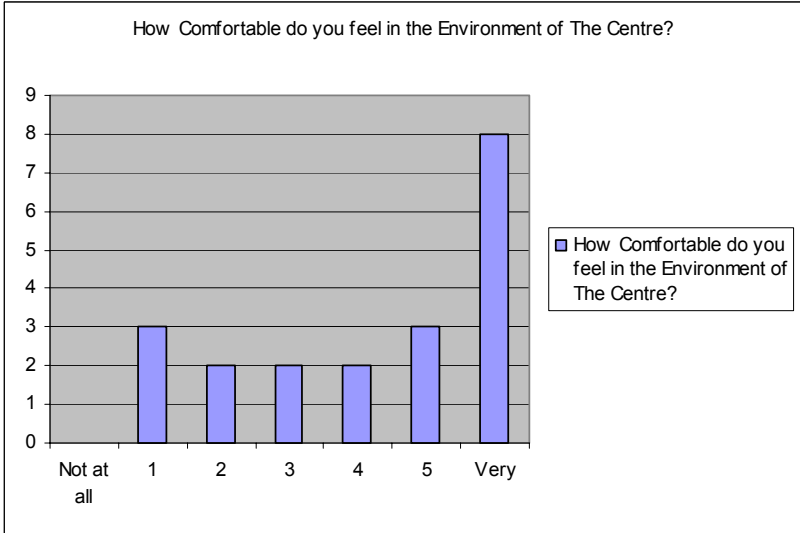
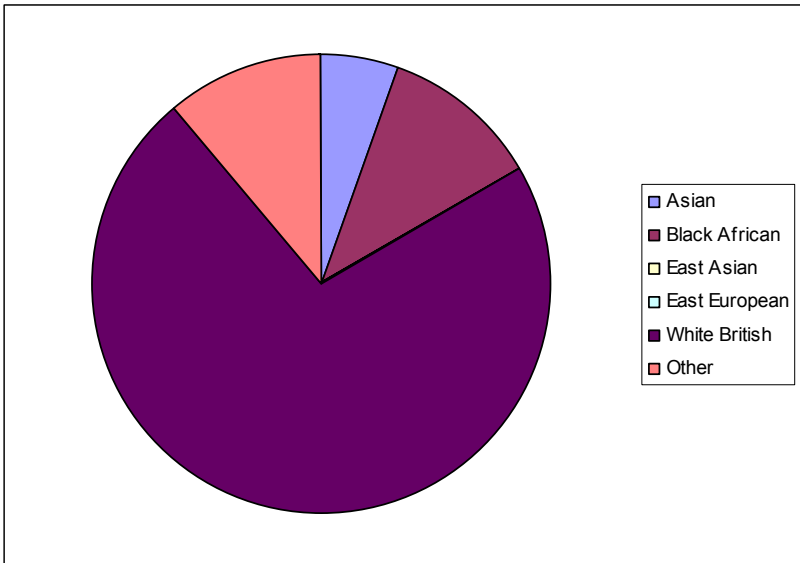
Finally I would like to thank everyone who took time and effort to give their views and help to be a part of making the Ribbons Centre a place for everyone.

Ginny Cranshaw

August 2007

Appendix A





How suitable are the centre's opening times for you?

Very

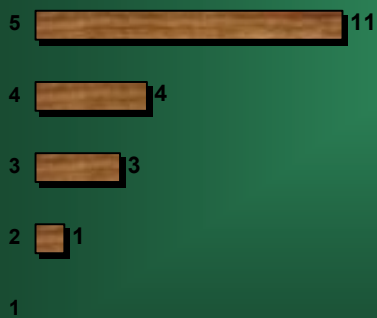


How suitable are the centre's opening times for you?

Not at all

How approachable do you find the staff at the centre?

Very

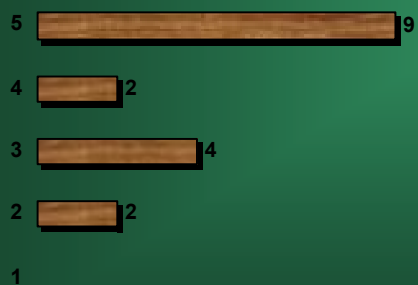


How approachable do you find the staff at the centre?

Not at all

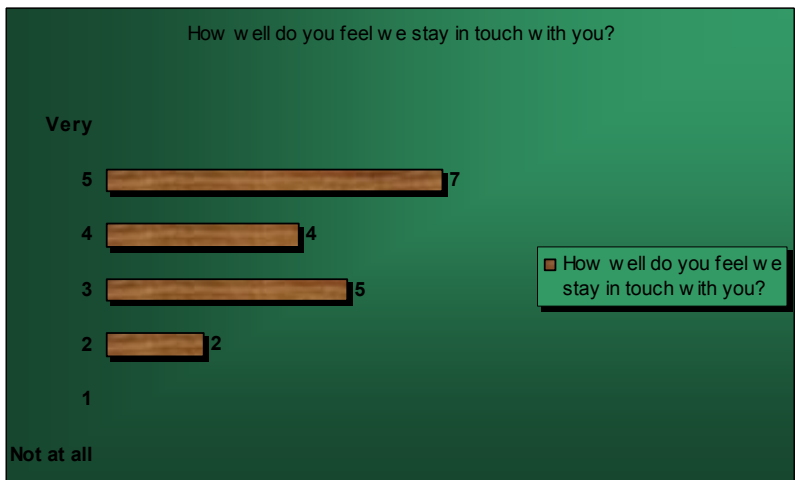
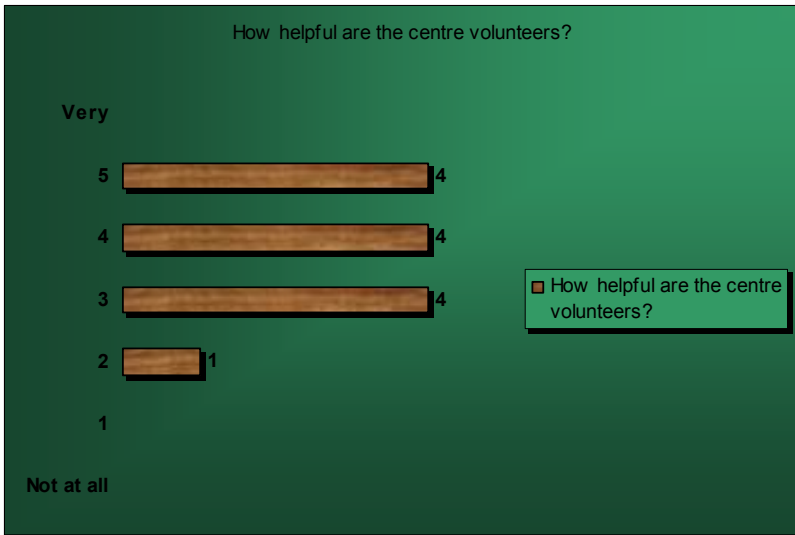
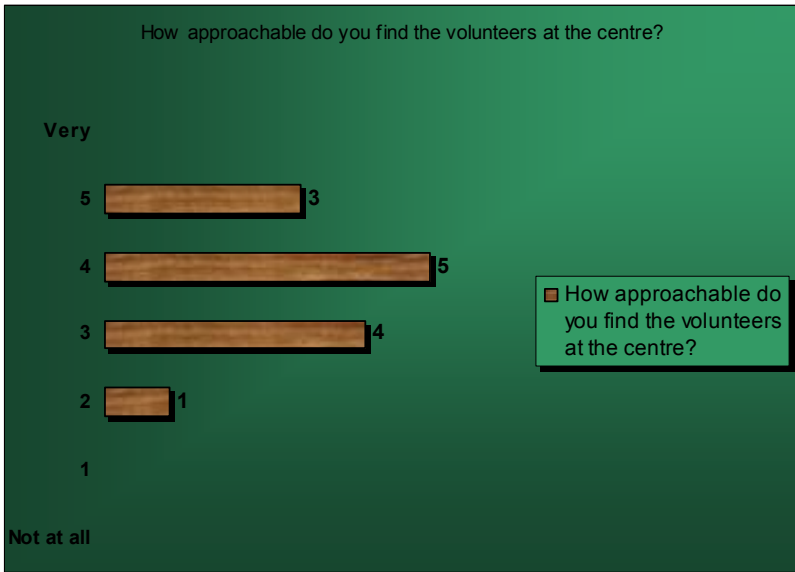
How helpful are the centre staff?

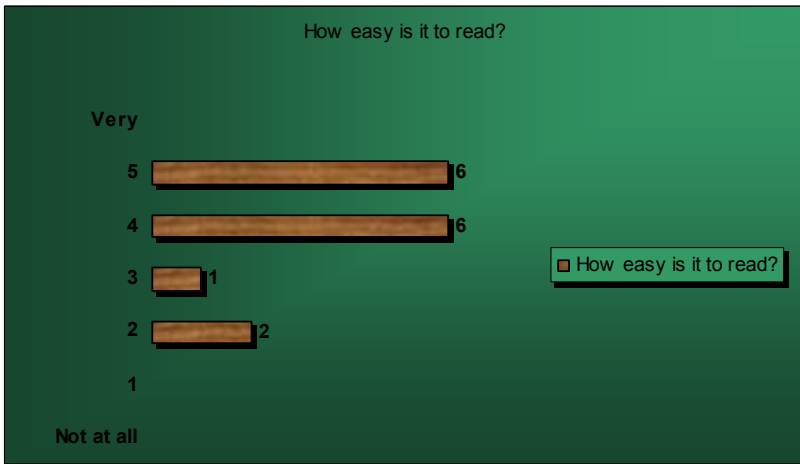
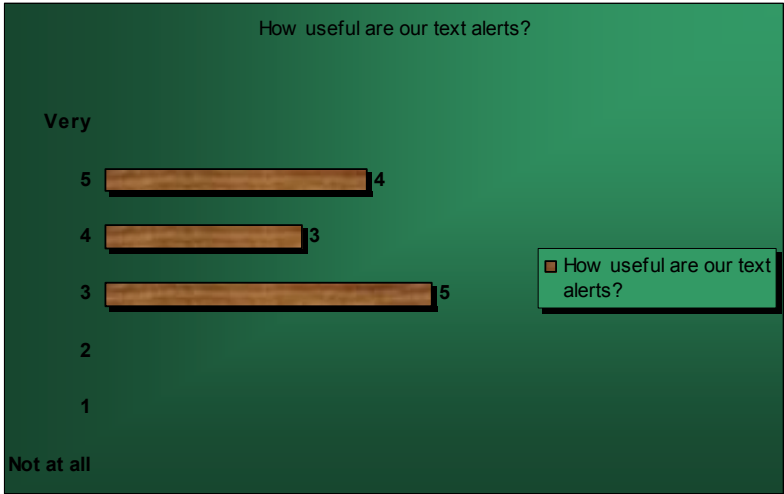
Very



How helpful are the centre staff?

Not at all





How useful do you think the Ribbons Centre website is?

Very



Not at all

How useful do you think the Ribbons Centre website is?

How do you rate the Ribbons Centre as a whole?

Very



1

Not at all 1

How do you rate the Ribbons Centre as a whole?