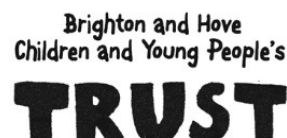


“An absolutely essential service to help community action.”

## Users' views of the Resource Centre

A report on the Resource Centre User Satisfaction Survey 2014

*The Resource Centre provides a vital service in Brighton to all groups and long may it continue!*  
*Coldean Community Forum*



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# INTRODUCTION

*We are so lucky to have the centre in Brighton. It would be great if there were centres like this all over the country.*

*Anonymous*

Listening to our users is a central part of the Centre's ethos. We believe that our success is directly related to the fact that we have taken care over many years to find out what groups need and what they think of our existing services.

We believe that our users recognise that we take their views seriously and that this accounts for the fact that our surveys consistently have a very high response rate. We are grateful that so many groups take the time to respond and that many make an effort to write detailed comments.

We are thrilled to find that local groups value the work of the Centre extremely highly.

Once again, a central message emerging from the survey results is that respondents feel happy with the service they receive from us, and that we are very useful for their groups.

The results also show that the Resource Centre is continuing to be successful in prioritising support for small, volunteer-run groups based in Brighton and Hove, who are not well connected to other sources of support.

# WHAT WE LEARNED AND HOW WE WILL RESPOND

## Our services are rated highly by our users

The survey results convinced us that we are still successful in providing services that are extremely highly valued by many local groups. The survey provided data from a highly representative sample of our user groups (over 49% of all groups that used the Centre over one month, during our busiest period).

Respondents reported finding the Centre very useful overall, and also being highly satisfied with the different types of service available.

- **100%** of respondents were very satisfied (94%) or satisfied (6%) with the **overall service they received from the Centre**.
- **100%** were very satisfied (92%) or satisfied (8%) with the **equipment hire service**.
- **100%** were very satisfied (92%) or satisfied (8%) with the **quality of printing done in our print room**.
- **100%** found **advice from the front desk worker** very useful (87%) or useful (13%).
- **100%** found our **written information** (on starting a group, running a group, managing money, raising money or organising an event) very useful or useful.<sup>1</sup>

We also learned that we are continuing to successfully meet our aim of providing specific, targeted services for small, volunteer-run groups based in Brighton and Hove.

Nearly two-thirds of responding groups have a core membership of fewer than ten, 70% have no paid staff, and 86% are based in Brighton and Hove.

We are the only organisation in the city doing this – two-thirds of our user groups have received no support from any other infrastructure organisation in the past 12 months.

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<sup>1</sup> Each information service was rated “very useful” or “useful” by different percentages of respondents. Full results available on request.

## Respondents are aware of, and using, more of our services

Through the survey we conducted in 2012, we identified that there was a significant number of groups who used only one of our services and were not aware of any others. In line with our aim of being an all-round source of ongoing support for local groups, we have worked hard over the last two years to inform all our users of the range of services they can access at the Resource Centre. In particular, we aimed to make users of the equipment hire service aware of the information and print services.

This year’s survey suggests that we have made significant progress in improving groups’ awareness of different services. 84% are aware of more than one service, up from 70% in 2012. The average (mean) number of services each respondent is aware of has increased from 3.34 in 2012 to 3.98 in 2014.

## The Resource Centre is vital for groups, and important for Brighton and Hove

We invited respondents to comment on any aspect of the Resource Centre. We received a large number of very positive comments. In particular, respondents emphasised

- a) that the Resource Centre provides vital support to them, and that without it their group would struggle to continue;
- b) that they feel Brighton and Hove is improved by the existence of the Resource Centre.

See page 9 for more detail about the comments we received on these themes.

## How we will respond

Our response to all of the above is simple: we will continue to do our best to provide a high quality, cost effective and unique service to our users. We will retain our specific focus on working with small, local, volunteer-run groups, and continue to respond to their views and requests when designing and improving our services.

In this way, we aim to maintain our ability to provide very relevant, very useful, and completely unique practical and advice services to hundreds of small groups, benefiting thousands of local people.

# RESULTS

This section contains a summary of the main themes of the survey results, and highlights particular changes and points of interest, including some comments made by groups. A full numerical summary of the results is available on request, and a full list of all the comments made can be found in *Appendix 1: Comments*. A copy of all the survey questions is in *Appendix 4*.

## Response rate

We received completed surveys from 49% of all the groups who used the Centre in July 2014.

We gave groups the option of completing the survey online or on paper. We gave out 123 paper surveys, of which 77 were returned completed (61%). This is not, however, a reliable response rate, as the paper survey included an invitation to groups to complete it online instead, if they preferred. This means some groups who were given a paper survey and didn't return it may still have completed it online. However, we can reliably conclude that the response rate for paper surveys was **at least 61%**.

57 groups completed the survey online. It is not possible to calculate a response rate based on this, as we have no way of knowing how many groups were aware of the electronic survey. We advertised it in the centre, on our website, and emailed groups who used us in July to ask them to complete it.

In July 2014, 215 groups used the Resource Centre (excluding website-only users). We received completed surveys from 81 of these groups, which is 79% of all the responses who gave a group name. We received 30 anonymous responses, so have assumed that 79% of these were also from separate groups that used the Centre in July. We can therefore assume that we received completed surveys from 105 different groups, all of whom used the Centre in July. This means we received responses from 49% of all the groups that used the Centre that month.

# About your group

Resource Centre services are specifically aimed at small, volunteer-run groups based in Brighton and Hove. A key indicator of our success is the number of these types of group that use us.

This section of the survey tells us whether we are successfully reaching our target groups.

## How many people are involved in your group?

### Key finding:

63% of groups have fewer than 10 core organising members, and 91% have fewer than 25.

We asked groups how many people are involved in their group in different ways, by asking how many core organising members, volunteers, members and beneficiaries they have.

63% have fewer than 10 core organising members, and 91% fewer than 25.<sup>2</sup>

37% have fewer than 10 volunteers helping out regularly, and 79% fewer than 25.<sup>3</sup>

68% have fewer than 100 members, and 96% fewer than 500.<sup>4</sup>

32% have more than 500 beneficiaries, and 65% more than 100.<sup>5</sup>

These results show that our services continue to be used predominantly by small groups, run by just a few people, and that a much larger number of people benefit from the work done by these groups.

## More about your group

We asked groups whether they have paid staff, whether they are based in Brighton & Hove, and whether they have received a grant from Brighton & Hove City Council in the past 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> Of 115 groups

<sup>3</sup> Of 100 groups

<sup>4</sup> Of 96 groups

<sup>5</sup> Of 92 groups

The findings indicate that:

**86% of our user groups<sup>6</sup> are based in Brighton & Hove.**

- **72%** of the groups based in Brighton and Hove<sup>7</sup> had **not received a grant** from Brighton & Hove City Council in the previous 12 months.
- **69%** of the groups based in Brighton and Hove<sup>8</sup> had **no paid staff**.
- **54%** of the groups based in Brighton and Hove<sup>9</sup> have **not received a grant** from Brighton & Hove City Council in the previous 12 months **and have no paid staff**.

**70% of all groups<sup>10</sup> have no paid staff.**

**59% of all groups<sup>11</sup> are based in Brighton & Hove and have no paid staff.**

**47% of our user groups<sup>12</sup> are based in Brighton & Hove, have no paid staff and have not received a grant from Brighton & Hove City Council in the last 12 months.**

These findings show that we continue to successfully reach the type of groups which benefit most from our services – the hundreds of small, unfunded Brighton and Hove groups, run entirely by volunteers, which form the front line of a community and voluntary sector whose work benefits everyone in the city.

Because our focus is on local groups, over the last 12 months we have amended our equipment hire process to prioritise organisations based in Brighton and Hove and the surrounding area. Groups in Brighton and Hove, and out as far as Lewes, Shoreham and Newhaven, can book equipment up to 6 months in advance. Other Sussex groups can now book equipment only 2 months in advance. The aim of this is to improve the service we are able to offer to local organisations. We have introduced it in part in response to monitoring data in recent years which

<sup>6</sup> Of 117 groups

<sup>7</sup> Of 101 groups based in B&H who answered grant question.

<sup>8</sup> Of 100 groups based in B&H who answered paid staff question

<sup>9</sup> Of 100 groups based in B&H who answered both other questions.

<sup>10</sup> Of 118 respondents

<sup>11</sup> Of 116 respondents that answered both questions.

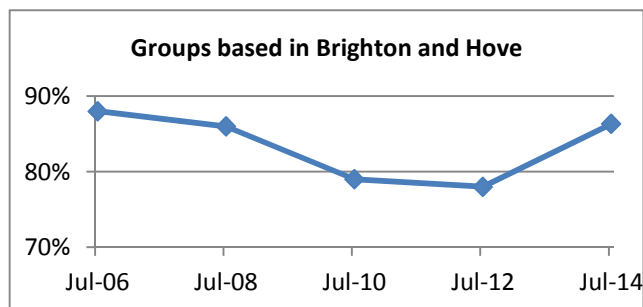
<sup>12</sup> Of 117 respondents that answered all three questions.

suggested a slight drop off in the number of local groups using the Resource Centre, in relation to those from further afield.

We hoped to find that this trend had been reversed this year, and are happy to say that it appears to be moving in the right direction.

We will continue to monitor this by asking every user group where they are based, throughout the year.

Figure 1



### What does your group do?

These questions help us to understand the different types of activities our user groups are involved in. The results, listed in *Appendix 2: Group activities*, illustrate a rich tapestry of different types of group, with a wide range of different aims and activities.

We asked respondents to tell us what their groups' activities are, by choosing from a list of 20, and also what the main purpose of their group is. At least 6 groups were involved in every activity, and 24 were involved in something else that was not listed.

Relying mainly on voluntary effort, small groups form the bedrock of communities across the city. They bring people together to support each other; provide opportunities for children and adults to meet, play, socialise, create and learn; raise funds for all kinds of good causes and strengthen the voices of people who are passionate about change.

All this is in the context of a very difficult situation for community groups. The Citizenship Survey<sup>13</sup> shows that since the beginning of the current recession there has been a reduction of a quarter in the amount of time people are spending volunteering. Our own experience reflects this: some groups are closing and others are struggling to

<sup>13</sup> *Communities and Local Government Citizenship Survey, 2011*. Available at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurveyq4201011> (accessed on 26th September 2014).

hold on. The fact that our services continue to be used by small groups involved in such a rich and diverse range of activity illustrates the role the Resource Centre is playing in the continued vitality of community life in Brighton and Hove.

### Help from other agencies

**Key finding:**  
Only 34% of groups had received support from any other infrastructure organisation in the previous 12 months.

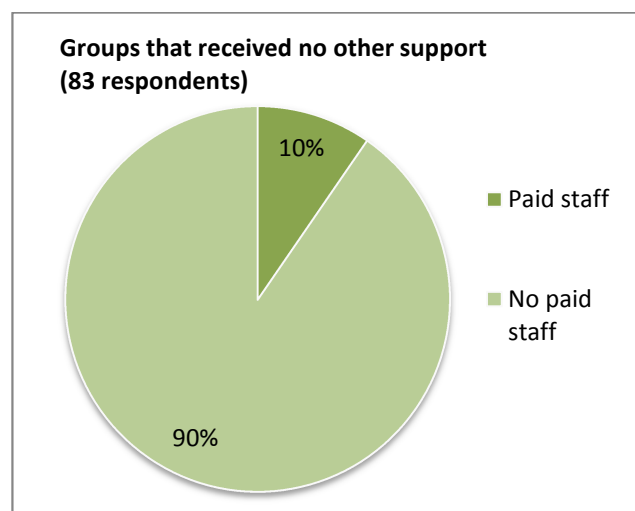
We asked groups to tell us which, if any, other organisations their groups had received support from in the previous 12 months.

Only 43 of the 126 groups who completed the survey (34%) said their group had received support from other organisations in the previous 12 months

This indicates that there is not a problem of duplication of services with other agencies.

Of the 83 groups that did not say they received support from any other organisation, 75 (90%) had no paid staff (see Figure 2). This illustrates the importance of the Resource Centre in providing specialist support for small, volunteer-run groups.

Figure 2



# What you think of the Resource Centre

*"The Resource Centre provides a vital service in Brighton to all groups and long may it continue!"*  
Coldean Community Forum

## How many times has your group visited the Centre in the last 12 months?

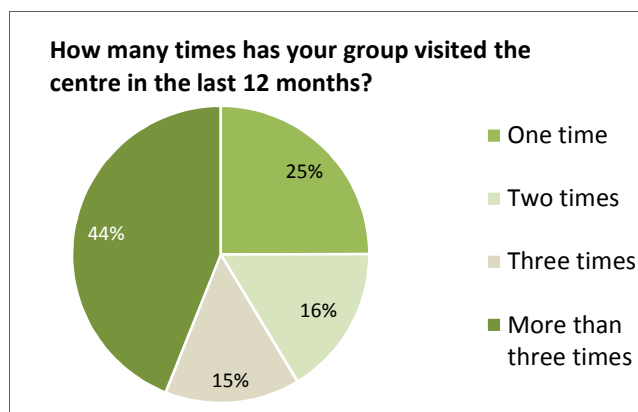
### Key finding:

Nearly half of respondents had used the Centre more than three times in the previous twelve months.

44% of respondents had visited the Centre more than three times in the previous 12 months. We aim to be a source of ongoing, useful support to groups, and having regular users is a good indicator that we are achieving this.

25% of respondents had used us just once in the previous 12 months. 69% of these had **only** used the equipment hire service. We know that some groups use us just once a year, to hire equipment for a summer event. Conducting our survey in July allows us to capture the views of these irregular users, but also means that once-a-year users are probably over-represented in the survey overall.

Figure 3



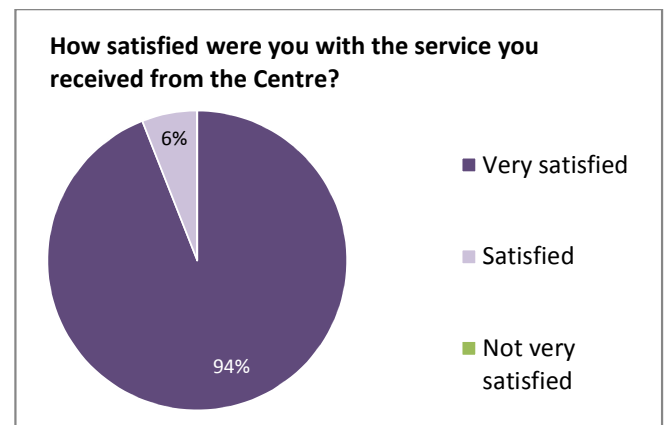
## How satisfied were you with the service you received from the Centre?

### Key finding:

94% respondents were "very satisfied" with the service they received at the Centre. 0% were "not very satisfied".

All respondents were asked to rate their overall experience of using the Resource Centre. 116 respondents answered this question. The results are displayed in Figure 4. As in previous years, satisfaction rates for the Centre overall were excellent, with an overall rating of 1.06.<sup>14</sup>

Figure 4



<sup>14</sup> If all respondents said they were very satisfied with the overall service, it would have an overall rating of 1.00. If all respondents said they were Not Very Satisfied with the service, it would be given an overall rating of 3.00. We therefore consider a rating under 2.00 to be good, and under 1.50 to be excellent.



## How helpful is the Resource Centre for your group?

We asked groups to give their opinions on specific aspects of our service provision by agreeing or disagreeing with a range of statements.<sup>15</sup>

**100% found Resource Centre staff very helpful.**<sup>16</sup>

**99% agreed that having equipment hire, printing and information services in one place is valuable for groups like theirs**<sup>17</sup>

**100% found the prices affordable.**<sup>18</sup>

**99% agreed that the Resource Centre is very useful for their group.**<sup>19</sup>

**91% said that the Resource Centre is the only place their group can get the equipment they need.**<sup>20</sup>

**100% found it easy to get through on the phone**<sup>21</sup>, **99% found that their emails receive a quick response**<sup>22</sup>, and **97% felt that they did not have to wait too long to be helped at the front desk**<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Not all groups rated every statement. We included an option of "Can't Comment" for groups who had not used certain elements of our service. Percentages are based on number of respondents that rated each statement, excluding those who ticked "Can't Comment". The respondent numbers, excluding "Can't Comment" are given in footnotes below.

<sup>16</sup> 120 respondents

<sup>17</sup> 109 respondents

<sup>18</sup> 115 respondents

<sup>19</sup> 121 respondents

<sup>20</sup> 95 respondents

<sup>21</sup> 100 respondents

<sup>22</sup> 71 respondents

<sup>23</sup> 115 respondents

## Do you have any comments about the Resource Centre?

### Common themes:

- Helpful and friendly
- Important for Brighton and Hove
- Important for groups
- Appreciated and valued by groups

We asked all respondents to give any comments about the Resource Centre overall. All the responses to this question are in *Appendix 1: Comments*.

Comments are a particularly useful way for us to find out what groups really think, and having a general comments field allows respondents to say whatever they like about any aspect of the Centre.

We are so happy to learn that many groups feel very attached to the Resource Centre, and find that it is a crucial source of support for their group.

### Helpful and friendly

The most common theme, touched on by thirteen groups, was that the Centre overall is a helpful, friendly place. Three groups expanded to say that they found staff to be knowledgeable and skilled.

*"The atmosphere is calm and supportive. The staff are always lovely."*

#### London Road Station Partnership

*"Wonderfully relaxed, friendly and informal yet everyone skilled and equipment for printing working and helpfully organised – love it!"*

#### Quaker Meeting House

*"Have always found staff members friendly and very helpful."* **Due East Neighbourhood Council**

*"Staff in centre are really helpful and knowledgeable even when clearly busy."*

#### Wyld Service

These comments indicate that user groups find that they are welcomed by friendly staff and are given the help they need. This feedback supports our conviction that offering an open-access front desk service 28 hours a week is a vital part of our support to local groups.

### Important for Brighton and Hove

Another common theme was a belief that Brighton and Hove is improved by having the Resource Centre. Twelve groups included this in their comments, and/or that they wished similar centres existed in other places.

*"I wish that every city had such a great resource for charities. People I know that have been involved with setting up new charities have all said how useful the Resource Centre has been for them."*

**Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Project**

*"Very useful, wish we had one in Hastings."*

**Hastings Against War**

*"The Resource Centre provides a vital service in Brighton to all groups and long may it continue!"*

**Coldean Community Forum**

*"We are so lucky to have the centre in Brighton. It would be great if there were centres like this all over the country."* **Anonymous**

*"I have used it over the years with different local groups, work, tenants association – the centre is one of the good things about living where I live."*

**Turner Yoga Group**

Some such comments were made by organisations that also provide support to groups in the city.

*"We are lucky in Brighton that we can always say 'I don't know but try the Resource Centre – they'll know'."*

**Personalised Travel Planning, Brighton & Hove City Council**

*"A very much under-acknowledged foundation of the infrastructure support for the thriving third sector in the City."* **Serendipity**

We believe that an active and vital community and voluntary sector brings many benefits to the city. We are encouraged to hear from our user groups, and other support organisations, that the Centre is helping to achieve this.

### Important for groups

A third resounding theme from this year's comments was that many groups feel we are crucial to enabling them to run their group well. Nine groups said they would struggle to run their group without the Centre.

*"Don't know how we would have managed without their support. Where else could a small charity/group like ours go for the kind of support we get?"* **Puffin Preschool Nursery**

*"It's a great service. Don't know what I'd do without it!"* **Starfish Youth Music**

*"Don't know how we'd run our fairs without them - nothing else like it!"*

**Friends of Davigdor Infant School**

*"Not sure we could run our events and raise money without the Resource Centre."*

**Friends of Queens Park**

*"Really don't know how we would cope without the Resource Centre in Brighton."*

**Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Project**

*"Could not do without them."*

**Benfield Wildlife and Conservation Group**

*"We don't know what we would do without you."*

**Anonymous**

*"An absolutely essential service to help community action."* **Anonymous**

*"It's a valuable resource for our group and I would find it much more difficult to balance the books without it, when we put on community events."*

**El Kereem Islamic Learning Centre**

Our approach is to provide practical services that directly help groups to achieve their own aims. Receiving feedback from groups that we are a crucial source of support to them is very encouraging, and indicates that we are successfully helping them in ways they find useful and important.

### Appreciated and valued by groups

Perhaps the most encouraging type of comments we received were those that suggested that groups really appreciate the Resource Centre and feel attached to it.

Twelve groups made comments either to give high praise in general, or to say that they love the Centre, and three groups said that they have a long history of using the Centre. These included:

*"We love your staff and services. So helpful, so useful."* **Saint Peters Church, West Blatchington**

*"We have been with the Resource Centre for 16 years now and the Resource Centre very helpful to our group, giving us very good suggestions in everything we want to know."*

**Christian Arabic Club**

*"Love it. Used for years, still using."* **Anonymous**

*"The Resource Centre is amazing."* **Wyld Service**

*"Excellent. Staff are fantastic."*

**Hereford Court Community Association**

*"Excellent service. Keep doing what you're doing!"*

**The Whitehawk Inn**

*"It's a lovely and valuable place – long may it last."*

**Free University Brighton**

Our aim is to provide a central pool of resources for groups, and to be a supportive space for grassroots activism in the city. To learn that so many groups value the centre so highly lets us know that our approach continues to achieve this aim.

## Do you find the Centre accessible?

This question was answered by 122 respondents. 114 (96%) said they do find the Centre accessible. 8 groups (6%) said they do not.

Six of these groups found the Centre inaccessible because there is limited parking available. Five additional groups mentioned parking difficulties in other parts of the survey.

Parking has always been and is likely to always be an issue. However, over the years, we have lobbied the local authority to introduce short-stay and disabled parking in the street, and both of these are now in place. Since conducting the survey, eight new cycle parking spaces have also been put in on Tilbury Place, following requests from us to the local authority.

The remaining two groups who did not find the Centre accessible said that this was because it is a

long way from their geographical location - Hastings and Birmingham. (The group from Birmingham had used the website only).

One group, who did find the Centre accessible, overall, mentioned elsewhere in the survey that it was difficult for disabled and elderly members to walk up the hill to the building. They added, however, that "Access to the building is excellent".

Three groups specifically praised our accessibility in the general comments section of the survey.

We are happy overall to find that no disabled users of the Centre said they found it hard to access for any reason that is within our control. Groups run by and for disabled people are among our priority groups, and we will continue to prioritise accessibility very highly.

## Awareness of services

*We love your staff and services. So helpful, so useful.*

**Saint Peters Church, West Blatchington**

### Key finding:

Groups are aware of more of our services than they were in 2012.

### Which of our services are you aware of?

This question helps us to understand how our users see the centre, and which of our services they are aware of. We asked respondents whether they are aware of the following Resource Centre services:

- Equipment hire
- Printing
- Computers
- Information resources on the website
- Information resources in the Centre
- Advice from the front desk worker

We know that some groups come to the centre just once or twice a year, to hire equipment or print publicity for events. We aim to ensure that these groups learn about our other services during their short visit, so that they can make use of them if they would like to.

We have made particular efforts since the last survey to improve the prominence of our in-centre information service, by setting up information displays in the front desk area from which groups collect equipment and pay for printing.

We also launched our new website in June 2013. The site is specifically designed to integrate all our services in a more user-friendly way, and, in particular, to ensure that visitors looking for details of our print and equipment services are also directed to information resources that might be useful for them.

60% of respondents were aware of information resources in the Centre, and 59% were aware of information resources on the website. This is up from 46% and 44% respectively in 2012, and suggests that our work to publicise our information services is having an impact.

We are also very pleased to see that respondents know about more services overall now than they did in 2012. The average Centre user is now aware of 4 out of 6 services, up from 3.4 in 2012.

# Hiring equipment

*It's amazing value for money, especially for small non-profit organisations.*

Polish Saturday School in Brighton and Hove

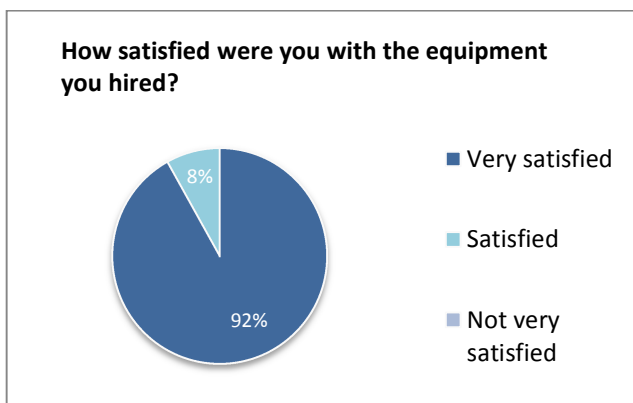
## How satisfied were you with the equipment you hired?

### Key finding:

Every group that hired equipment was “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the service they received.

Respondents who had hired equipment in the previous 12 months were asked to rate their experience by saying whether they were “Very Satisfied”, “Satisfied” or “Not Very Satisfied”. 86 groups answered this question.

Figure 5



We are pleased to hear that there were no respondents who felt dissatisfied with the equipment hire service.

## Do you have any comments about hiring equipment from the Centre?

### Common themes:

- The staff are friendly and helpful
- The service is efficient and easy to use
- The prices are very affordable

All respondents were invited to comment on the equipment hire service.

As in previous years, we received a large number of positive comments relating to our **friendly and helpful staff** (22 respondents), the **efficiency and ease of use of our systems** (20 respondents), and the **affordability of our prices** (16 respondents).

Eight users said that **they would not be able to run their activities without the service**, and eight commented on the **high quality of the equipment available**. Six respondents said they were **impressed with the instructions/advice provided with the equipment**.

Three groups said they had found specific pieces of equipment **difficult to use**. We will take these comments into consideration as part of the ongoing process of reviewing and replacing our equipment.

Three groups said that **they would like collection and drop off times to be more flexible**. We recognise that our opening hours mean that some group organisers find it difficult to use our services. We are planning a review of our opening hours in the next few months. However, we must balance any decision to alter them with the need to ensure we have enough time for other essential areas of our work. In particular, longer overall opening hours would cut into the time available for planning and maintaining our systems, and would mean we were less able to respond flexibly to the needs of our priority groups – grassroots groups in communities that face additional barriers to effective organisation.

Two groups commented on the fact that equipment gets booked up in busy periods, and two said that the equipment they hired could do with being replaced. We are aware of both these recurrent issues, which highlight the need for a rolling programme of investment in our stock of equipment for hire. This continues to be a priority for our fundraising.

72 Centre users gave comments in total, which are all listed in *Appendix 1: Comments*.

# Printing and computers at the Resource Centre

*We used to print our large print runs at our centre, on a photocopier that would break down when it tried to print large numbers. It cost us hours of time and frustration. We now use the Resource Centre, which has loads of papers, great equipment and staff always on hand. It saves us so much money and time, we can't believe we didn't start doing it sooner.*

Hangleton & Knoll Project (Youth Team)

## How satisfied were you with different elements of our printing service?

Respondents who had used our printing equipment in the past 12 months were asked to rate their experience of different elements of the service, by saying they were “Very Satisfied”, “Satisfied” or “Not very satisfied”.

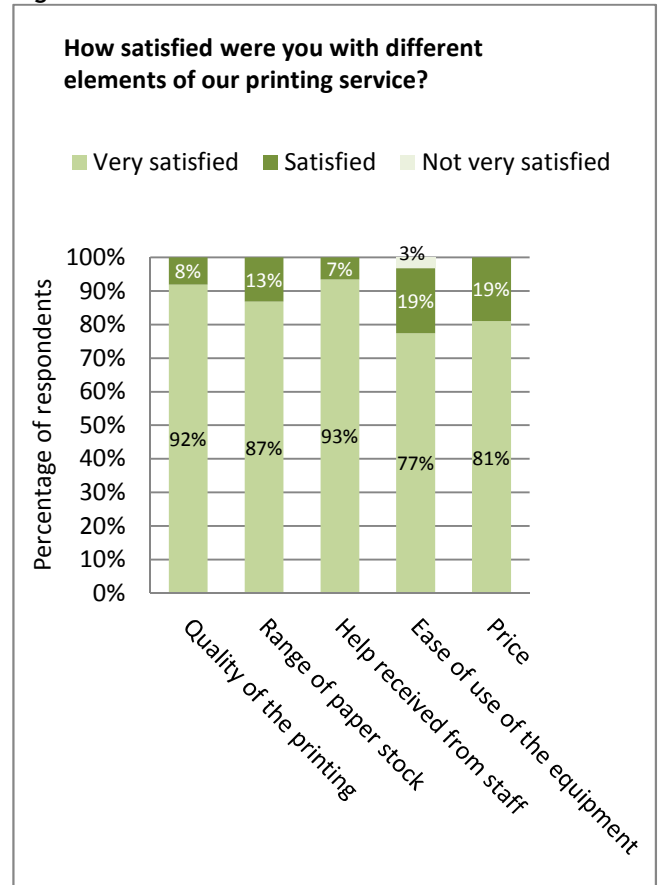
Centre users overwhelmingly rated the printing services very highly. (See footnote on Page 9.)

	Number of respondents	Overall rating
Quality of the printing	62	1.08
Range of paper stock	61	1.13
Help received from staff	61	1.07
Ease of use of the equipment	62	1.26
Price	58	1.19

We are happy to find that all elements of the service have been rated by our users as within the “Excellent” range, with “Quality of the printing” and “Help received from staff” rated very highly indeed.

The element of the service which received the lowest overall rating was “Ease of use of the equipment”. We are aware that some of our printing equipment has now been in use for some years, and is in need of replacement. We know that our users have to cope with the equipment breaking down more often than they should. This is therefore a major fundraising priority for the Resource Centre, and we plan to introduce new equipment to the print room in the coming year.

Figure 6



## What new equipment would your group like to use?

In light of our plans to introduce new equipment into the Resource Centre we asked groups whether they would be interested in using various new services we are considering introducing.

Over 50 respondents said they would be interested in each of the following:

- Sticker printing
- T-shirt printing
- Cloth banner printing
- Cheaper colour printing.

Funding continues to be an obstacle to expanding the print room service, but we will be taking this feedback into account when planning future fundraising.

## Do you have any comments about printing at the Resource Centre?

### Common theme:

- The staff are friendly and helpful

All respondents were invited to comment on the printing service, whether or not they had used it in the past 12 months. 35 groups gave comments, which are all listed in *Appendix 1: Comments*.

Nearly half of all those who commented mentioned that **they had found our staff to be friendly and/or helpful**. Being welcoming to all community groups is central to our ethos, so we are always happy to know that our users have this positive experience of being in the Centre.

Four groups specifically mentioned that they had found our help with **preparing and printing**

**newsletters very useful**. This is an area we specialise in, and is a way in which we support groups to communicate with their wider communities.

Four groups said that they found the service **cheap**, or that **it saves their group money**. This is also a central aim of our print room - to allow groups to produce materials and publicity within their limited budgets.

Several groups made suggestions of other services they would like to see in the print room. These included **A1 printing, lanyards and vinyl banners**, as well as some of those we had included in the previous question (sticker printing, cloth printing, cheap colour printing).

## The Resource Centre information service

*I think the Resource Centre provides an invaluable source of information for small groups, in one easy place.*  
**Survivors Network**

### Have you used our information service in the last 12 months, either in the centre or on the website? How useful was it?

#### Key finding

More respondents than ever before have used our information services in the past 12 months.

Respondents were asked how useful they had found various different types and formats of information, either in the Centre or on the website.

All Centre users responding to the survey were asked to complete this question, and for each type of information there was an option to choose “Not Used”. This meant that respondents could rate just the parts of the service they have used, and we were able to learn how many respondents had used each service.

89 respondents gave a rating of “Very Useful”, “Useful” or “Not very useful” for at least one information service, indicating that they had used it in the past 12 months. This is a substantial (29%) increase from 2012, when 69 respondents rated one or more information service, and a huge leap (218%) from 2010, when only 28 did so.

We think this increase in reported use of information services has been caused by two factors:

1) We have changed the way we ask about information services. In previous surveys we have referred to our different types of resource (e.g. Information sheets; Favourite Funders). This is the language we ourselves use to describe our services, but the people using the services may not recognise these terms.

We thought it likely that groups *had* used the services, but didn't realise that they had. This year, we described our information in ways we hoped would be more familiar to our users. For example, instead of “Favourite Funders”, we said “Details of useful funders”. This may have helped respondents to work out which of our services they have used. For example, in 2012, 18 respondents said they had used Favourite Funders. This year, 29 said that had used “Details of useful funders”.

2) However, as explained on page 11, there has been a real increase in awareness of our information services. We believe this is down to the launch of our new website and the increased prominence of information resources in the Centre itself.

We have calculated overall ratings for each information service, based on the responses of the groups that rated them, where 1 is Excellent and 3 is Poor. (See page 8 for calculation method).

We are pleased to see that every element of the service was rated within the “Excellent” range. We are particularly pleased with the very high ratings of our information for small groups on starting a group; running a group; managing money; fundraising and organising an event. Providing information that is specifically targeted at small, volunteer-run groups is integral to our service, and we are pleased to see groups are finding it useful.

Information service	Number of respondents	Overall rating
Advice from front desk worker	69	1.13
Details of useful funders	29	1.28
Information about fundraising	28	1.29
Information about running a group	26	1.23
Information about managing money	25	1.20
Information about starting a group	15	1.20
Information about organising an event	17	1.18
Trustfunding.org.uk	8	1.50
In-centre noticeboards	18	1.39
Website news pages	19	1.47
Links / referrals to other organisations	24	1.46
Reference library	13	1.23

## Have you used the Resource Centre website in the last 12 months?

### Key finding

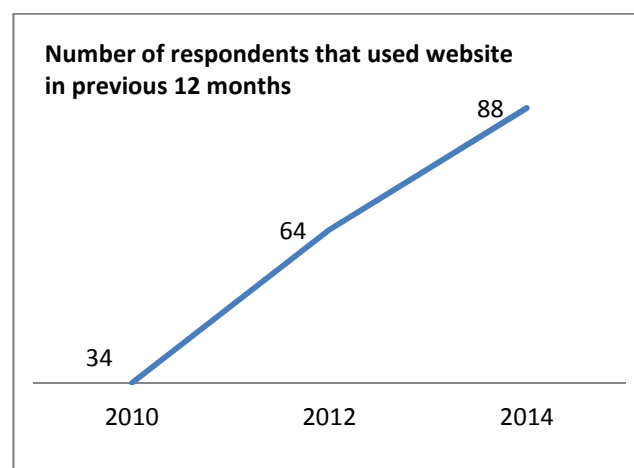
71% of respondents use the Resource Centre website. One-third of respondents use it as a reference source to help them run their group.

We asked respondents whether they have used our website in the last 12 months. This is important information for us, as it is very useful to know whether groups who access our in-centre services are also using the website.<sup>24</sup>

This year, this information is particularly important. We launched a new website in June 2013, with the aim of making our information easier to find and use. While we can gather website usage data, which shows a big increase in use of the site, this doesn't tell us who is using the site and what they think of it. This survey is our first opportunity to find out if and how our new site has been useful for groups that use the Centre.

124 respondents answered this question. 71% of these (88 respondents) had used the website in the last 12 months. Figure 7 shows how this compares with surveys conducted in 2012 and 2010.

Figure 7<sup>25</sup>



<sup>24</sup> While we did display a link to the survey on the site, so that groups who do not come to the Centre could complete it, 98.5% respondents said they have used at least one in-centre service. The vast majority of survey respondents are users of the Centre, as well as the website.

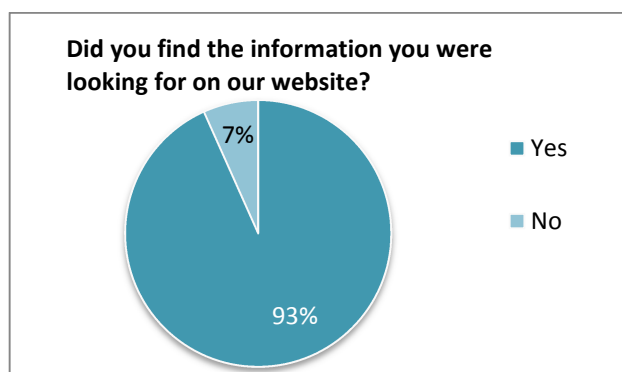
<sup>25</sup> This data is displayed as number of respondents, rather than percentage of respondents. This is because this question received a low response rate in 2010 (48 responses), which makes the data hard to compare. We believe the low response rate that year reflected a lower number of groups engaging with the website at that time. If calculated relative to the number of returned surveys (including those that skipped this question), 31% had used the site in 2010, 50% in 2012 and 67% in 2014.

We are thrilled to learn that the efforts we have made to improve our website have paid off and that more groups than ever are using it as a part of their use of the Resource Centre. This means that busy volunteers can book equipment, get print prices and find information to help them run their group, at any time of day, from wherever they are.

### Did you find the information you were looking for on our website?

89 groups answered this question. The results are displayed in Figure 8.

Figure 8



We are pleased to see that most respondents found the information they were looking for on our website.

We asked those who didn't to tell us what they were trying to find. We received four comments. These are listed in *Appendix 1: Comments*.

Two groups said that they had followed our links to other suppliers of equipment, and found that these suppliers no longer offered the equipment listed. This service, referring groups to other organisations, is of course only useful if the organisations provide the services we say they do! While we do work hard to keep our information up to date, we have taken this feedback on board and will continue to do our best to keep everything accurate.

One group couldn't find templates for badge making. We do have these on our site, but realised on receiving this comment that they were a little buried. We have now improved this.

One group couldn't find information on equipment collection and return times. Again, this is on the site. We have improved the searchability of this page, to help ensure that people find it if they need it.

### How well is our website designed?

We asked website users to state whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about its design and ease of use.

- 98% of respondents agreed that it is easy to find information on the website (of 87 responses).
- 98% of the 54 respondents who had used the search tool found it useful.
- 98% of the 42 respondents who had looked for print prices on the site found it easy to find them.
- 100% of the 43 respondents who had used the equipment booking form found it easy to use.

We also asked website users whether they use the site as a reference source to help them run their group. 72 groups answered this question, of which one-third said they do.

We are very pleased to find that many community activists do see our site as a useful place to go for information about running a group. We hope that, following the launch of the new site, the next two years will see a further increase in groups' awareness of it as a place to get the information they need.

### Do you have any comments about our information services or website?

All groups were invited to comment on the information services or website. 19 groups answered this question. All the comments given are listed in *Appendix 1: Comments*.

Three respondents said they find the information service to be useful for their group, and two of these also said that they think it is a useful service for groups in general.

Three said they would find it useful if we added photographs of the equipment available for hire. This is something we would like to do, but it requires a substantial investment of time. Sometimes groups kindly donate photos of our equipment in use, which is very helpful. We plan to gradually add more photos to the website over the next few years.

Two groups said that they have found our Money in Mind accounting system very useful, and two groups said they would like it to be available in other programs (in addition to Microsoft Excel).

Two groups said they found it difficult to find print prices on the website - we have now reformatted some pages to make these more prominent.



# CONCLUSION

*Don't know how we would have managed without their support. Where else could a small charity/group like ours go for the kind of support we get?*

**Puffin Preschool Nursery**

Once again, we have been overwhelmed by the level of response and the positive and constructive comments given by groups.

We are reassured that our services are valuable and appropriate for the needs of community and voluntary groups in Brighton & Hove and surrounding areas.

We are particularly pleased to find that our services continue to be used predominantly by small, grassroots groups run by volunteers, who do not receive support elsewhere. This evidences our success in providing specialist, ongoing and unique support to this crucial section of the community and voluntary sector.

Since the last survey we have worked hard to publicise our range of services to our users, so that groups are aware of all the different support they can get here. We are thrilled to find that groups are aware of a higher number of services than they were two years ago, and we look forward to continuing our work to improve this even further. We are particularly encouraged to find that more respondents than ever were aware of our information services this year.

We will work with our user groups to improve the services available at the Centre, and welcome feedback and comments throughout the year.

*Resource Centre staff team, October 2014*

# APPENDIX 1: COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

All comments about equipment hire are published here, with the exception of comments that said only that the respondent did not have anything to say.

## Comments about hiring equipment

**5th Hangleton Brownies:** It's a very smooth operation

**Brighton and Hove French Circle / Regency Square Area Society:** Very easy and efficient

**Brighton People's Assembly:** It's really useful to be able to hire equipment at such a low cost.

**Brighton Person Centred community:** Staff very helpful and flexible re hire

**Brighton Phoenix Athletics Club:** Very reasonable rate, great friendly service

**Brighton Women's Centre:** It's quick and easy to do online – all very efficient and the prices are very reasonable.

**Changing Faces / Little Green Pig / Artifish:** All ok, helpful, thank you

**Christian Arabic Club:** The system of hiring equipment is very organised. I got list about anything I hired.

**Coldean Community Forum:** The Resource Centre has a good range of equipment for hire and is very reasonably priced.

**Coombe Road Area Local Action Team:** I was slightly worried by loose parts getting lost e.g. cutter for the badge machine. With sufficient people involved in picking up, setting up, etc.

**El Kereem Islamic Learning Centre:** Its really useful to be able to hiring equipment of a reasonable standard at a price that keeps people without causing a massive deficit in the budget

**Exploring Senses CIC:** I often thought to would be great if this model was applied to digital technology/equipment (such as LED projectors) for use in creative industries.

**Fostering Service Intensive Placement Team:** The equipment was great, great value, friendly staff, easy to use service.

**Friends of Brighton Steiner School:** Did not actually use it as did not have time to practice with video camera before actual show. Next time will hire a simpler video camera.

**Friends of Davigdor:** Staff always helpful. Some equipment a bit tired but generally very good.

**Friends of Glebe School:** All good but candyfloss machine was a bit erratic and a bit hard to use!

**Friends of Mile Oak Primary School:** Very helpful and flexible staff

**Friends of West Hove Infants School:** Easy to use, well maintained with clear instructions

**Friends of William Clark Park:** Good to be able to return on Mondays.

**FUB:** Great to have it available

**Grassroots Suicide Prevention:** Very helpful, a huge benefit to the city.

**Hamsey Festival:** So fantastic- affordable, quality equipment, v efficient and together service at the collection/drop off. We are really very grateful, thank you

**Hands Off Hove Park School:** Very pleasant, convenient and cheap!

**Hastings Against War:** Efficient – friendly

**Holland Road Baptist Church:** Great team and service. It would be amazing if you could invest in some new equipment but understand that this is expensive.

**Hullabaloo Community Quire:** It was an excellent idea to come to you! The equipment made our fete really fun.

**Serendipity:** Excellent service , always courteous and pleasant to deal with , flexible around needs of hiring orgs, great value for money, clear practical advice given.

**Institute of Development Studies:** I was particularly grateful for the speedy and flexible attitude by your staff which enabled me to resolve a crisis situation very quickly.

**Lindfield Court TA:** Very good and was given advice on getting home.

**London Road Station Partnership:** Such a fantastic resource! We couldn't have run our event effectively without this – made all the difference.

**Mount Pleasant Residents' Association:** They are always very helpful

**North Whitehawk Tenants and Residents' Association:** As some equipment is limited if it is not booked early enough there is nothing left.

**Polish Saturday School in Brighton and Hove:** It's amazing value for money, especially for small non-profit organisations.

**Puffin Pre-School Nursery:** Very straightforward, efficient system. Comprehensive choice.

**Ringer Primary Home School Association (PTA):** Really cheap and good providing you know when the date of your fair is 6 months beforehand. Would like to have more flexibility at when I can return hired equipment, although I do realise it needs to be hired out again very quickly as there are other organisations waiting. 2 hours on the Tuesday morning after our event on the Friday evening was quite difficult to organise, but we do appreciate this facility!

**RISE:** Very efficiently managed.

**Root Experience:** Very easy and efficient.

**RSPB:** The candy floss machine was quite hard to use but I think that they do take practice!

**St Wulfran's Church, Ovingdean:** A great service for church groups.

**Stanford Infants PTFA:** Parking very difficult!

**Survivors' Network:** It was good

**Sussex Badger Vaccination Project:** Efficient and helpful

**Sussex Community Foundation:** Always efficient and helpful

**Sustainable Clothing Workshop:** Very friendly and helpful and very helpful for small informal group. Min. of bureaucracy. Thanks.

**Tarner Yoga Group:** I hired coffee making stuff for a participation events at work and everything went really well.

**The Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Project:** The charities I work for have been hiring equipment from the resource centre, from games to video cameras and PA systems. It has been really very useful to have access to your great equipment. It makes such a difference to our events and activities.

**The Hangleton & Knoll Project (Youth Team):** Its such an invaluable resource for us. We're able to hire things we wouldn't be able to purchase ourselves and that really add to our events. And it's so affordable.

**The Link (Peacehaven Heights Primary School PTA):** The system in place works really well. Everything is thoroughly checked and the staff are friendly and helpful... an excellent and very valuable service.

**The Regency Masonic Lodge Brighton:** Extremely easy to do, saved our day as I only found out about you the week before our event.

**The Whitehawk Inn:** It was very easy to book online. The process when I collected & returned was very efficient. I think the equipment hire is very good value for money.

**Shoreham Academy Ghana Trip Fundraising event:** I think the equipment is very good and the lady on the desk was very helpful.

**West Hill Film Society:** Excellent value for money and lovely helpful staff.

**West Hove Junior PTA / Parents:** Really helpful staff and good advice on hire

**Whoopsadaisy:** Excellent service. Phone answered every time I called and good information given. Website information also very good.

**Wyld Service:** Being able to return on Monday would be good!

**Anon:** It is affordable and good for fetes and fundraising events

**Anon:** fantastic service

**Anon:** Yes, very cheap compared to other companies

**Anon:** Always easy – I like that you book online

**Anon:** I think it is an excellent resource, making fundraising equipment affordable to hire.

**Anon:** Lots of availability and great selection

**Anon:** Very easy process. Lovely, helpful and friendly staff.

**Anon:** It's an absolute life-saver

**Anon:** Always easy to do, always efficiently hired out.

# Comments about printing at the Centre

**Brighton and Hove French Circle / Regency Square Area Society:** Being able to send work by email, thus avoiding two visits (leaving work and collecting) is a huge help and much appreciated. Staff v. helpful when I do "DIY" printing.

**Brighton People's Assembly:** We have used other printers for colour printing, because it worked out cheaper, so cheaper colour printing at the Centre would be really great. The idea of being able to produce flags and cloth items is also quite exciting.

**Coldean Community Forum:** Our newsletter is collated and printed by the Resource Centre and we are pleased with the excellent results.

**Coombe Road Area Local Action Team:** I didn't arrange our group's leaflets but the person who did opted to use colourfast instead as they didn't think the RC's equipment was a high enough quality. I can't remember the technical details.

**Craven Vale Community Association:** Would also like vinyl banner printing and lanyards.

**El Kereem Islamic Learning Centre:** As yet I've never used the print room but Tshirt printing is something that we have definitely been looking into.

**Exploring Senses CIC:** All good ☺ How about a vinyl cutter to be used with the heat press?

**FUB:** It's always a very friendly and efficient service. Very happy with it.

**Garage Girls:** Very helpful 'desk workers'. Wonderful team, very helpful. Could do with printing larger. A1 would be nice indeed.

**Hereford Court CA:** Excellent.

**Holland Road Baptist Church:** We tend to print in house as it works well for us.

**How 2 Train UR Human:** The staff are always lovely.

**Hullabaloo Community Quire:** It is really useful to be able to get 2 colour printing done so cheaply.

**Serendipity:** Very patient and clear and supportive staff, always on hand to sort out glitches and help users and volunteers feel more confident about the processes involved

**Lindfield Court TA:** Very helpful.

**London Road Station Partnership:** All very useful.

**Mount Pleasant Residents' Association** The staff at the Resource Centre are always very helpful

**Ovingdean news / St Wulfruns PCC:** We have had excellent support with printing our magazine 'Ovingdean news'. Our overall impression is that there is 'strength in depth' at the Resource Centre. Always ready to help and cooperate to overcome any problems that arise.

**Rosa Bridge Housing Co-op: Re new equipment:** We would probably like all the others things as well at some point, but the stickers and clothes/bags would be of more immediate interest, the rest rather speculative. Thanks for always being helpful and friendly.

**ShardFest:** Wish you had a Centre near us in Birmingham.

**St Peter's Church, West Blatchington:** I haven't needed to use this service as yet, but I will in the future.

**St Wulfran's Church, Ovingdean:** We print our magazine every month at the centre and the staff are always more helpful. We are pleased with the printed results and the price.

**Survivors' Network:** Business cards, if you don't already do them

**Sussex Badger Vaccination Project:** I'd be REALLY interested in this service

**Sylvan Hall Residents' Association:** Very helpful in producing our newsletter

**Tarner Yoga Group:** I appreciate the advice and help which is always clear and positive. Staff always seem to give extra for example handy word processing / presentation tips.

**The Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's project:** It's been brilliant we print our newsletters here, it's quick and great prices.

**The Hangleton & Knoll Project (Youth Team):** We used to print our large print runs at our centre, on a photocopier that would break down when it tried to print large numbers. It cost us hours of time and frustration. We now use the Resource Centre, which has loads of papers, great equipment and staff always on hand. It saves us so much money and time, we can't believe we didn't start doing it sooner.

**Anon:** Staff always so helpful

**Anon:** Some staff lovely, some grumpy

**Anon:** Staff are always extremely helpful

# Comments about the information service and/or website

**Brighton People's Assembly:** We use the Money in Mind accounts system and it is great.

**Craven Vale Community Association:** Maybe move prices to the top of the page/separate page on website

**Friends of West Hove Infants School:** How to pay – ie by cash or cheque

**FUB:** I couldn't find the equipment booking form at first after extensive searching and then realised you click on an item and add to basket. Perhaps more info up front about this to make clearer. Perhaps also the printing prices tool would be better if a quick link to it on the home page – I bet this gets used a lot.

**Hands Off Hove Park School:** It would have helped to see a photo of the gazebo in use to gauge the size of it.

**Serendipity:** Clear and well set out, and readable for a wide range of volunteers and workers in the sector, not patronising but not too technical either – just about right! Always my first resource I advise people setting up groups to look at – re setting up a group, constitutions etc – make clear sense of difficult material

## Comments about accessibility

**Benfield Wildlife and Conservation Group:** no parking available

**Brighton and Hove Federation of Allotments:** Bad for parking

**Brighton Women's Centre:** It is very difficult to park outside. We often hire the screen which is very heavy and not possible to collect on foot.

**Hastings Against War:** Come from Hastings.

**Ringer Primary Home School Association (PTA):** Not very easy due to parking when picking up and returning large items although I do understand the difficulties.

**ShardFest:** Because our group is in Birmingham. Not your fault.

**Mount Pleasant Residents' Association:** Helpful staff

**Personalised Travel Planning, BHCC:** However good the website, it's no substitute for a real human as a starting point for my daft questions.

**Rosa Bridge Housing Co-op:** We found the excel sheets for accounting. It would have been useful to get these sheets in a format that doesn't require installing and expensive software suite (Microsoft Excel) but instead use a free version like Libre Office.

**ShardFest:** Thank you, it provided exactly the information I needed.

**Survivors' Network:** I think the Resource Centre provide an invaluable source of information for small groups, in one easy place

**Wyld Service:** It would be helpful to have the amazing accounts system download available for Open Office systems, not just Excel. This package is really useful – easy to use.

**Anon:** Could do with more pictures of the equipment to hire

**Anon:** It needs photos of the games

**St Peter's Church, West Blatchington:** Re access: very dependable on how many other people have turned up at the same time. On this occasion I was fortunate to be able to reverse right up to the door. On previous occasions I've had to park right at the end of the road, which makes hard work of loading/unloading equipment. On two occasions there have been people sitting on the steps who just haven't got the hint that they're in the way, despite saying 'excuse me please' and banging large items into them accidentally.

**Whoopsadaisy:** No parking – dead end street, difficult to load up car.

# Other comments about our services

**Benfield Wildlife and Conservation Group:** could not do without them

**Brighton and Hove French Circle / Regency Square Area Society:** Not very near a bus stop. For most parts of the city, the Centre is up a hill. Not easy for the disabled and the elderly. Access to the building excellent.

**Christian Arabic Club:** We started our group since 1998. We have been with the Resource Centre for 16 years now and the Resource Centre very helpful to our group, giving us very good suggestions in everything we want to know – for applying for the grant, for accounting our accounts.

**El Kereem Islamic Learning Centre:** It's a valuable resource for our group and I would find it much more difficult to balance the books without it, when we put on community events.

**Friends of Davigdor:** Don't know how we'd run our fairs without them – nothing else like it!

**Friends of Glebe School:** Tricky location to get to and not that easy to park/load at leisure.

**FUB:** It's a lovely and valuable place – long may it last. Also great to know it's a cooperative – if only there were more in Brighton.

**Garage Girls:** Lovely team, helpful with all our many questions. Will be coming back again. Thank you!

**Hamsey Festival:** Fantastic, thank you.

**Hastings Against War:** Great – wish it was in Hastings

**Hereford Court CA:** Excellent. Staff are fantastic.

**Holland Road Baptist Church:** It would be great if you could add some new equipment for hire. The Staff are brilliant and very efficient.

**How 2 Train UR Human:** Everyone is very lovely & it's very useful.

**London Road Station Partnership:** It's wonderful – friendly, accessible, offering the things it's often easy to forget about (e.g. laminating, urn for making drinks) but which make all the difference. The atmosphere is calm and supportive. the staff are always lovely.

**Mount Pleasant Residents' Association:** Merely as already stated very helpful.

**Personalised Travel Planning, BHCC:** Staffed front desk is really important; other centres without one appear cold. How about some eco-toys/activities ie stuff to hire that educate through play (there's only so

much candyfloss or badge making I can stand), such as perhaps something made by 3D Design course at University of Brighton. Thank you for your help over the years. We are lucky in Brighton that we can always say 'I don't know but try the Resource Centre – they'll know'.

**PSC:** Thank you for your all help over the past few months.

**Puffin Pre-School Nursery:** Don't know how we would have managed without their support. Where else could a small charity/group like ours go for the kind of support we get?

**Quaker Meeting House:** Wonderfully relaxed, friendly and informal yet everyone skilled and equipment for printing working and helpfully organised – love it!

**Ringer Primary Home School Association (PTA):** Lovely to be able to hire items for our summer fair.

**RISE:** The Resource Centre is incredibly useful and a great 'resource' for community groups and charities in the City.

**Serendipity:** At a time when the voluntary and community or Third Sector is changing incredibly and under massive pressures, in practical terms re funds and resources and in policy terms" what is the role of the sector ? "the Resource Centre remains an oasis of calm and consistency, always focused on the precise needs of individuals who volunteer and of their groups who come in all shapes and sizes. They represent what is best about the voluntary sector – they know their customers extremely well , the many groups in the city and many of the individuals who make them work, and they are highly effective and efficient, resourceful and innovative in continuing to provide cost effective services to the sector – a very much under acknowledged foundation of the infrastructure support for the thriving third sector in the City.

**St Peter's Church, West Blatchington:** We love your staff and services. So helpful, so useful.

**St Wulfran's Church, Ovingdean:** Parking a problem

**Starfish Youth music:** It's a great service. Don't know what I'd do without it!

**Sussex Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus:** The response to my query and request by phone was great and the confirmation email promised arrived within 10 minutes – couldn't ask for more!

**Sussex Community Foundation:** Invaluable service

**Turner Yoga Group:** I have used it over the years with different local groups, work, tenants association – the centre is one of the good things about living where I live.

**The Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's project:** Really don't know how we would cope without the Resource Centre in Brighton. I wish that every city had such a great resource for charities. People I know that have been involved with setting up new charities have all said how useful the Resource Centre has been for them.

**The Friends of Queens Park:** Not sure we could run our events and raise money without the Resource Centre.

**The Link (Peacehaven Heights Primary School PTA):** More turning space for vans and a loading bay would be VERY helpful!!

**The Regency Masonic Lodge Brighton:** I found out about this centre on the website. You do an amazing job. I am going to get my husband to put forward that you are included on their fundraising events to receive a donation when possible.

**The Three Trees:** I find the Resource Centre a great friendly place to hire kit for street parties

**The Whitehawk Inn:** Parking is a bit tight.

**The Whitehawk Inn:** Excellent service – keep doing what you're doing!

**Longhill School Ghana Trip Fundraising event:** I think the Resource Centre is easy to find. The lady on the desk was very polite, helpful, and very happy. We will use the Resource Centre again when we do another fundraising event. It was very quick service as well. The lady on the front desk was very lovely.

**West hill film society:** an invaluable community asset.

**Wyld Service:** The Resource Centre is amazing – really helpful, really quick and helpful response to email queries. Staff in centre are really helpful and knowledgeable even when clearly busy – thank you for all your help!

**Anon:** I would comment that the Resource Centre has been of some use, in specific circumstances But is not Very useful to the group and its members.

**Anon:** An absolutely essential service to help community action.

**Anon:** Only parking when dropping off and picking up equipment which can't be changed.

**Anon:** We don't know what we would do without you. We are so lucky to have the centre in Brighton. It would be great if there were centres like all over the country.

**Anon:** Would love it to be open a little later, say 5 or 5.30pm.

**Anon:** Love it. Used for years, still using.

**Anon:** It's wonderful to have such a useful and accessible service.

# APPENDIX 2: GROUP ACTIVITIES

What does your group do?		
Activity	Number of groups who say this forms part of their work <sup>26</sup>	Number of groups who say this is their main purpose <sup>27</sup>
Work to improve your local area or neighbourhood	61	13
Provide a place for members to meet and support each other	54	7
Organise social activities for adults	54	2
Organise social/play activities for children/young people	43	4
Provide advice, training, education or support to individuals	35	9
Raise funds to give to charity or good causes	30	3
Create art (including music, drama, poetry, film)	28	4
Campaign on other issues	24	6
Involve members of the community in art projects	25	1
Other <sup>28</sup>	24	16
Provide advice, training or support to groups	23	0
Organise sports or healthy lifestyle activities	21	3
Campaign on environmental issues	20	5
Represent members (e.g. Tenants' Association, Trade Union)	19	11
Raise funds for a school (e.g. PTA or Friends group)	17	12
Provide services to a minority ethnic community	16	1
Provide housing, health or financial services	15	2
Provide advocacy, mediation or interpreting services	10	
Provide environmental services (e.g. recycling)	10	0
Provide religious services to a faith community	10	8
Provide non-religious services to a faith community	6	1

<sup>26</sup> 110 groups

<sup>27</sup> 108 groups

<sup>28</sup> Groups wrote in their own words what their "Other" activities were - see Appendix 1: Comments.



# APPENDIX 3: RESEARCH METHODS

## The survey

We asked all groups that used our front desk service during July 2014 to complete a survey, either on paper or electronically. We also placed a link to the survey on our website during July, to invite groups that used our online services to respond. A copy of the survey questions can be found in *Appendix 4*.

We collected responses throughout July and August, to allow groups time to return their surveys to us. We did not accept any surveys returned after the advertised deadline of 31st August 2014.

We printed large print copies of the survey and advertised this in large print on all paper copies. We displayed posters around the Resource Centre asking groups to complete the survey, and provided boxes for groups to place completed surveys into anonymously. When groups contacted us by email, we sent them a link to the electronic survey. We opted not to survey the groups who contacted us only by telephone, although the survey link was available on our website, so they may have seen this. At the end of July, we emailed all groups who had used the equipment hire service that month to remind them to complete the survey.

All groups were given the opportunity to respond anonymously. We did include a question asking the group's name, but this was at the back of the survey and was worded in order to give groups the option not to give their name. The purpose of asking groups for their names was to create an opportunity for follow-up discussion on comments, and also because knowing most group names allows us to calculate more accurately the number of **separate groups** (rather than individual centre users) that have returned a survey.

The survey included sections on six topics. These were:

- Your use of the Resource Centre
- Hiring equipment
- Printing and computers at the Resource Centre
- The Resource Centre's information service
- What you think of the Centre
- About your group

While these sections are the same as we used in 2014, we included some new questions and removed some that were no longer relevant. In particular, we introduced questions about which new types of equipment groups would like to see in the print room,

to allow us to take our users' views into account when planning future print room development.

### Problems with the survey

Through the process of analysing responses, we have identified issues with a few survey questions, which we will improve upon when we next conduct a survey in 2016.

These are:

#### **Question 5: Have you used our printing equipment in the last 6 months?**

We aimed to find out which groups have used any of our print room services. However, we do the printing for some groups, rather than helping them to do it themselves, and we found that some of these groups answered "No" to this question. We will rephrase it in the next survey to ensure all print users are included.

#### **Question 6.5: What does your group do?**

This question required respondents to tick boxes to indicate which activities their group takes part in, and **one** main purpose of their group. Many groups ticked several activities in the main purpose section, meaning we could not include their main purpose in the data. We plan to work on improving the clarity of this question next year.

In addition, several groups that ticked "Other" in this question said they work with animals. We will add an option for work with animals in the next survey.

#### **Question 6.6: In the last 12 months, have you been helped by any of these other agencies?**

This question did not include an option of "No other agency". We therefore assumed that any group that did not respond to this question had received no help from other organisations. This is problematic, as it is possible some groups just skipped this question altogether. Next time, we will add an option for groups to tick to confirm they have received no other support.

**General:** The survey is quite long, and 17 respondents stopped completing it before they got to the end. In 2016 we will evaluate the survey as a whole with a view to making it shorter and quicker to complete.

### Errors in the survey

We made two errors in the survey.

#### Question 4.1: Have you used our information in the last 12 months, either in the Centre or on the website? How useful was it?

This question listed different aspects of our information service, and asked groups to rate them. The paper survey included in this list “Advice from front desk worker”, while in the online survey we put “Advice and support”. As all groups who receive support away from the front desk also receive it on the front desk, and most survey respondents only use front desk services, we do not think this will have significantly altered responses.

#### Question 5.5: Do you find the Resource Centre accessible?

We asked groups to tick “Yes” or “No”. We intended to then direct those who answered No to explain why, and those who answered Yes to skip to the next section. However, we accidentally asked those who answered No to both explain why *and* skip to the next section. This may have confused respondents, and some groups who ticked No could have felt discouraged from explaining why. However, 8 respondents answered “No”, and all of these wrote a comment. This reassures us that this mistake did not damage the data we collected.

## Analysis and presentation of data

For each section of results, information is provided about the source of the data and the method of calculating the results. However, there are some points which require more explanation.

Most of the questions we asked were identical to those we asked when we conducted surveys July 2012 and July 2010, and very similar to those asked in 2008 and 2006. This has allowed us to draw meaningful comparisons across an eight-year time period.

We conduct the survey in July as this is our busiest period and means we can maximise the number of groups who respond. However, this does result in a disproportionately high representation of groups that use us only once a year, for a summer event. The impact of this is an overrepresentation of groups using the equipment hire service. We have provided comparable data from our usage figures across the whole year, alongside the survey results, to provide a more accurate picture of the year as a whole.

For most questions, the response data is analysed in relation to the number of people who answered that question. The response rate therefore varies from question to question. There are three exceptions to this:

- We received six surveys from Centre users where another member of their group had already returned a survey on behalf of their group.

We included these in most of the results, in order to gather as wider a range of different experiences and opinions as possible. However, we omitted them from the **About Your Group** section, to avoid counting the same groups twice. 31 respondents did not give a group name (23%). We have no way of knowing if any of these were returned by two members of the same group, so have included them all in the **About Your Group** calculations. If we assume a similar likelihood of this occurrence among those who gave group names and those who did not, we can assume that only one or two anonymous surveys represent the same group twice, and these responses will not have significantly skewed the data.

- As our focus is on local groups it is important for us to understand the particular usage patterns of groups based in Brighton & Hove. In some cases, therefore, we have specifically pulled out data that relates only to groups based in Brighton & Hove. This is clearly stated where it applies.
- Some questions, asking groups to provide an opinion on a service, included an option for respondents to say that they haven’t used the service or are unable to comment. We have discounted those who responded in this way when analysing overall opinions of each service.

# APPENDIX 4: SURVEY QUESTIONS 2014

## Your use of the Resource Centre

Which services have you used at the Resource Centre in the past 12 months? (Tick any that apply)

Printing / photocopying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment hire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information resources at the Resource Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information resources on the website	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice from front desk worker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please say what you used)	

Which of our services did you already know about before reading this survey?

Printing / photocopying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment hire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information resources at the Resource Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information resources on the website	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice from front desk worker	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Hiring equipment

Have you hired equipment from the Centre in the last 12 months?

Yes

No

If the answer to question 2.1 is No, please go on to question 2.4.

What equipment did you hire?

How satisfied were you with the equipment you hired?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Not very satisfied

Do you have any comments about hiring equipment from the Centre?

## Printing and Computers at the Resource Centre

Have you used our print room equipment in the last 12 months?

Yes

No

If the answer to question 3.1 is No, please go to question 3.3.

How satisfied were you with these different elements of the printing service? (Please tick)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not very satisfied
Quality of the printing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Range of paper stock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help received from staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of use of equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Price	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

We are hoping to add new equipment to the print room. What would your group like to use?

(Please tick any you think you might use, or leave blank.)

Sticker printing	<input type="checkbox"/>
T-shirt printing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cloth banner printing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tote-bag printing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keyring making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fridge magnet making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheaper colour printing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments about printing at the Centre?

## The Resource Centre's information service

Have you used our information in the last 12 months, either in the Centre or on the website?  
How useful was it?

	Very useful	Useful	Not very useful	Not used
Advice from front desk worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of useful funders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about running a group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about managing money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about starting a group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about organising an event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trustfunding.org.uk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-centre noticeboards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website news pages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links / referrals to other organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you used the Resource Centre website in the last 12 months?

Yes

No

If the answer to question 4.2 is No, please go on to question 4.5.

Did you find the information you were looking for on our website?

Yes

No

If **No**, please tell us what you were looking for:

## How well is our website designed?

(Please tick to show whether you agree or disagree with the statements.)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not used
It was easy to find information on the website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The search tool was useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use the website as a reference source to help run my group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found the equipment booking form easy to use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found it easy to find printing prices on the website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any comments about our information services or website?

## What you think of the Resource Centre

How many times has your group visited the Centre in the last 12 months?

- One time   
 Two times   
 Three times   
 More than three times

How satisfied were you with the service you received from the Centre?

- Very satisfied   
 Satisfied   
 Not very satisfied

How helpful is the Resource Centre for your group?

(Please tick to show whether you agree or disagree with the statements.)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't comment
The staff are very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is valuable for our group to have equipment hire, printing and information services in one place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We don't have to wait too long at the front desk if we need help from staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The prices are affordable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's the only place we can get the equipment we need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email enquiries receive a prompt response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is easy to get through on the phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Resource Centre is very useful to our group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Do you have any comments about the Resource Centre?**

**Do you find the Resource Centre accessible?**

Yes

No

If the answer to question 5.5 is No, please go on to question 6.

**If the answer to 5.5 is No, please explain why you did not find the Centre accessible.**

## About your group

**How many people are involved in your group?**

(Please tick one box in each row to show how many people are involved in your group in different ways).

	1-10 people	11-25 people	26-100 people	101-500 people	501-1000 people	1000+ people
Core members e.g. committee members; people who come to organising meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteers e.g. people who are usually willing to help out if asked; people who take turns on a work rota	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Members e.g. people who are invited to the AGM; people who are on the mailing list	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beneficiaries e.g. people who use the services you provide; people who come to your public events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Do you have paid staff?**

Yes

No

**Has your group received a grant this year from Brighton & Hove City Council?**

Yes

No

**Is your group based in Brighton & Hove?**

Yes

No

## What does your group do?

Please tick **all** your activities in the middle column, and just **one main purpose** in the right hand column.

	Any activity	Main purpose (tick only one)
Provide a place for members to meet and support each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work to improve your local area or neighbourhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Represent members (e.g. Tenants' association, Trade union)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organise social activities for adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organise social/play activities for children/young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organise sports or healthy lifestyle activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raise funds for a school (e.g. PTA or Friends group)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raise funds to give to charity or good causes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide advice, training, education or support to individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide advice, training or support to groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide housing, health or financial services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide advocacy, mediation or interpreting services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide environmental services (e.g. recycling)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide religious services to a faith community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide non-religious services to a faith community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide services to a minority ethnic community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campaign on environmental issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campaign on other issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create art (including music, drama, poetry, film)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involve members of the community in art projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## In the last 12 months, have you been helped by any of these other agencies?

(Please tick any you have used)

Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trust for Developing Communities (TDC)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black & Minority Ethnic Community Partnership (BMECP)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Base	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impact Initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skills Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Works	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serendipity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hangleton & Knoll Project	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Fed Centre for Independent Living	<input type="checkbox"/>
East Brighton Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>
MOSAIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>

## What is the name of your group?

Please leave blank if you would prefer not to say.

