



Evaluation of Restore's Therapeutic Work Services: A Hybrid Approach to Work and Recovery

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Restore commissioned independent consultants to conduct a review of their three Therapeutic Work Services, Elder Stubbs, The Beehive and Fleet Meadow.

The consultants were asked to evaluate the services against a number of key criteria including level of service user involvement, support to access mainstream opportunities, and promoting recovery and self-management.

A number of research methods were utilised which resulted in over 127 stakeholders being successfully engaged. This included current and former clients, referrers, staff, carers, commissioners and members of the public.

Key Findings

Ex-service users

26% of respondents first attended Restore because they were interested in the activities they could participate in and the skills they could acquire. 21% said that they attended to help with their recovery and 21% attended for the company.

The main benefits to attending Restore were identified as increasing well being/recovery (28%) and socialising (26%). 22% of respondees felt that Restore had been very important in their recovery (awarding it a 9 or 10 out of 10).

31% of people had entered employment since leaving Restore

Current service users

15% of respondents began attending Restore to increase their social networks and 11% wanted a structure to their day. Only 5% identified the desire to develop work skills and gain experience.

The main benefit of attending Restore was clearly identified as socialising (40% of people identified it as their top priority). 54% of people thought Restore was vital to their recovery awarding it a 9 or 10 out of 10 for importance.

31% of current service users aspire to be in part time or full time paid employment within a year, 27% in voluntary work and 17% in education.

Focus groups

4 focus groups were conducted across the three services. Attendees undoubtedly found the Therapeutic Work Services beneficial to their mental health. In particular participants identified the importance of the support they received from staff and the accepting environment.

People identified a number of changes they would like to see, this included an increase in resources, the opportunity to gain more skills, qualifications and work experience, and for Restore to become more commercial or work orientated

Carers

Only two carers completed questionnaires, both thought that Restore was vital to their loved ones mental health

Staff

23% of staff who responded, felt that service users attended Restore to give structure to their day, 18% to be part of a community or to be in a safe environment and 18% to socialise. Only 5% of staff felt that clients attended to help them with their return to employment.

63% of staff felt Restore was vital to service users recovery, awarding it a 9 or 10 out of ten for importance

Referrers

33% of referrers gave their main reason for referring clients to Restore as helping them to get back to work. Only 3% identified socialising as their top priority.

29% of respondents felt that Restore was vital to their clients on going recovery, awarding it a 9 or 10 out of 10 for importance.

Decreasing waiting lists was the main change that referrers would like to see to Restore

Generic Questionnaire

24 questionnaires were completed by other stakeholders. 57% were regular customers of Restore.

Whilst many people are committed to supporting and engaging with people who experience mental health problems, many also identified the reasons for their association with Restore as being the good quality produce (17% named this as their top priority), and the good value and good quality food (17% named it as their 2nd priority and 67% as their fourth priority)

57% of people awarded Restore the highest mark (out of 10) seeing it as vital to their community. 36% of people (the highest percentage) would like to see Restore extend the opening hours of their services (the shop and café).

Commissioners

Commissioners valued Restore as being an integral part of the mental health services offered in Oxfordshire. They have great respect for Restore and value their services highly. They are particularly proud of Restore's efforts to increase their links with BME communities

Discussion

Without question, across all the stakeholder groups that we engaged with, Restore is seen as offering a highly valued service.

When current and former clients are asked to identify the benefits of attending Restore they reflect on how Restore is able to support them in maintaining their wellbeing, and enabling them to socialise in a non judgemental and supportive environment whilst obtaining new skills.

Across all the relevant questionnaires (former and current service users, carers, referrers and staff), Restore is seen as being important to individuals on-going recovery from mental illness

During the review we identified a possible disparity between service users aspirations to be in some form of employment within a year (31%), supporting clients on their journey to employment as the driving factor for referrals (33%) and the low priority given by staff to employment (5% identified employment as a reason for clients attending Restore).

Recommendations:

7 recommendations were made as a result of this review:

1. Creating opportunities for learning amongst service users and staff

Supporting service users and staff to visit each other's projects is a way of enabling learning to take place and to encourage, challenge and motivate each other

2. Addressing the volunteer pathway

There is currently a policy of having a 3-month gap between receiving a service and volunteering within the service. Clear volunteer and induction policies and training programmes will help to reduce the requirement for this gap

3. Retaining an employment focus

Enabling clients to make a transition to employment by increasing the volunteering and employment opportunities within Restore itself, as well as ensuring that benefits advice and better off calculations as well as career advice and referral into employment services is available

4. Enabling individuals to engage with their community

As well as increasing volunteering and employment opportunities within Restore, it is also important to enable individuals to pursue these opportunities within their own communities.

5. Creating and valuing a buddying system

Mentioned by both service users and staff during this review has been the idea of a buddying system. Currently a scheme is informally and partly in place, but we would suggest formalising and valuing this system

6. Encouraging greater service user involvement

During this review, it was noted that the level of service user involvement was apparent but that there is great potential to increase this from daily involvement to senior managerial decision-making

7. Creating a social enterprise run by service users

Restore has great potential to becoming a Social Enterprise, since it needs to generate revenue for sustainability but has equally important social aims to improve the opportunities available to people experiencing mental health issues. Examples where service users can develop Social Enterprises are given

Introduction

Restore, a provider of services for people who experience mental health problems in Oxfordshire, commissioned independent consultants to review their three therapeutic work services. This report is the result of that review

The consultants engaged by Restore are Stephany Carolan an independent consultant who specialises in the mental health, recovery, social inclusion and employment agendas; and Raise MH Ltd a wholly service user led social enterprise that delivers consultancy and training services nationally

Stephany led on defining the review process and research questions, and writing the final report. Raise Mental Health Ltd led on developing the numerous questionnaires, conducting all the field work including facilitating the focus groups, and collating and analysing the resultant data

It is our belief that this combination of skills and experience has resulted in a thorough, sensitive and credible process which has produced an informative report that includes recommendations for supporting Restore to move forward

Evaluation criteria

The key features of the SCIE Therapeutic Work Services hybrid approach Restore was evaluated against were that they offered:

1. A service to a wide range of people
2. High level of service user involvement
3. Supports to access mainstream opportunities
4. Person centred individually tailored support
5. Ability to engage with under represented and diverse groups
6. Services that promote recovery and self management
7. Innovation in service design and delivery
8. A focus on value and meaningful work
9. Support in employment

The core objectives of the evaluation was to evaluate the Therapeutic Work Services so that Restore can:

- Assess their activity and outcomes against the recommendation in the SCIE report¹
- Assess the impact of having an integrated IPS worker on people's uptake of employment and training opportunities
- Identify changes that would make the services more effective
- Ensure that commissioners are fully aware of the benefits of the Therapeutic Work Services as they compile their tender

¹ [‘Supporting People in Accessing Meaningful Work’, Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\), June 2008](#)

In order to ensure this was a comprehensive evaluation that engages as widely as possible with stakeholders, Restore requested that the researchers consult ex and current service users; commissioners, referrers and potential referrers; members of the community including customers, allotment holders and festival participants.

Methodology

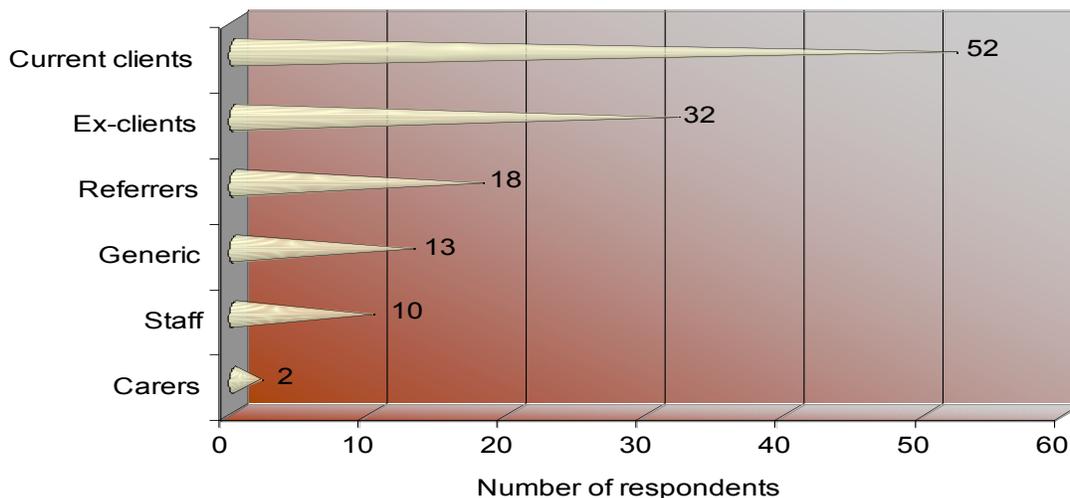
The review combined a number of research methods including questionnaires, telephone interviews, focus groups and 1 to 1 interviews

Restore provided contact details for ex service users, carers and commissioners. Questionnaires were made available at all three Therapeutic Services, and service users were encouraged to complete them. Staff were all given questionnaires and encouraged to complete them. Questionnaires were distributed by Restore to their contacts within local CMHT's and other referral agencies. Questionnaires were also made available to a variety of stakeholders – such as customers at the Beehive café and neighbouring allotment holders. A Freepost address was provided by Raise to help maximise the number of returns.

Four focus groups for current service users were facilitated across the three services, two being held at Fleet Meadows, to accommodate the differing attendance days of current members

Questions were emailed to commissioners and telephone interviews booked

In all over 127 people engaged with the process, 127 returning questionnaires and 27 participating in the 4 focus groups. The numbers of people completing questionnaires is shown below.



All the fieldwork for this review was conducted by Raise Mental Health Ltd, ensuring that people who have experience of accessing mental health services drove the process. Raise Mental Health Ltd also led on the collation and evaluation of the data; again this ensured that the service user perspective was at the fore of this work

Key Findings

The demographical information available from the current and ex-client questionnaire indicates that the gender representation for the current client survey is as we would expect, but for the ex-client survey females disproportionately completed and returned questionnaires.

The table below compares data provided by Restore indicating gender breakdown for clients with responses from both questionnaires

Gender

	Restore Data	Current client survey data	Ex-client survey data
Male	74%	76%	59%
Female	26%	24%	41%

We have also compared data from Restore on the ethnicity of their clients with the information from the questionnaires. This indicates that the survey respondents were representative of the Restore client population

Direct comparisons of the age data are more difficult because we used different categories to those used by Restore. But where comparisons can be made (under 25 our data indicates 6% and Restore data 9%; over 50 our data 31%, and Restore 32%; 25 – 50 our data 61% and Restore data 62%) the categories are in line

Age data from the questionnaires:

Age	Number of respondents	%
Under 24	3	6
25-34	13	25
35-49	19	37
50-59	10	19
60+	7	13

Age data from Restore (2007 – 2008)

<18	0	0%
18-24	23	9%
25-29	26	10%
30-39	60	24%
40-49	68	27%
50-59	59	23%
60-64	9	4%
Over 65	10	4%

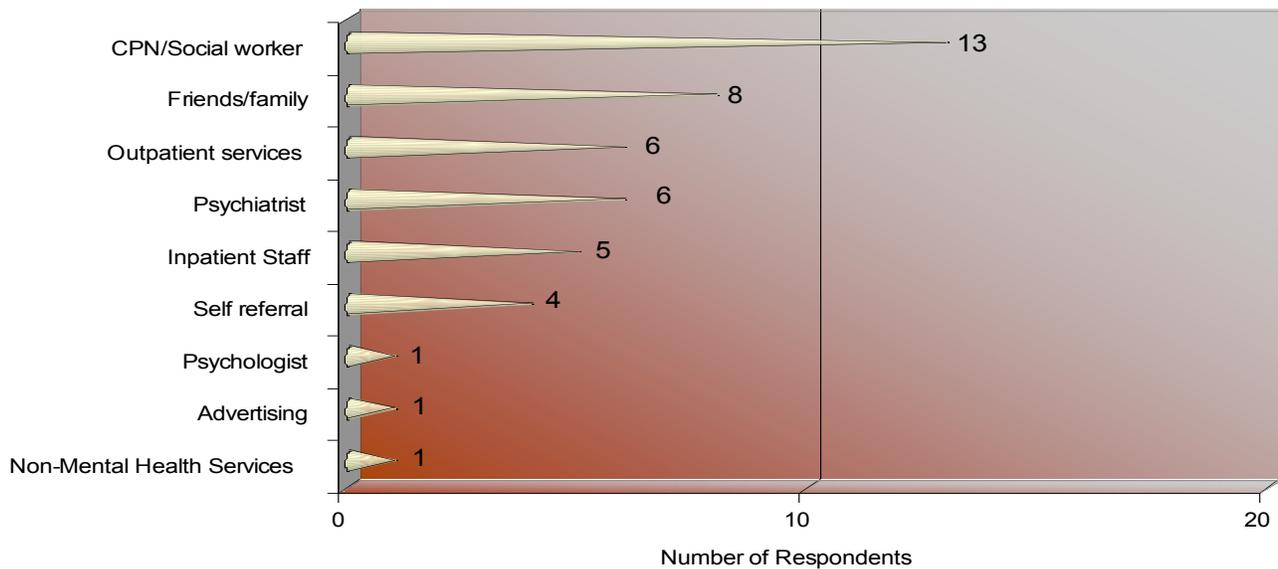
As part of the questionnaires for ex and current clients we collated information on the postcode areas that people lived in. This will enable Restore to identify where geographical gaps might be in attendance

Postcode area of residence

Post code area	Ex service users	Current service users
OX1	2	21
OX2	2	7
OX3	2	6
OX4	5	8
OX5	-	1
OX7	1	-
OX10	2	-
OX11	4	-
OX12	3	-
OX14	1	-
OX16	2	-
RG4	1	-
RG9	3	4

We asked clients (both ex and current) where they first heard about Restore. The graph below shows the Responses from current clients. A comparison from ex-clients (not shown) indicates that more clients are beginning to hear about Restore through inpatient services

Graph where current service users first heard about the service



We asked respondents how long they had been attending Restore. The results are below.

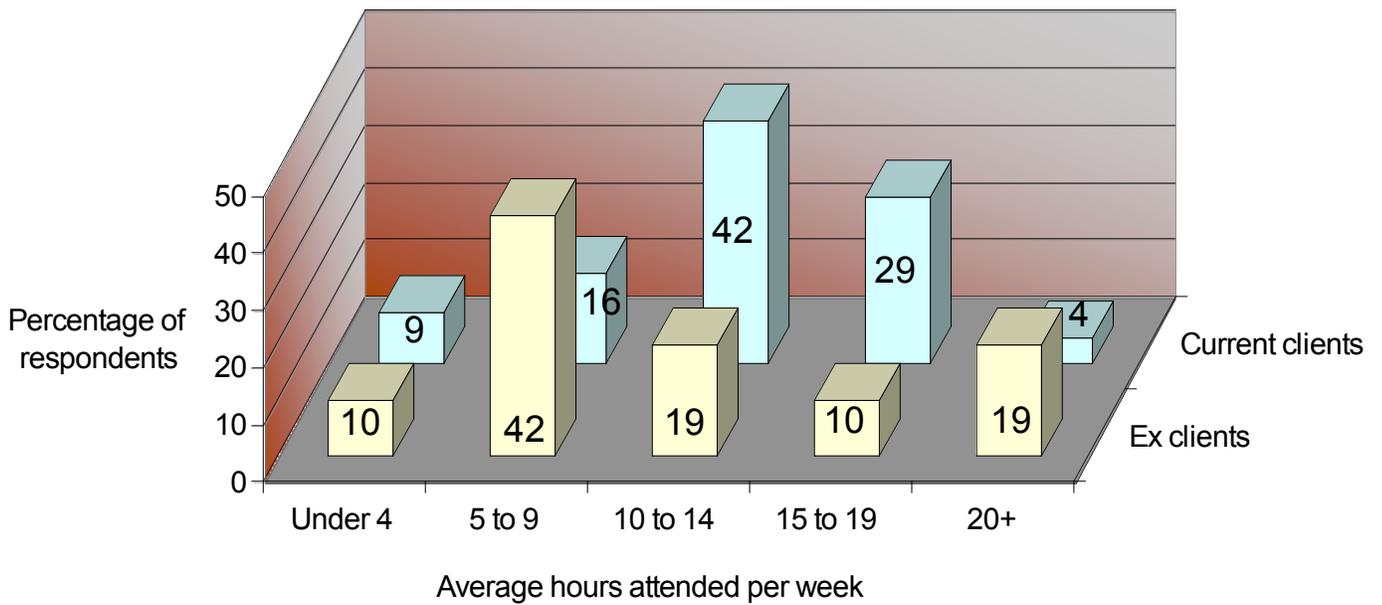
Attendance in years

	Current Service Users	Ex Service Users
Under 6 months	17%	48.8%
6 months to 1 yr	10%	19.5%
1 to 2 years	15%	16%
2 to 3 years	6%	0%
3+ years	48%	16%
Unknown	4%	0%

48% of current service users have been there for 3 or more years; where as 48.4% of service users attended the service for less then 6 months

The number of hours that clients attended is recorded below.

Hours people attend:



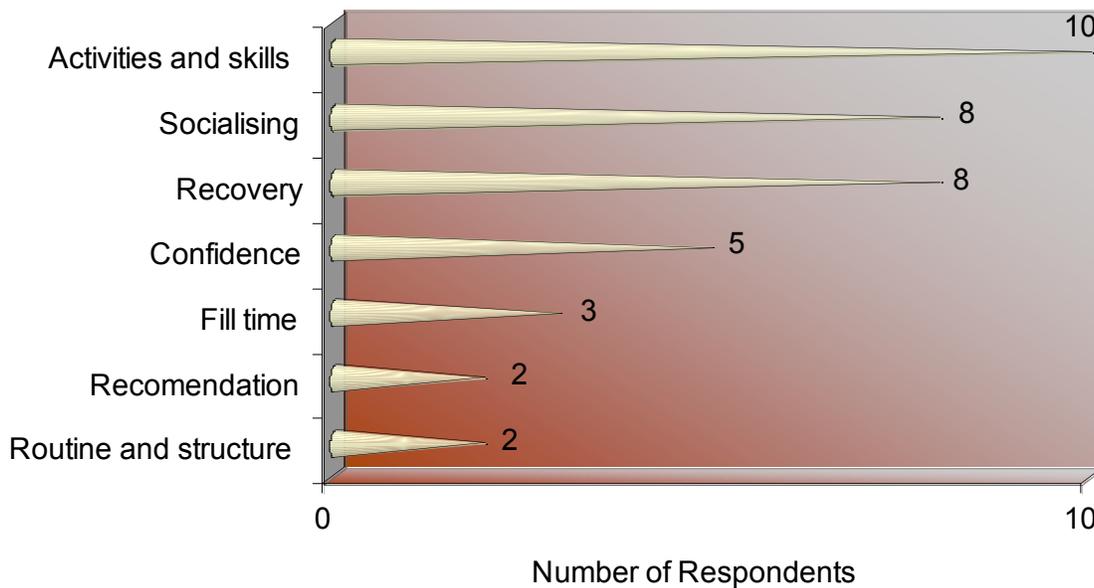
Questionnaire aimed at ex-clients

32 ex clients of Restore completed questionnaires

Gender		Age range	
Male	59%	Under 24	6%
Female	41%	25 – 34	16%
Service attended		35 – 49	34%
Elder Stubbs	18%	50 – 59	34%
Fleet Meadow	41%	60+	9%
Beehive	41%		

When asked their reason for attending Restore, respondents answered:

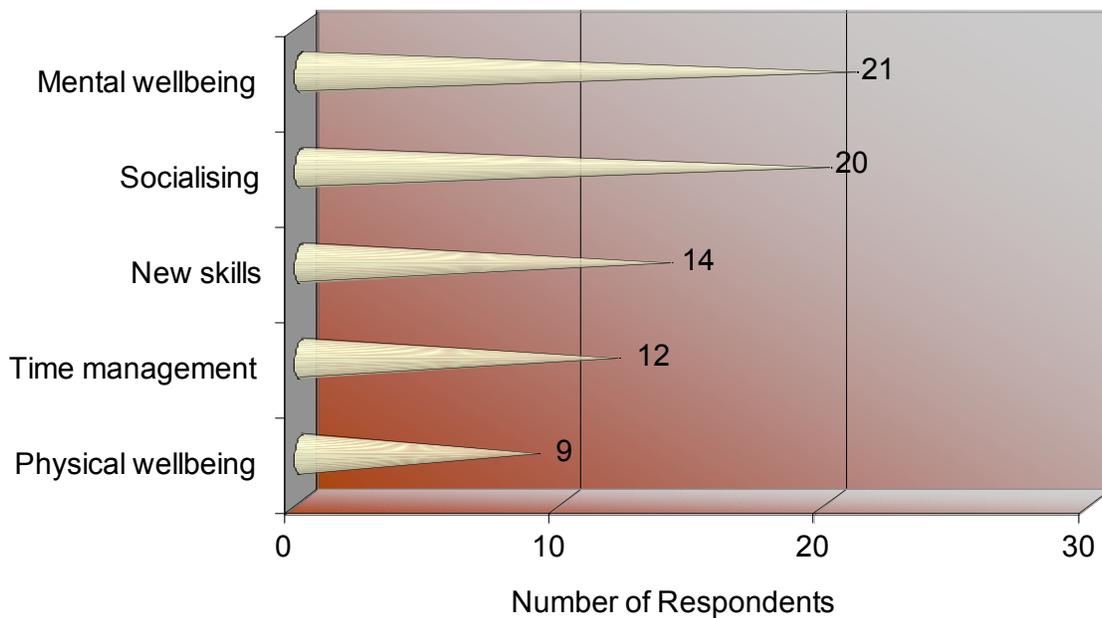
Reason for attending Restore?



26% of respondents first attended Restore because they were interested in the activities they could participate in and the skills they could acquire. 21% said they attended to help with their recovery and 21% attended for the company. 13% felt it would help them with their confidence

Responsees were asked 'what was the main benefits of attending Restore for you?' They were asked to identify 5 benefits placing them in order of importance

The main benefit of attending Restore?



1. helped me to cope in being with more than one person
2. Helped me regain self-confidence
3. Learn new skills
4. Ability to go out without my husband
5. Meet and become friends with new people.

1. Structure to my day / part of my week
2. Friendship
3. Creativity
4. Progression from the Warneford
5. Increased levels of concentration.

1. Non-judgmental group
2. Variety of activities
3. Time for rest & rehab,
4. Good food
5. Good environment.

1. Not feeling isolated
2. No pressure
3. Caring staff
4. Understanding
5. Could be myself - no need to pretend that I was happy

1. I found someone who cared for the poor and destitute of society.
2. It being a physical world, gave me a hands on experience of a different way of life.
3. The people became my best companions,
4. Through my daily tasks of finding out about life.
5. I will never forget the people and dogs of the staff.

The main benefits identified by ex clients to attending Restore were increasing their wellbeing/recovery (28%) and being able to socialise (26%)

When asked how important Restore had been to their ongoing recovery (rated between 1 – 10 with 10 being “vitaly important” and 1 being “not really important”) people responded in the following way:

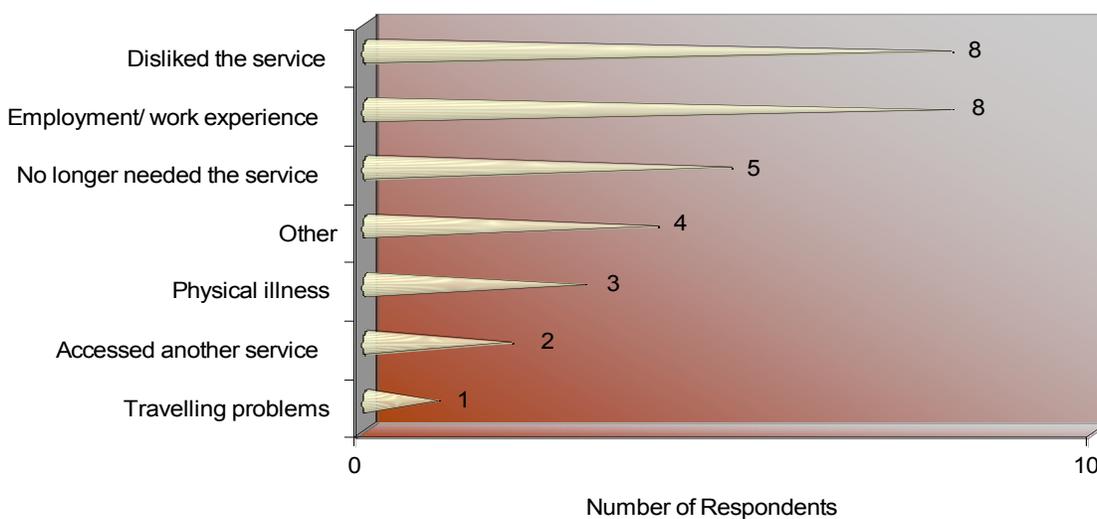
How important has Restore been to your ongoing recovery?



71% of people felt Restore have been very important in their recovery (6 and above), with 19% saying it had been “vitaly important’ (awarding a 10)

When asked why they had left the service, respondents answered in the following way:

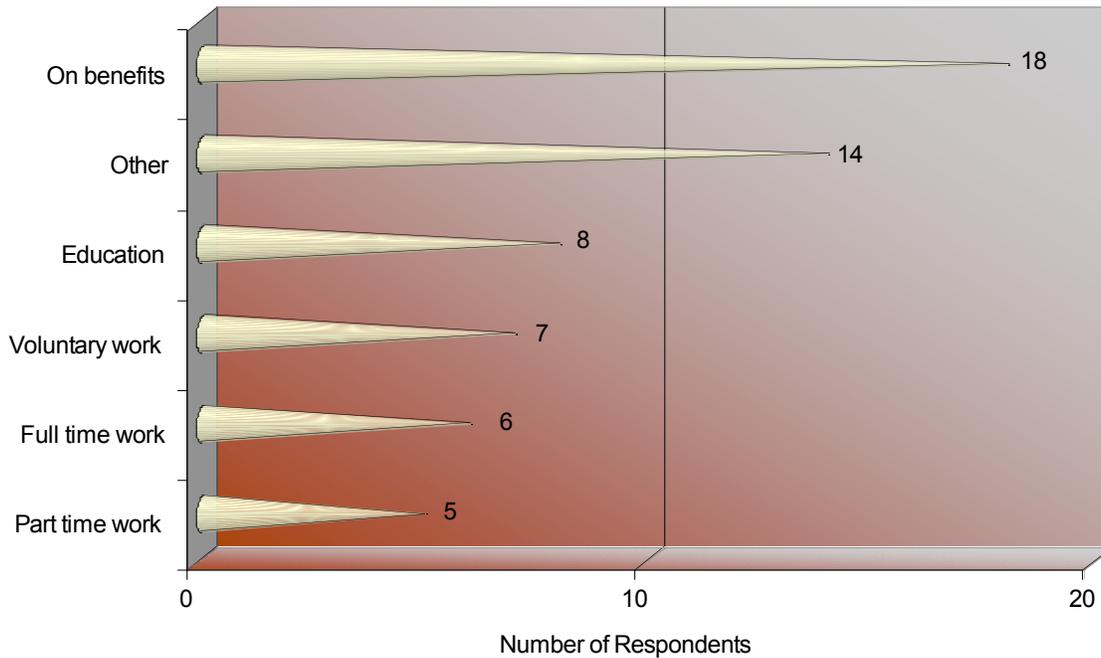
Why did you stop going to Restore?



26% had entered employment, and 26% disliked the service. 16% left because they felt they no longer needed the service

Asked what they had done since leaving Restore, respondents replied:

What have you done since leaving Restore?

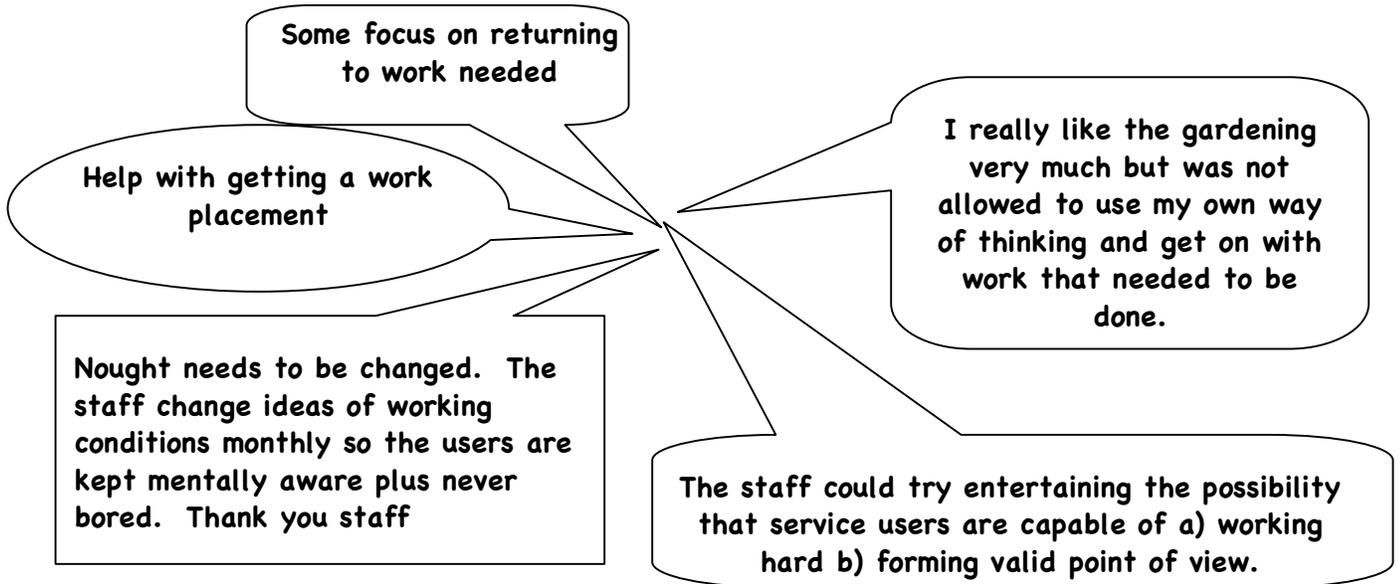


31% had entered employment, training and/or education and 31% had remained on benefits

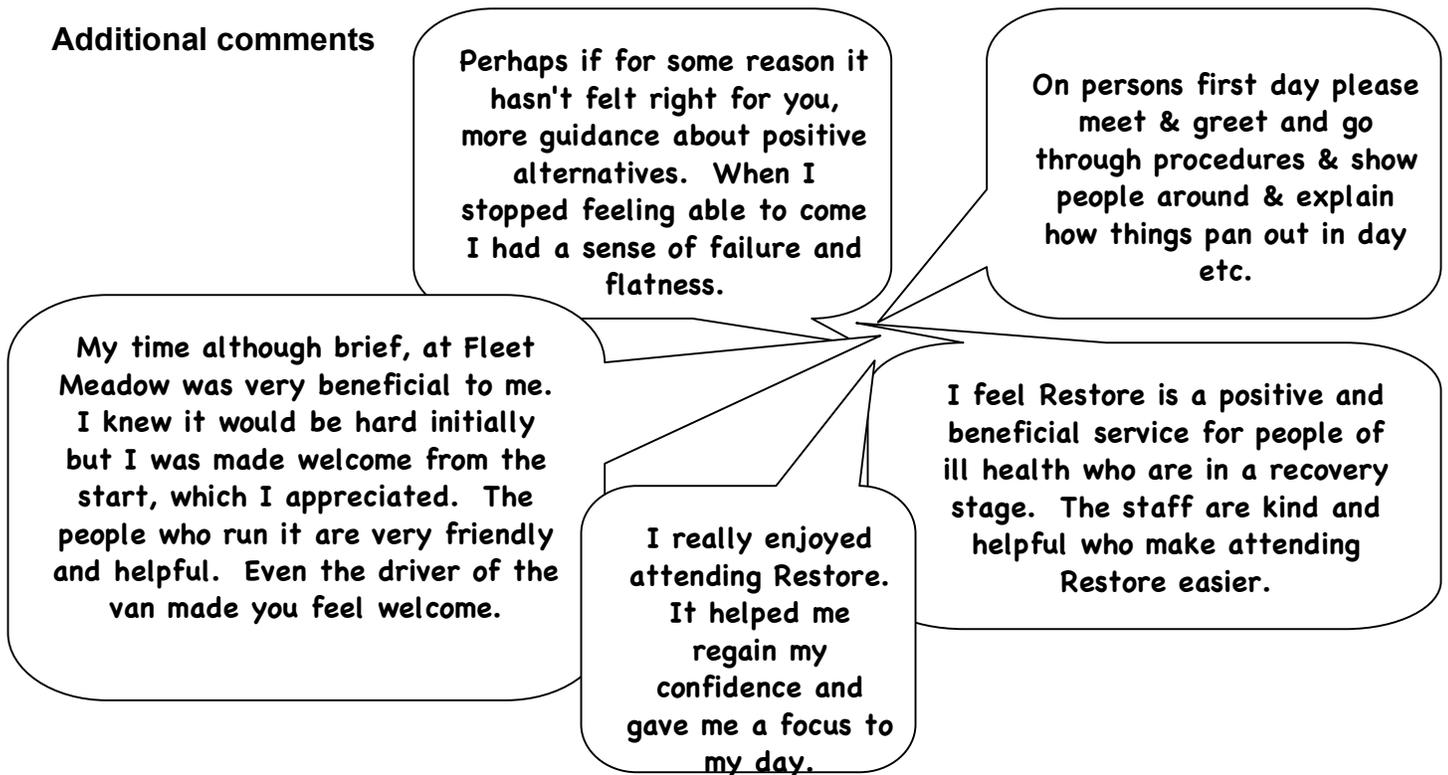
What one thing would you like to change about Restore?

When asked what one thing they would change about Restore 25% of people said 'nothing', 16% said that they would like more resources, 19% improved activity and 6% more support to move into employment.

What one thing would you like to change about Restore?



Additional comments



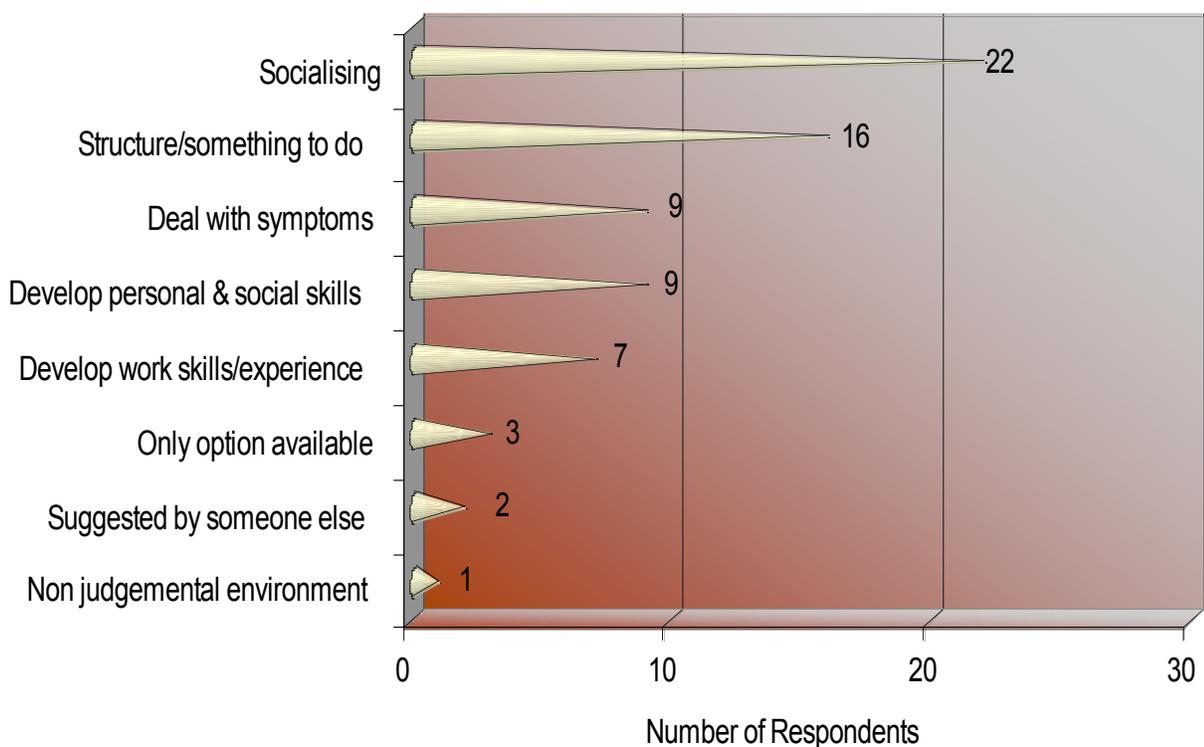
Questionnaire aimed at current service users

50 current service users completed questionnaires out of a total of 137 clients across all three services – a 36% response rate.

Gender		Age range	
Male	76%	Under 24	6%
Female	24%	25 – 34	25%
Service attended		35 – 49	37%
Elder Stubbs	14%	50 – 59	19%
Fleet Meadow	44%	60+	13%
Beehive	42%		

Why did you first start attending Restore?

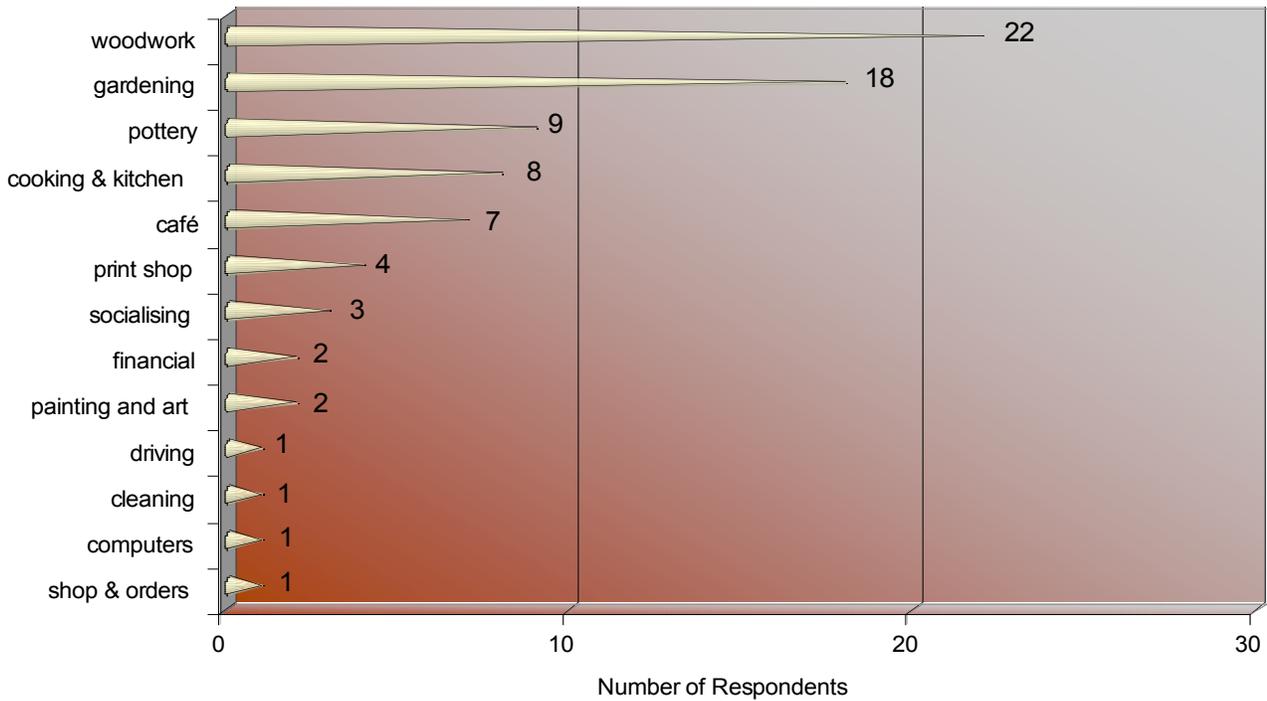
Asked why they first started attending Restore 15% of respondents suggested they wanted to increase their social networks and 11% wanted a structure to their day



Only 5% of respondees identified the desire to develop work skills and gain experience

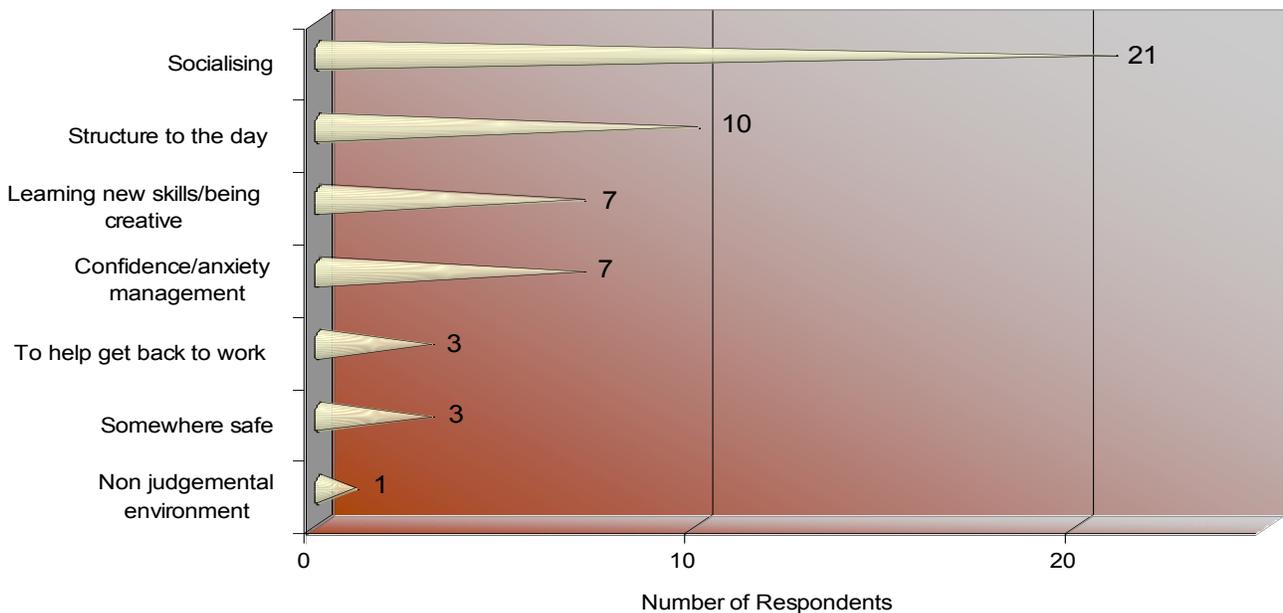
When asked what the main activities were that they do at Restore respondents answered in the following ways:

What are your main activities at Restore?



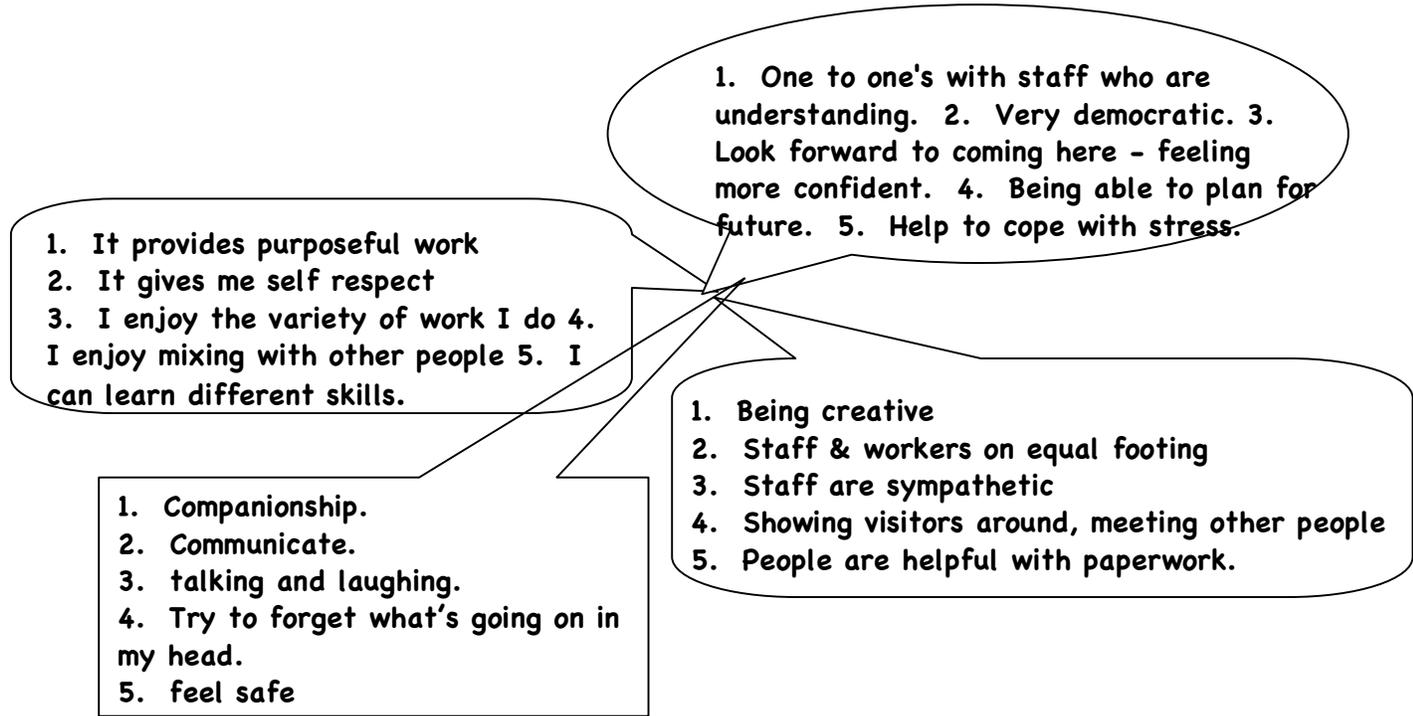
When asked what the main benefits of attending Restore were (people were asked to select up to five benefits placing them into order of priority), all the top three priorities were identified as socialising

Main benefit of attending Restore



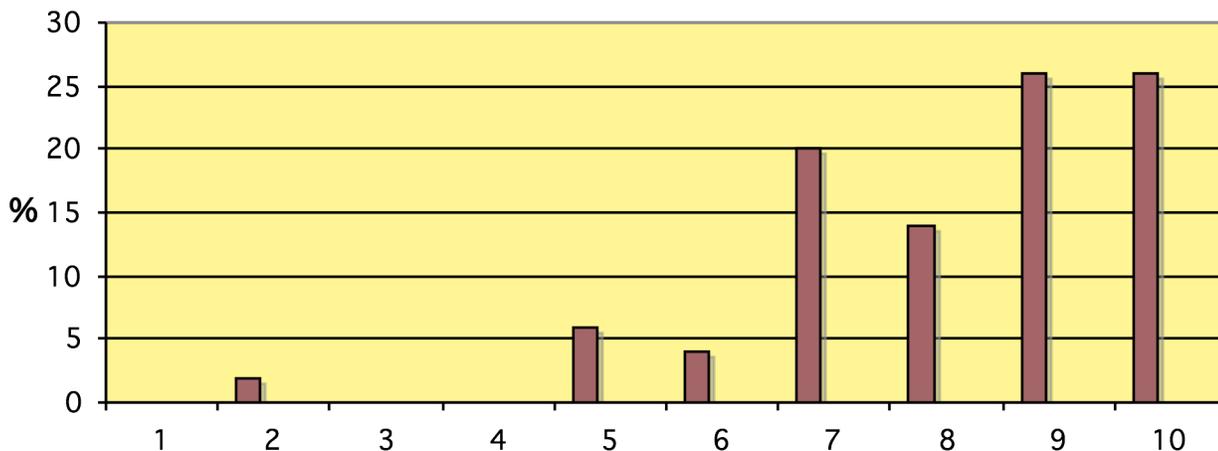
For both current and ex clients socialising scored very highly. For current users socialising was the most popular response in each of the top 3 out of 5 benefits identified. Getting back to work was mentioned by 3 current clients as their main benefit for attending Restore

What are the 5 main benefits of attending Restore?



We asked the question “how important would you say Restore is to your on-going recovery?”(Rated between 1 – 10 with 10 being “vitaly important” and 1 being “not really important”) people responded in the following way:

How Important Would You Say Restore Is To Your Recovery?



Over 50% indicated a 9 or 10, suggesting that Restore was vitally important in their recovery

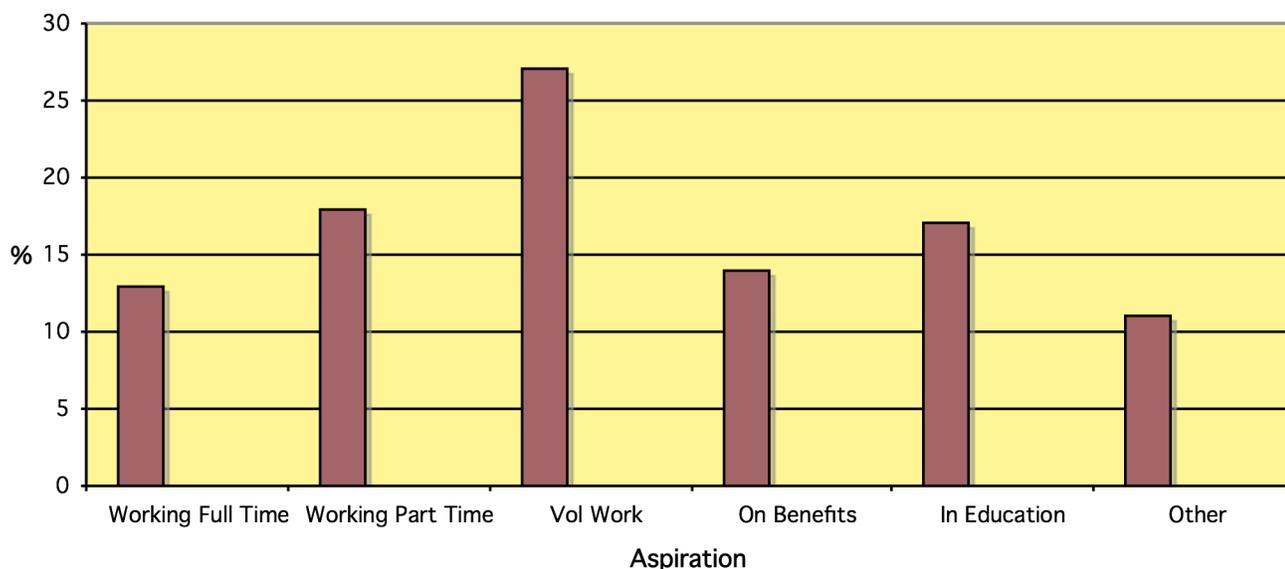
We then asked “if you could change one thing about Restore, what would it be?” 31% of people said “nothing”, they were completely satisfied, and 31% of people didn’t answer. Amongst those that did identify something that they would like to change, 10% wanted improved building space, 8% to be paid or to get an increase in the attendance allowance, 6% to open at weekends or increased hours and 4% (2 replies) suggested the planning meetings were not very useful

If you could change one thing about Restore, what would it be?



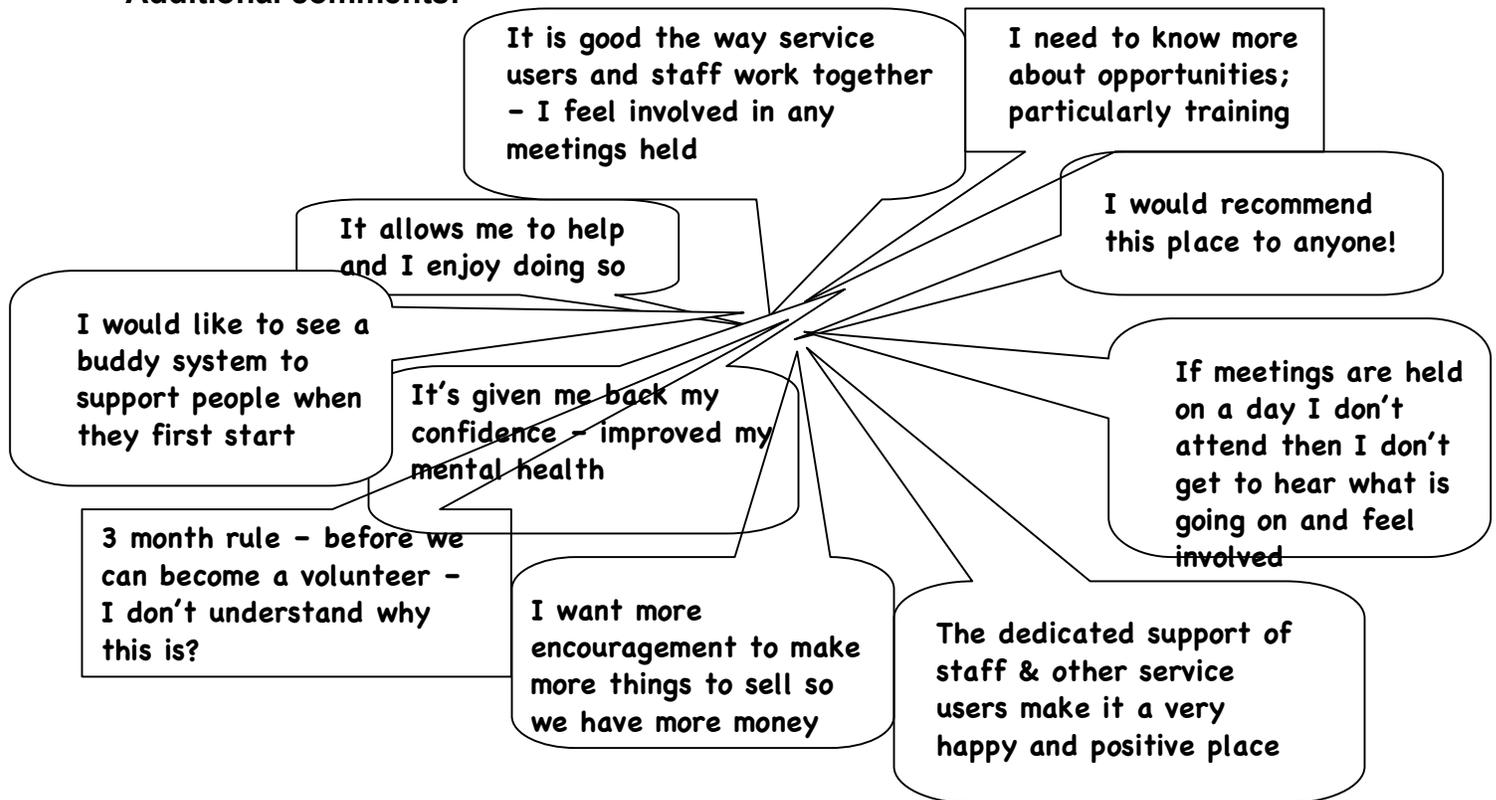
Finally, we asked the question “What would you be aspiring to be doing in a years time?”

What would you aspire to be doing in a years time?



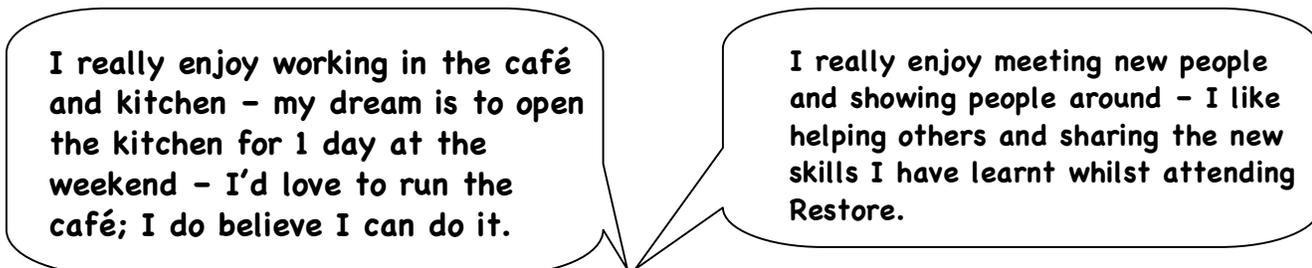
31% of people aspired to be in part or full time employment within a year, 27% in voluntary work with 17% wanting to go in to education.

Additional comments:



Focus Groups

A full write up if the four focus group is available as Appendix One



All those who attended the focus groups undoubtedly find the service beneficial to their mental health, they all emphasised the importance of attending.

There was some disharmony amongst those who attended Elder Stubbs and Fleet Meadow about the differences in the services provided at the Beehive and the fact they were expected to travel as opposed to the services coming to them. This included; access to IT equipment,

vocational support (LEaP), and differing equipment available. However, this was contradicted by the staff we spoke to.

None of the service users we spoke to attended 5 days per week – vocalising that according to what days they attended, really impacted on what level of involvement they accessed. Some said they had never heard of the planning meetings at Restore, but coincidentally these happened on days they did not access the service. Others complained of too many planning meetings!!!

Many of those who attended the focus groups mentioned they would like to become volunteers for Restore and perceived it to be a 'step up' in their journey of increasing wellness. Some also mentioned the idea of wanting to support 'new starters' – to provide peer support (Buddying) but to date this has not evolved within the service.

Specific comments included: - where do you see Restore in 2 years time?

- ❖ “I would love to see Restore franchise their services – become available to more people.”
- ❖ “I would to see more service users at management level – making more decisions and helping others.”
- ❖ “We need more variety here – something more challenging, more stimulating.”
- ❖ “I would like to see bigger amounts of produce being sold – different products available in the shop so we could start to expand our services.”
- ❖ “For me, Restore is like a 'pick and mix' there are different things I can try without any pressure. ****picture attached to the end of the write up in Appendix One to support this***

“I would love to become a volunteer – but I have been told their needs to be a 3 month cooling off period before I can do this.”

Specific comments included: - where do you see yourself in 2 years time?

- ❖ “I want to stay the same as I am”
- ❖ “I would love to be in paid employment – working as a mechanic.”
- ❖ “I would like to be making things at Restore independently.”
- ❖ “I want to be in paid employment – I'd love to be working either in IT or in a bookshop.”
- ❖ “I want to be receiving an income – I want to be independent, earning a wage by working on a building site.”

All service users who attended the focus groups agreed that Restore provided a non judgemental, supportive environment – a feeling of safety and acceptance. Everyone reiterated the importance of having somewhere to go; something to get up for in the morning.

Concerns which were expressed at all three projects included: -

- ❖ Need to decrease the waiting lists and referral time

- ❖ Need to promote more independence within the service
- ❖ Need for more activities/resources – particularly within winter months
- ❖ Apparent lack of staffing and monies

Combined responses – for all three centres

Question: The good things about Restore

Support from staff/Accepting environment	20
Structure to day/Variety of activities	10
Training, new skills/stepping stone to employment	10
Socialising	8
Developing personal skills, i.e.: confidence/Motivation	6
Food	3

“I have never been in an environment before that is so understanding and accepting of who I am.”

Question: Things we would like to change

Increase in Funding/resources – i.e.: bigger premises/equipment	18
Gaining more skill/qualifications/work experience	13
Restore to be more commercial – more work orientated	7
More activities/trips out	3
Increase in staffing levels	2
Paid employment at Restore	2
To allow more members	1
Longer hours/open at weekends	1

Question: How involved we feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved:

Average: 6.5

Questionnaires aimed at carers

Only two questionnaires were received from carers. When asked what the main benefits were to attending Restore one carer responded; “It gives me one day a week when I don't have to worry about keeping my husband occupied & I can go out & do something with my friends.”

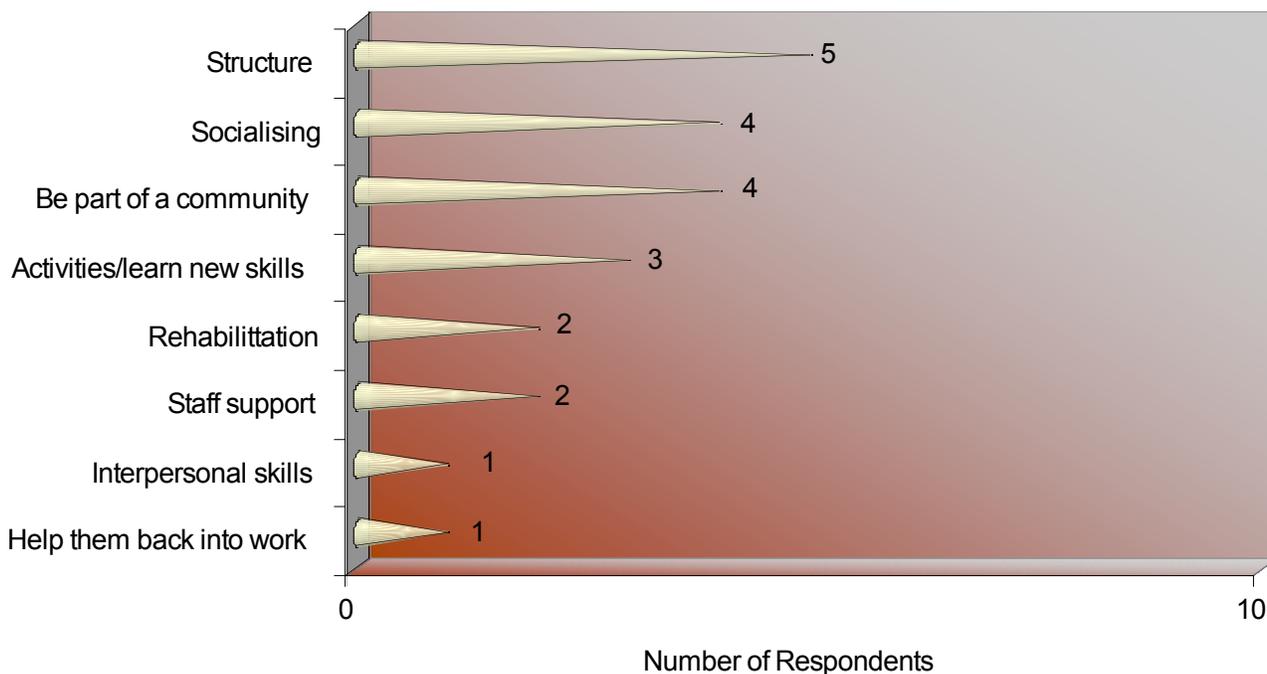
Both carers felt that Restore was vital in their loved ones recovery and out of a scale of 10 each gave a 9 and a 10 for levels of satisfaction with the service the Restore offers. Both stated that if their loved ones did not attend Restore they could think of no other place they could go. Neither carer could identify a change that they would like Restore to make.

Questionnaires Aimed at Staff

11 out of 17 members of staff completed questionnaires; 3 from the Beehive, 3 from Elder Stubbs and 5 from Fleet Meadow.

We asked the question “Why do you feel that service users come to Restore?”

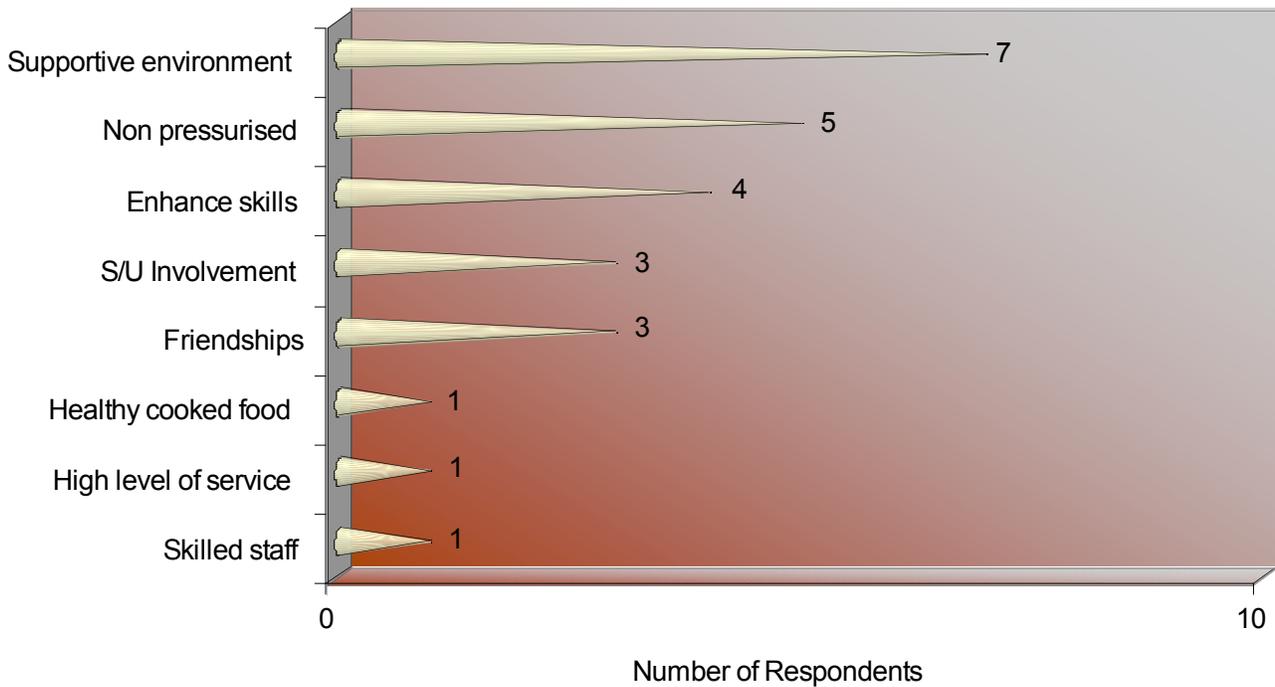
Why do you feel that service users come to Restore?



23% of staff felt that service users attended Restore to give them structure to their day. 18% to be part of a community or to be in a safe environment and 18% to socialise. Only 5% of staff felt that clients attended to help them with their return to employment

When asked what it was that Service Users valued about Restore the responses given below were offered

What do you think service users value about Restore?



What do you think Service Users value about Restore?

A relaxed and friendly atmosphere. People who don't judge and will listen if need be. Structure & occupation.

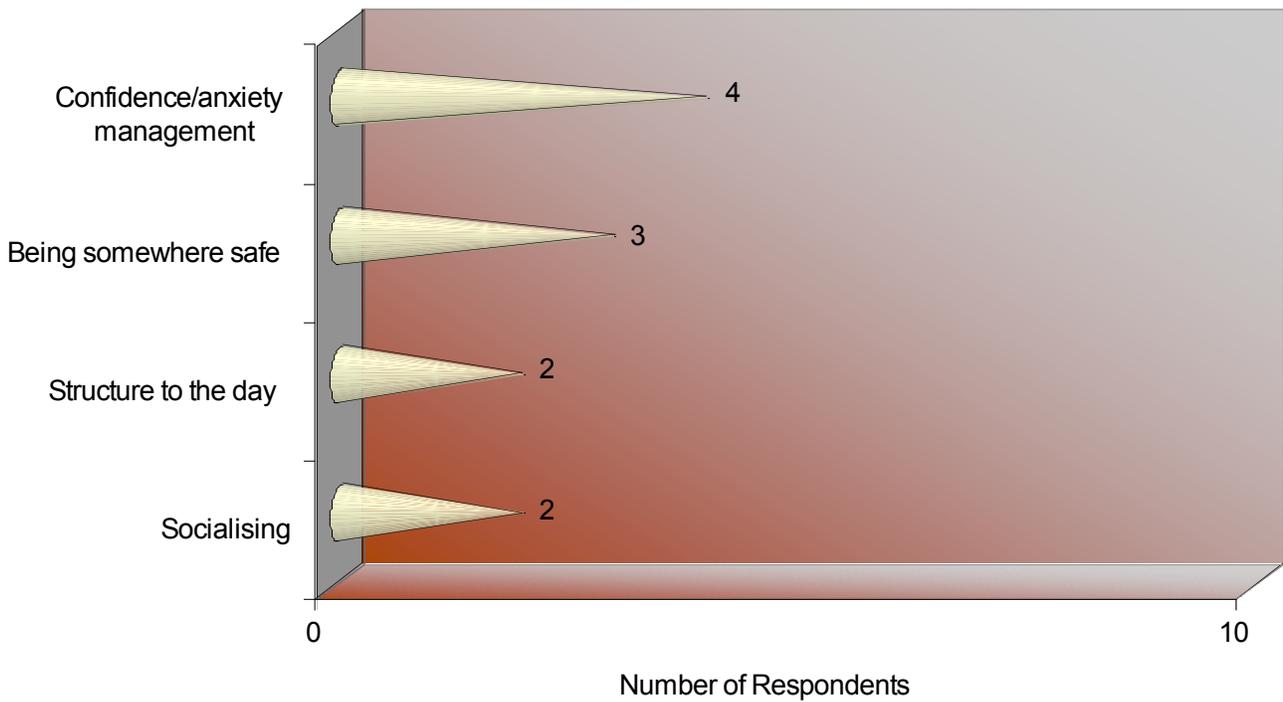
Friendship - many people use the project socially. Involvement - they begin to take responsibility and see that work at ES could lead to employment. They feel welcome and this helps to Restore self-confidence.

A safe haven, friendly faces, strong support/, freedom to be ones self, choice of tasks, good fresh food cooked daily, a calm relaxed venue which opens the door and welcomes everyone! Non judgmental!

The security & feeling of being safe & not being judged. They learn not just new skills ie, woodwork pottery, gardening but social skills as some users have difficulty communicating.

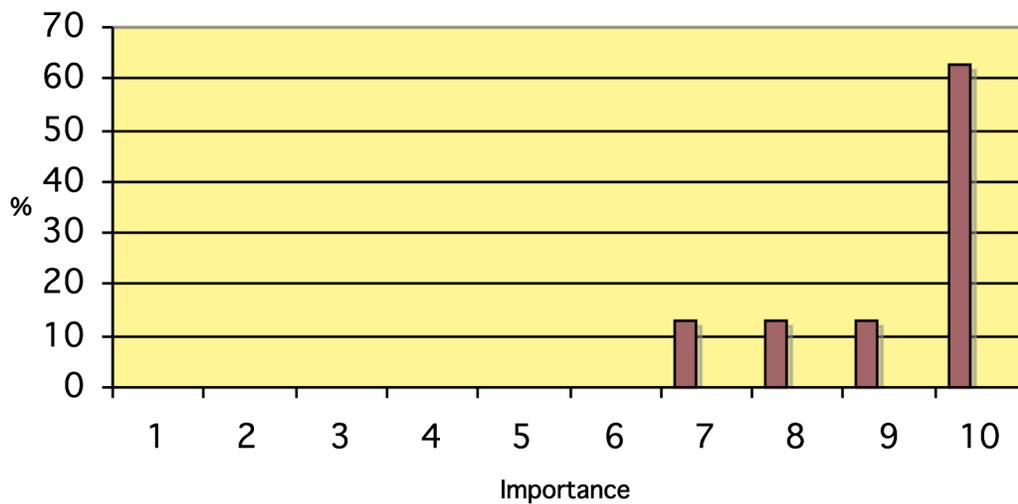
We then asked: “What are the main benefits of Restore for Service Users?” (most important factor first). Staff identified the following as their top priorities

What are the main benefits of Restore for Service Users?



When asked how important Restore was in Service users' on going recovery, the following indications were give (rated between 1 – 10 with 10 being “vitaly important” and 1 being “not really important”):

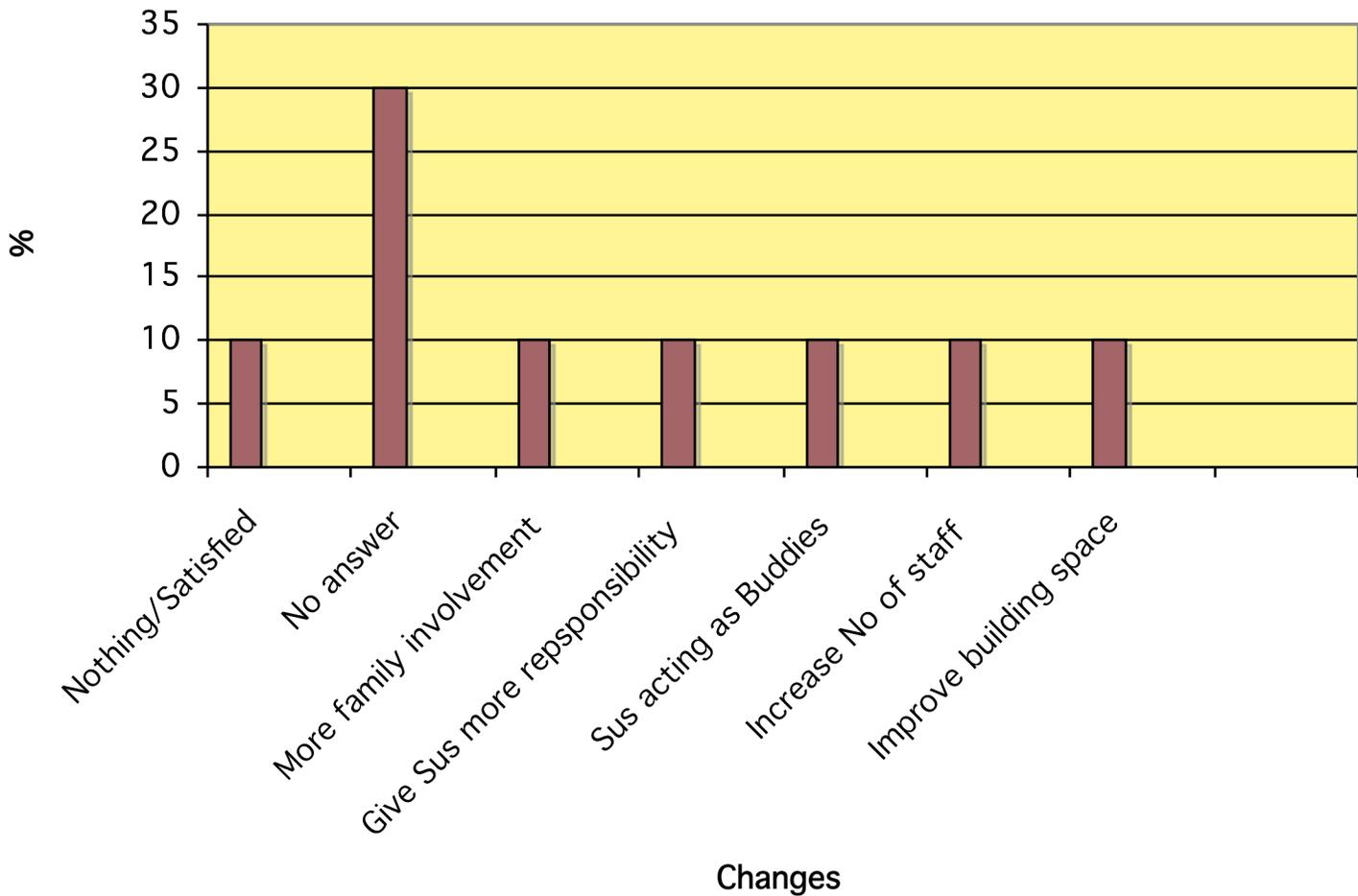
How Imprtant is Restore in Service Users' Ongoing recovery



63% of staff awarded the top mark, suggesting that Restore was vital in service users recovery

When asked to identify one thing they would change about Restore, staff answered in the following way:

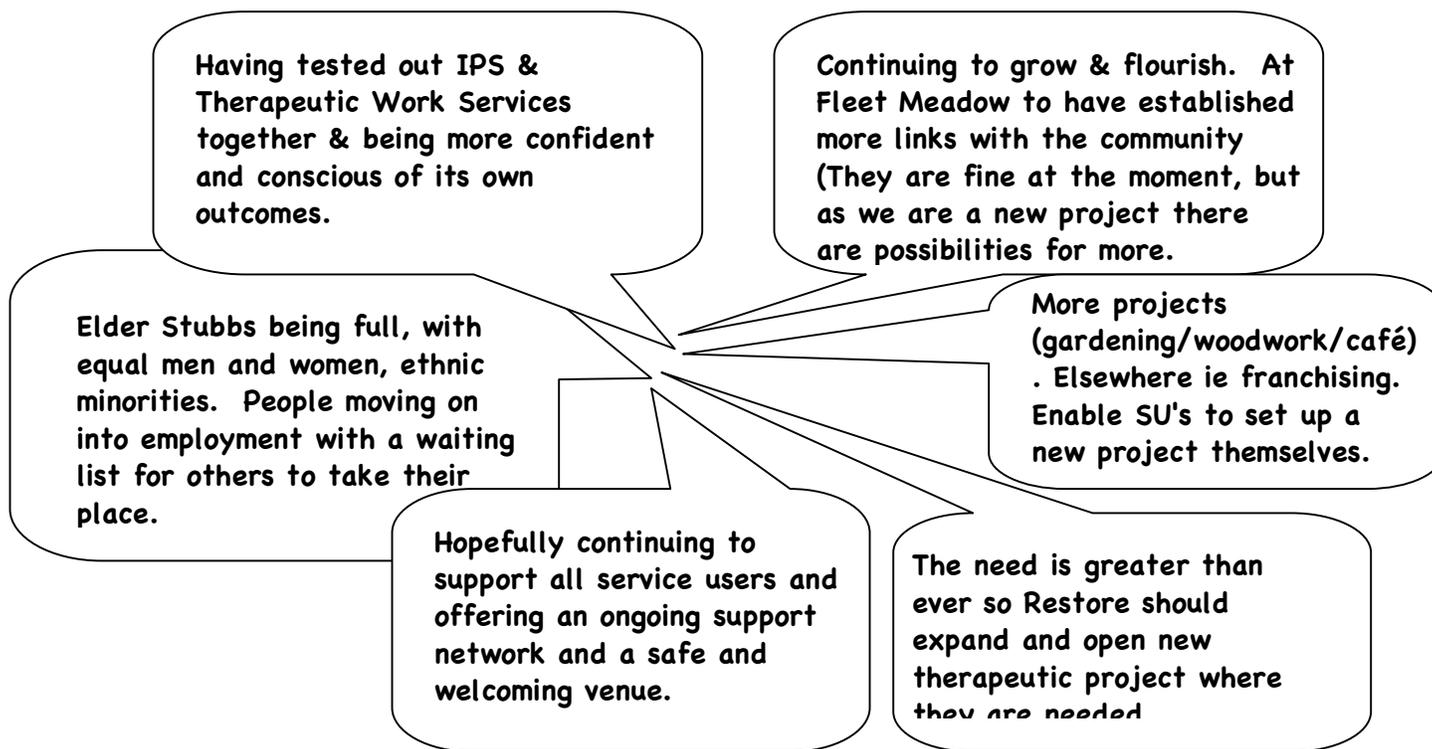
What One Thing About Restore Would You Change?



Disappointingly, 30% of staff that responded were not able to identify one improvement they would like to see in Restore

Finally, we asked the question “Where do you see Restore in a years’ time?” The answers given are below:

“Where do you see Restore in a years’ time?”



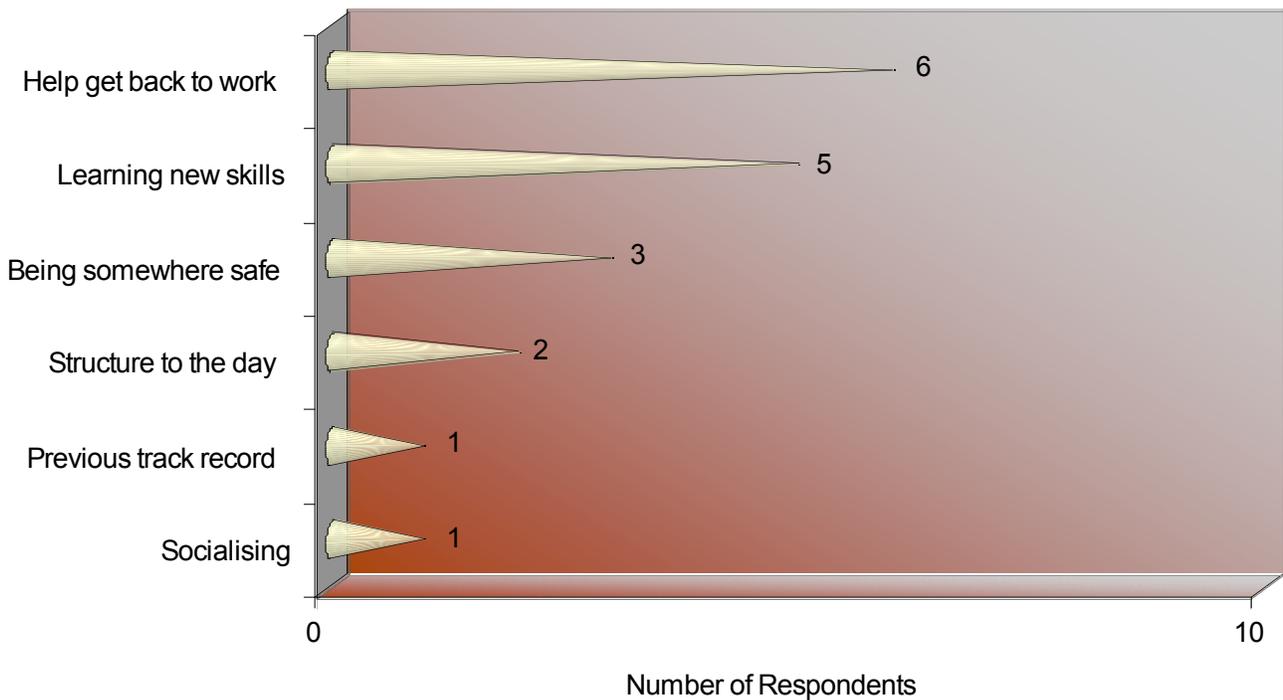
Questionnaires Aimed at Referrers

18 questionnaires were returned by referrers. The majority (10) from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. The 16 respondents who had referred into services had done so evenly across the three Therapeutic Work Services

One respondent who had not referred clients to any of the services said that Restore was “not an option that occurs to me a lot of the time when I am seeing clients”.

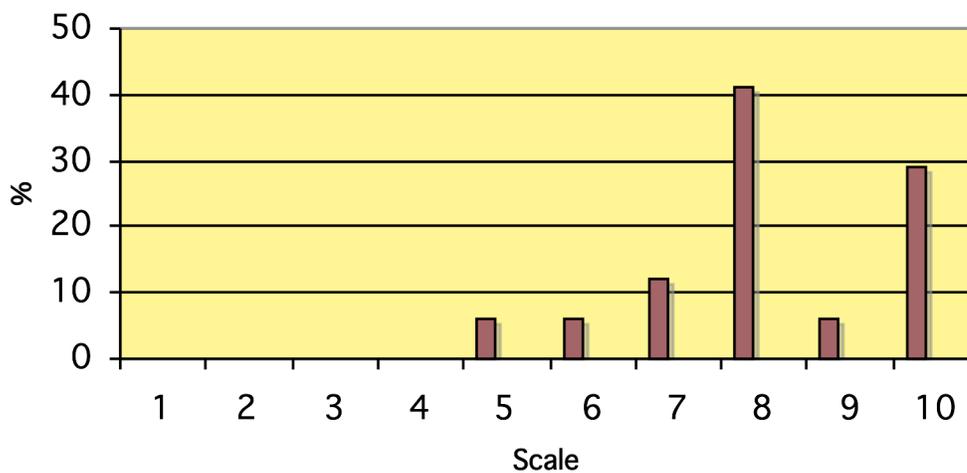
When asked what their main reasons were for referring service users to Restore, 33% (the highest number) gave their top priority as helping them get back to work. Only 3% identified socialising as their top priorities

Main reason for referring clients to Restore?



We asked the question “how important would you say Restore is to your clients ongoing recovery?”(rated between 1 – 10 with 10 being “vitally important” and 1 being “not really important”) people responded in the following way:

The Importance of Restore to Clients On-going Recovery?

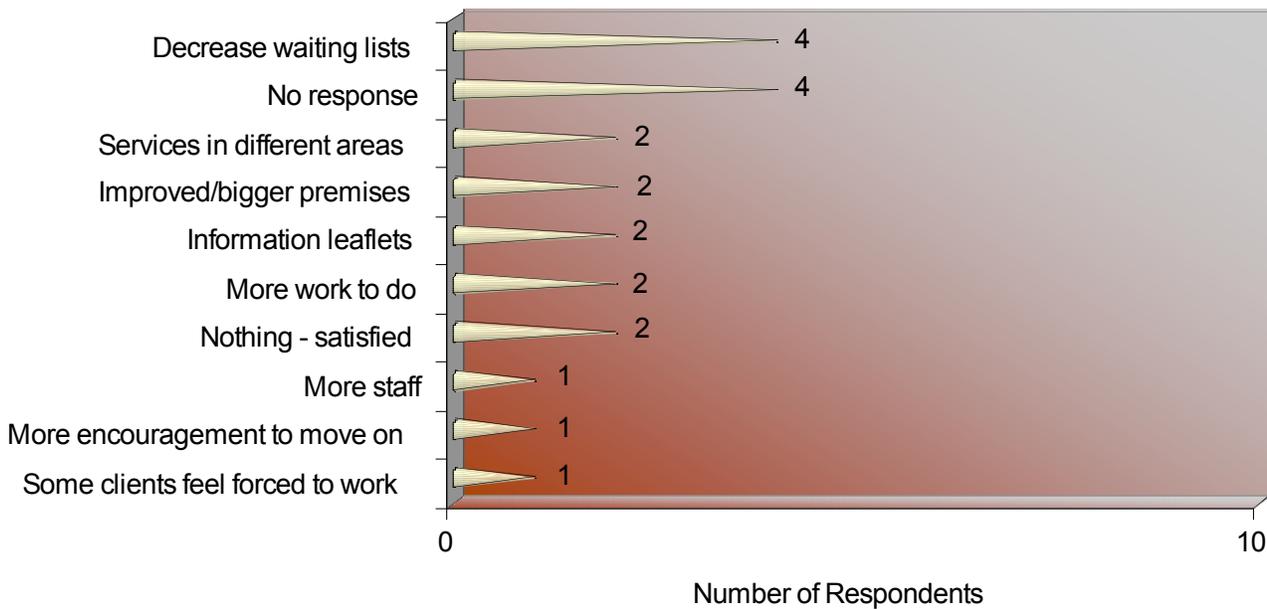


The average mark given was an 8 with 29% respondees awarding Restore the top mark.

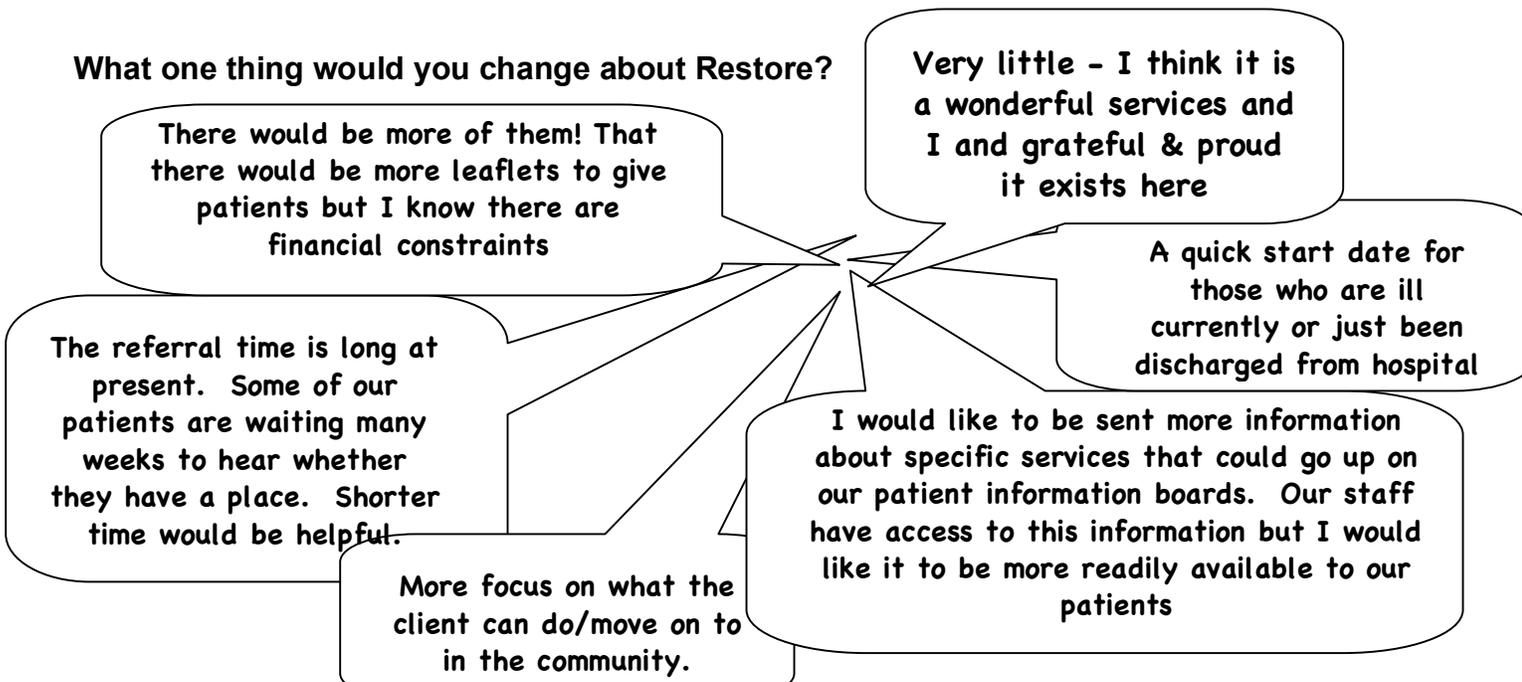
We asked how satisfied referrers were with the service that Restore offered. 28% of respondees gave the highest award of a 10, a further 28% awarded a 9, and 22% an 8. No one awarded below a 6

Finally we asked “if there was one thing you could change about Restore, what would it be?”

If there was one thing you could change about Restore, what would it be?



What one thing would you change about Restore?



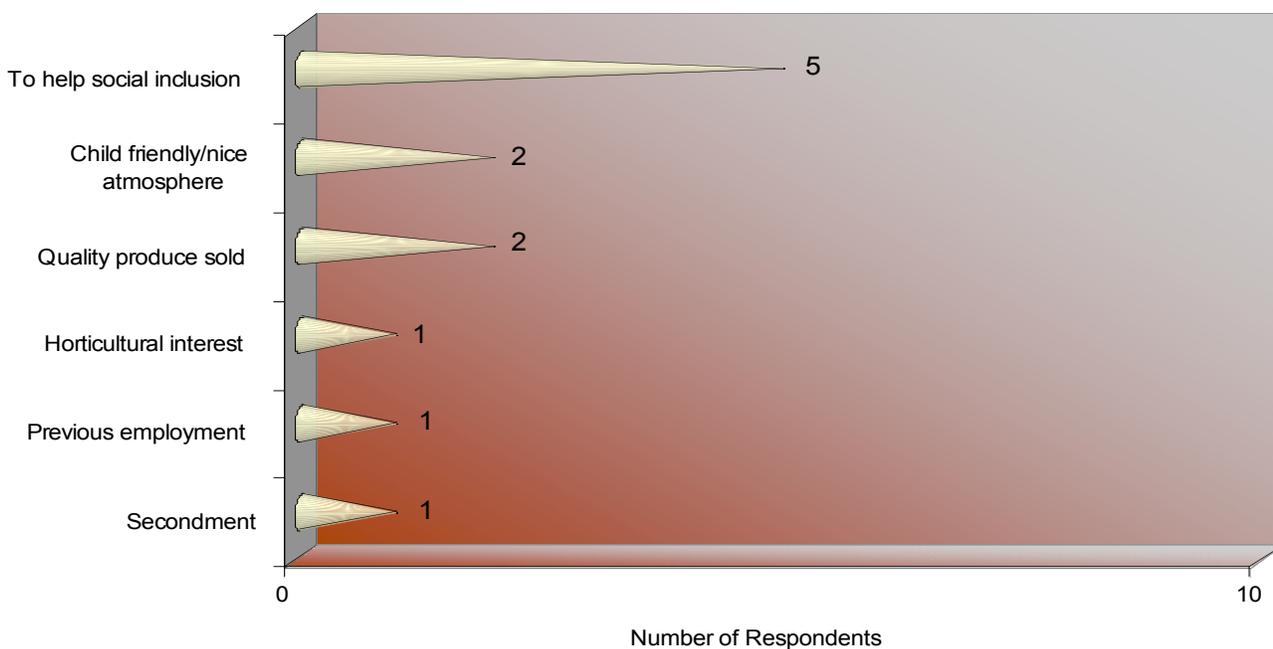
Generic Questionnaires

24 questionnaires were completed by members of the public and other stakeholders. 13 responses came from people interacting with The Beehive, 9 from Elder Stubbs and 2 from Fleet Meadow. The large number of responses coming from Café patrons at the Beehive shows their successful interaction with the public

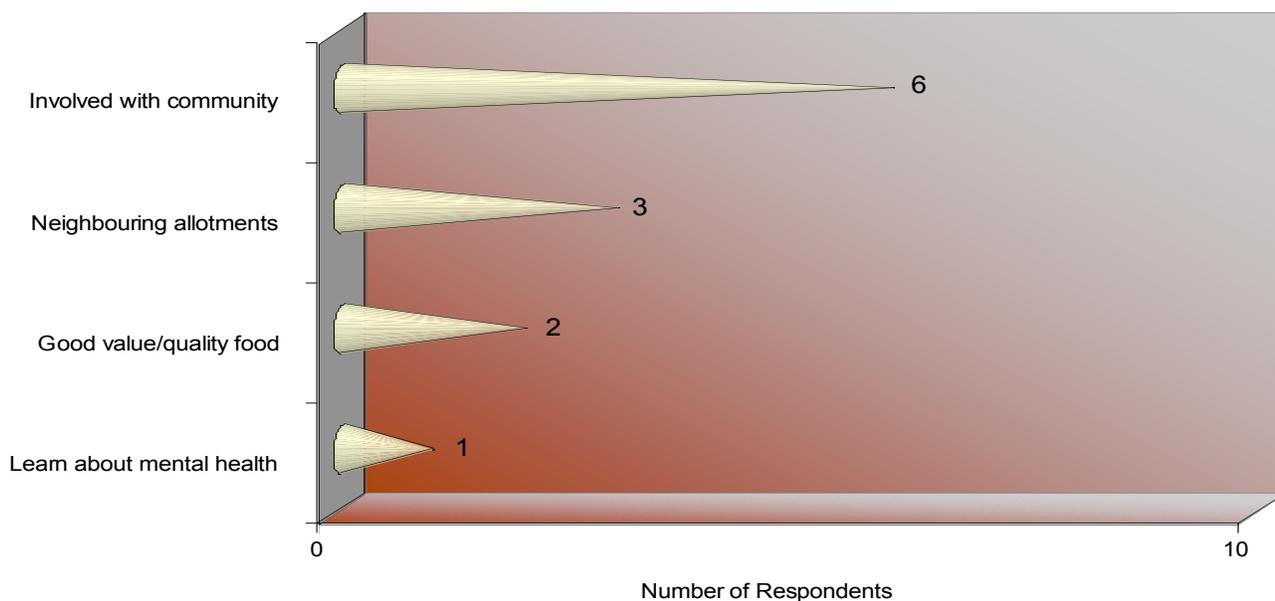
21% of respondents were supporters or volunteers, and 57% were regular customers. Respondents had been in contact with Restore for between 2 months and 30 years

When asked what the main reasons were for them beginning to associate with Restore (in order of priority) people selected the top 2 priorities as follows:

Top priority:



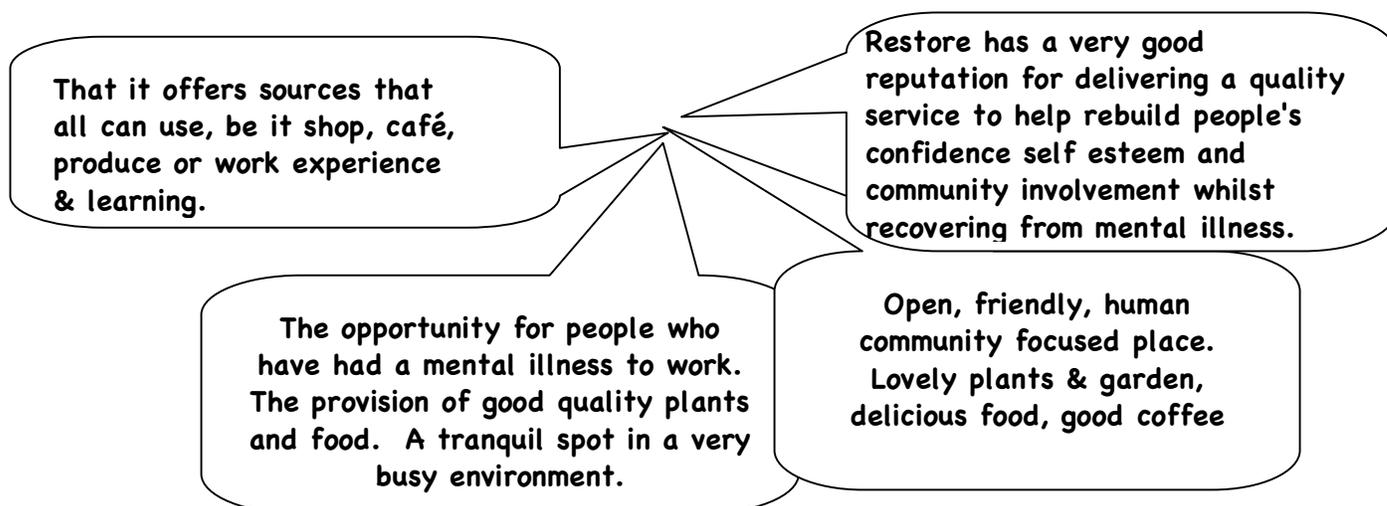
Second priority:



Whilst many people are committed to supporting and engaging with people who experience mental health problems, many also identified the reasons for their association with Restore as being the good quality produce (17% named this as their top priority), and the good value and good quality food (17% named it as their 2nd priority and 67% as their fourth priority)

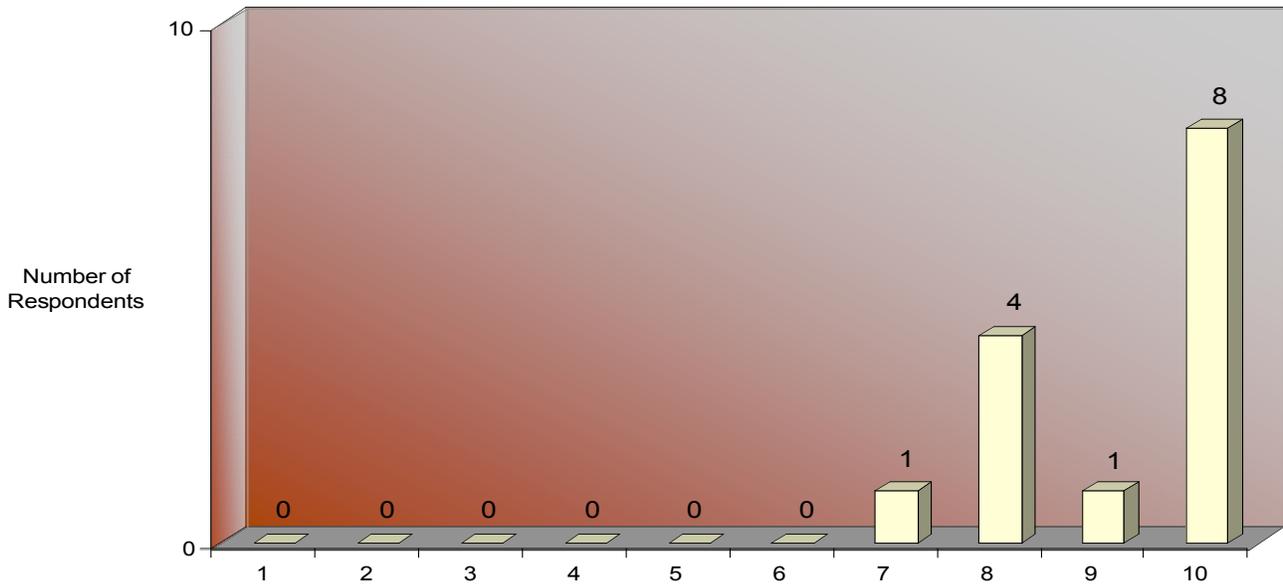
We asked why the community values Restore. 50% of people said that it had a good reputation, good food and was good value. 22% of respondents wanted to support community projects, and 28% because of its work in promoting recovery from mental illness

Why do you think the community values Restore?



When asked on a scale of 1 – 10 how important Restore was to the community, people answered in the following way

How important is Restore to the community?



57% of people who responded to this question awarded Restore the highest mark, seeing Restore and being very important to their community

Asked what one thing they would like to change about Restore, 7% of people said nothing, they were satisfied; 29% did not respond. 36% of people wanted Restore to extend their opening hours and/or open at weekend

Asked for any other comments, people responded:

Other comments:

The annual Elder Stubbs festival attended by upwards of 3000 people is a great focus of the local community of all ethnic backgrounds and an excellent P.R. opportunity for mental health issues.

The strength of an organisation is invariably a result of the quality and commitment of the people involved with it. The excellent atmosphere and results achieved by Restore at Elder Stubbs is a testimony to the above fact. There is also a very positive note that the service users have a strong sense of ownership of their resource.

I really value the work your doing, the service you offer, the beautiful shop & willingness for chats. Thank you All

Really love the herbs and plants

Questions aimed at commissioners

Only one of the three commissioners identified were able to provide a telephone interview to feedback on their thoughts of Restore.

We asked the question: “where do you see Restore fitting in with the other services that you commission?” The response that we were given was that Restore is an integral part of the mental health services offered in Oxfordshire. Commissioners have great respect for Restore and value their services highly. They are particularly impressed with the quality of their work and the way that they network and link with other services

When asked where they see the future for Restore and what Restore needed to be doing to prepare for that future, the commissioners responded that none of us know where the future will take us, particularly in the current economic climate but it is certainly likely that Direct Payments will be something that Restore will have to engage with in the future, enabling Service Users to purchase services directly.

When asked whether Restore offered value for money, we were told that yes they did, but there was some thoughts on the level of their overheads which needed to be addressed

Finally we asked: “how does Restore fit in with strategic service user involvement in your area?” We were told that whilst there is always room for improvement commissioners were particularly proud of Restore’s efforts to increase links with BME communities this is an area that commissioners are very keen to improve and Restore is seen as effectively starting to address this issue

Discussion

Without question, across all the stakeholder groups that we engaged with, Restore is seen as offering a highly valued service.

When current and former clients are asked to identify the benefits of attending Restore they reflect on how Restore is able to support them in maintaining their wellbeing, and enabling them to socialise in a non judgemental and supportive environment whilst obtaining new skills.

Across all the relevant questionnaires (former and current service users, carers, referrers and staff), Restore is seen as being important to individuals on-going recovery from mental illness

Commissioners view Restore as being greatly respected and integral to mental health service provision in Oxfordshire, and other stakeholders suggest that services provided by Restore are viewed as being central to their community, providing a valued and much appreciated resource

One of the reasons that Restore commissioned this independent review of their Therapeutic Work Services, is that as identified also by the commissioners, mental health services are entering a future that we are unsure what it will look like. We are sure however that there will be greater service user choice and autonomy (as heralded by Direct Payments), and a

greater emphasis on value for money. As well as a continued emphasis on supporting people in their recovery, and achieving socially inclusive and valued outcomes such as a move into paid, mainstream employment opportunities

Within this review, we identified that 31% of current service users aspire to be in part time or full time work within the next year. 27% want to be in voluntary work and 17% in education. 3 current service users identified a return to employment as their top priority for attending Restore, and 33% of referrers gave helping service users to return to work as their top priority for referring them to Restore. But only 2 members of staff mentioned individuals attending Restore as part of their pathway to employment.

There seems to be a possible disparity between service users aspirations, referrers' reasons for referring, and members of staff's understanding of why people attend Restore

We also noted that whilst 63% of staff suggested that Restore was vitally important to service users recovery (giving it a top mark of 10), Only 19% of former clients, 28% of current service users and 29% of referrers awarded Restore this mark. No staff awarded less than 5 marks compared to 8% of current service users and 29% of ex service users.

Clearly all stakeholders viewed Restore as being very important to individuals ongoing recovery. The point being made here is that staff may view the centrality of Restore's role as being more vital than other stakeholders' may view it.

It is also worth noting that 26% of former clients (the largest percentage) identified learning new skills as being their main reason for first attending Restore. This is compared to only 5% of current service users who identified this reason for attending and 14% of members of staff.

It is very difficult to draw concrete conclusions with some of the numbers of returns that we got from the questionnaires. 11 questionnaires were returned by members of staff out of 17. We had a low number of returned questionnaires from current service users at Elder Stubbs (only 14% of those returned), and a low number of returns from carers

We were particularly pleased with the number of returned questionnaires we received from former service users. It is interesting that 41% of the questionnaires received were completed by females compared to only 24% of those returned from current service users. It is difficult to draw any conclusion from this anomaly without being able to dig further behind the statistics

We also had an excellent response from members of the public and other stakeholders (24 questionnaires returned). Whilst many of the stakeholders valued the social and service imperative behind Restore (providing support to people with mental health problems), the main focus of the responses that we received were emphasising the importance of the quality of the produce and the food, and the role that Restore had within the community.

Respondents were clearly asking for more – longer opening hours, including weekends.

Increasing the resources available to the public could enable Restore to meet some of the needs identified by their service users. Increased responsibility, more opportunities to sell goods, greater variety in activities, a greater involvement in Restore, more volunteering opportunities and a desire to see greater independence amongst service users promoted within Restore.

During the course of the review we noted that an attendance allowance of £1.50 per day was being made. Whilst this payment is not made by Restore (it is administered by them but funded through Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust) we would like to suggest that this payment is potentially divisive across the 3 services (administered to two services and not the other), not reflective of best practice and potentially creating problems with minimum wage and issues of who are members of staff in TUPE circumstances (this has been a problems for another Mental Health Trust in the South East)

Attendance allowance is different to the wholly legitimate payment of travel expenses and we are not suggesting that travel expenses are no longer paid.

Fleet Meadow, which does not pay the attendance allowance, has a system of pooling some of the profits to fund activities and items which are decided on in a collective way. This 'profit sharing' system may be a more effective method of valuing people's attendance and activities at the services, as well as involving service users in decision making and directly linking their efforts to profits

This idea was reinforced whilst attending the three sites. We observed a number of activities to generate an income. Elder Stubbs has a great shop on site which is open to the public once per week, all monies generated are given back to the Beehive. Fleet Meadows do not have a shop facility, but have a wheelbarrow which is filled with produce and left outside the front of the building for the public to buy if they wish. It appeared that a lot of the items which are made or grown at Elder Stubbs and Fleet Meadows are sold at the Beehive.

When asked where the profits generated from the hard work at these two projects went, no one, including staff seemed to have an idea. It would be both empowering and educational from a business perspective (for example exploring exactly how much profit is made from selling an item) to involve services users and staff in deciding how the profits are spent.

Involving service users at every level within the organisation is an important aim for restore. People attending focus group said that on average they felt on a scale of 1 – 10 that 6.5 represented the amount of involvement they felt. Raise reflected on this during and after the focus groups and felt that despite members believing they were involved with the running of and managing of the services, this was not necessarily seen in practice. There was a feeling of complacency about their entitlement to 'have their say' in the running of the services they attended; with members vocalising they were happy to stay as 'passive recipients of care.'

The consultants from Raise felt that this was a result of members generally being grateful for the help they receive and having somewhere to go etc. They felt that is was not necessarily a feasible concept for service users to imagine things being any different.

It was apparent during the visits to sites, and from the questionnaires from referrers and the public as well as from volunteers, that many were unaware of the services provided by Restore, this included current service users.

More effective marketing of their services would help Restore ensure that there was greater awareness of what they are able to offer. It would also help them to increase the number of self referrals to the services.

Self referral is an important access point into Restore's services . Potential members are invited down for an informal interview and a tour of the premises before being accepted and placed on the waiting list (Fleet Meadow) until there is a space for them to start.

There were many mentions made during this review of the waiting list and the need to minimise it. One current service user said:

"I was really pleased when I was first referred to Restore; especially when I had my interview and a tour around the premise. I was then told it could take up to 6 months before I could start as I needed to wait for a space....this was way to long."

Recommendations

Below are 7 key recommendations made by the consultants as a response to engaging with stakeholders and listening to their experiences of Restore and their thoughts for how this valued service can move forward

1. Creating opportunities for learning amongst service users and staff

Some service users reported having attended Restore for a long period of time but not having had the opportunity to visit the other projects. There are differences between the 3 services this includes the payment of an attendance allowance, accessibility to services, structure and the culture within the service. To enable learning to take place across the 3 services and in order to share great practice and to motivate and challenge each other as well as helping to further create a 'Restore' identity rather than project identity we would encourage visits to sites for both staff and service users

2. Addressing the volunteer pathway

Currently service users who wish to become volunteers within Restore have to take a 3 month gap from the service. This is done to create a separation between receiving the service and helping to deliver the service. We would suggest that the pathway between receiving services and no longer receiving services is never that clear cut. People can still be a service user and in employment. Or be a service user and in volunteering. Whilst there is a need to have a clear understanding about the difference between the 2 roles and what the expectations of Restore are, this can be achieved in a different way rather than potentially hindering the pathway by introducing a 3 month gap.

Clear volunteer and induction policies could help with this process, as well as a specific training programme. If a gap is desired thought could be given to enabling service users to volunteer at the different projects during this time

Increasing the number of volunteers within the projects could free up staff time and potentially enable waiting lists for the services to be reduced

3. Retaining an employment focus

Moving into paid employment opportunities is one of the key aspirations for many of the service users that attend Restore. Thought should be given to how people attending the Therapeutic Work Services gain the information and support they need to make that transition

This can be achieved by increasing the volunteering and employment opportunities within Restore itself, as well as ensuring that benefits advice and better off calculations as well as career advice and referral into employment services is available

The opportunity to access training within Restore (for example training service users as first aiders and health and safety officers etc) and rewarding externally validated certificates would also support this aspiration

One of the potential risks to wholly locating employment services within mental health teams (as advocated by the evidence based approach IPS) is that we can lose the employment focus from other mental health services. This is particularly problematic for those individuals who are in a 'pre competitive' stage and need to receive the constant message that employment is a real potential for them

4. Enabling individuals to engage with their communities

As well as increasing volunteering and employment opportunities within Restore, it is also important to enable individuals to pursue these opportunities within their own communities.

An essential role for any service operating in a semi segregated environment is to help their clients move from that environment to an open environment. At Restore this can be done by helping people to move into education and/or training at local colleges and volunteering within organisations such as BTCV. Support could also be given to help individuals move from employment within Restore such as the café or the horticulture projects to employment with support in cafes, nurseries and garden centres in Oxfordshire

5. Creating and valuing a buddying system

Mentioned by both service users and staff during this review has been the idea of a buddying system. Currently a scheme is informally and partly in place, but we would suggest formalising and valuing this system

There are already members who provide internal support for other members/new starters, but possibly lack reward and recognition for their input. We would suggest that by giving a purposeful title to these service users; buddy, 'service user champion' etc would increase

morale, skills, confidence and sense of responsibility and ownership within all three projects. We believe this would have a 'knock on' effect for other members and encourage/aspire them to take equal ownership and responsibility, engaging in effective contributions.

6. Encouraging greater service user involvement

During this review, it was noted that the level of service user involvement was apparent but that there is great potential to increase this from daily involvement to senior managerial decision-making. Ideas include; offering training in the areas which service users are already involved in, i.e.: horticultural qualifications; attending courses in marketing, contract tendering, funding applications etc

This would enable Restore to further develop their recovery approach, looking towards the person and their hopes and aspirations. Currently the projects endeavour to help build the self esteem and confidence of project members but could expand on providing them with accessible opportunities to learn new skills, and to engage with the local community in a real work environment.

7. Creating a social enterprise run by service users

Restore has great potential to becoming a Social Enterprise, since it needs to generate revenue for sustainability but has equally important social aims to improve the opportunities available to people experiencing mental health issues.

Examples

- ❖ Set up the successful garden maintenance and garden development arm of the business
- ❖ Attending various events in and around Oxford. Garden fayres - Restore produce stalls, talks to organizations in and around Oxfordshire
- ❖ Host free workshop events – for example those hosted by a similar project Mayfield Nurseries - Southampton

Grow Your Own - Learn more about fruit and vegetables and about container vegetable gardening

Hanging Baskets and Containers - Learn how to make a show stopping basket

Design a Border - Learn about what plants complement each other and what will thrive best in your garden

Plant Doctor - Bring in your poorly plants and gardening difficulties and our panel of experts will try and find solutions to your problems!

- ❖ Any surplus money from the business is reinvested to support more people experiencing mental distress gain work experience in the business with a view to employment. All of the above will enhance service user involvement
-

FOCUS GROUPS

Generalised comments

“ I really enjoy working in the café and kitchen – my dream is to open the kitchen for 1 day at the weekend – I’d love to run the café; I do believe I can do it.”

“I really enjoy meeting new people and showing people around – I like helping others and sharing the new skills I have learnt whilst attending Restore.”

All those who attended the focus groups undoubtedly find the service beneficial to their mental health, overly emphasising the importance of attending.

There was some disharmony amongst those who attended ES and FM about the differences in the services provided at the BH and the fact they were expected to travel as opposed to the services coming to them. This included; access to IT equipment, vocational support (LEAP), and differing equipment available. However, this was contradicted by the staff we spoke to.

None of the service users we spoke to attended 5 days per week – vocalising that according to what days they attended, really impacted on what level of involvement they accessed. Some said they had never heard of the planning meetings at Restore, but coincidentally these happened on days they did not access the service. Others complained of too many planning meetings!!!

Many of those who attended the focus groups mentioned they would like to become volunteers for Restore and perceived it to be a ‘step up’ in their journey of increasing wellness. Some also mentioned the idea of wanting to support ‘new starters’ – to provide peer support (Buddying) but to date this has not evolved within the service.

Specific comments included: - where do you see restore in 2 years time?

- ❖ “I would love to see restore franchise their services – become available to more people.”
- ❖ “I would to see more service users at management level – making more decisions and helping others.”
- ❖ “We need more variety here – something more challenging, more stimulating.”
- ❖ “I would like to see bigger amounts of produce being sold – different products available in the shop so we could start to expand our services.”

- ❖ "For me, restore is like a 'pick and mix' there are different things I can try without any pressure. ***picture attached to support this on p49**

"I would love to become a volunteer – but I have been told their needs to be a 3 month cooling off period before I can do this."

Specific comments included: - where do you see yourself in 2 years time?

- ❖ "I want to stay the same as I am"
- ❖ "I would love to be in paid employment – working as a mechanic."
- ❖ "I would like to be making things at Restore independently."
- ❖ "I want to be in paid employment – I'd love to be working either in IT or in a bookshop."
- ❖ "I want to be receiving an income – I want to be independent, earning a wage by working on a building site."

All service users who attended the focus groups agreed that restore provided a non judgemental, supportive environment – a feeling of safety and acceptance. Everyone reiterated the importance of having somewhere to go; something to get up for in the morning.

Concerns which were expressed at all three projects included: -

- ❖ Need to decrease the waiting lists and referral time
- ❖ Need to promote more independence within the service
- ❖ Need for more activities/resources
- ❖ Apparent lack of staffing and monies

Combined responses – for all three centres

Question: The good things about restore

Support from staff/Accepting environment	20
Structure to day/Variety of activities	10
Training, new skills/stepping stone to employment	10
Socialising	8
Developing personal skills, i.e.: confidence/Motivation	6
Food	3

Question: Things we would like to change

Increase in Funding/resources – i.e.: bigger premises/equipment	18
Gaining more skill/qualifications/work experience	13
Restore to be more commercial – more work orientated	7
More activities/trips out	3
Increase in staffing levels	2
Paid employment at Restore	2
To allow more members	1
Longer hours/open at weekends	1

Question: How involved we feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved:

Average: 6.5

Results by centre

ELDER STUBBS – 9 attendees of which 8 were male – (one of whom had been at Restore for 12 years)

Question: How involved do you feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved: (one person didn't take part)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Respondents				2		2	1	1		2

Average: 6

Question: The good things about Restore:

Summary:

Motivation/Confidence/capabilities	4
Support from staff	3
Socialising/Good Atmosphere	3
Training/Stepping stone to employment	3
Structure/Continuity	2
Healthy Food	1

Words/phrases used:

Helps-me-to-get-up
Continuity

Structure
 Relaxed-atmosphere
 Meeting other people
 Socialising
 Healthy-food
 Streetwise-Understanding-from-staff-and-service-users
 Training
 Stepping stone to employment
 Supportive
 Less stress
 Therapeutic
 Experience-for-later-on
 Building-confidence
 Helps-you-realise-your-potential
 Helps-you-realise-what-your-capable-of

Question: Things we'd like to change:

Summary:

Gaining More skills/Qualifications/Job	6
Increased Monies/Resources	6
Personal Objectives	5
More work experience	2
Developing links between restore & employers	2
More access to IT	2
Pay for clients	1
More members	1
External Socialising	1
Increase staffing Levels	1
Paid employment at restore	1

Words/phrases used:

More-working-skills
 Being-able-to-work-on-computers
 More-support-&-access-to-IT
 Gain-more-qualifications
 Beings-able-to-arrange-work-experience
 Make-myself-feel-more-free
 Take-it-nice-and-easy
 Not-to-worry-about-anything
 Feel-safe
 No-rushing

Buy-a-large-house-and-new-car
 Second-garden-supervisor
 More-money-needed
 A-future-in-a-job
 Training-leading-to-work
 More-money
 Paid-a-training-allowance
 More-members
 A-room-for-weaving-work
 More-socialising-outside
 Invest-more-money-in-equipment-for-woodwork-room
 More-recognised-training
 Use-Elder-Stubbs-experience-towards-getting-a-job
 Invest-and-develop-more-gardening-projects-such-as-introducing-new-vegetables-to-go
 Staff-able-to-give-reference
 Apply-more-funding
 Developing-links-between-Elder-Stubbs-&-Employers
 Another-stepping-stone-?
 Possibility-of-paid-employment-at-Elder-Stubbs

FLEET MEADOW 1 – 8 attendees of which 5 were male

Question: How involved do you feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Respondents					2	1		2	3	

Average: 7.5

Question: The good things about Restore:

Summary:

Staff/Having someone to talk to/distraction	3
Structure/Purpose	2
Socialising/Developing Friendships	2
Opportunity to learn	1

Words/phrases used:

Socialising

Friends
 Structure
 Purpose
 Opportunity-to-learn
 Staff
 Someone-to-talk-to
 Positive-distraction

Question: Things we'd like to change:

Training-&-skills-for-employment/ Work experience/Qualifications for jobs done at restore	3
Increase advertising of services/more commercial	2
Larger premises/More equipment	2
Acting on 3 Month reviews	1

Words/phrases Used:

Larger Buildings
 Machinery-woodworking-lathe-sanding-machine
 Training-&-skills-for-employment
 Work-experience
 Acting-on-3-month-plan
 Advertising-'Roundabout'
 Commercial-outlet
 Qualifications-for-activities-at-Fleet-Meadow

FLEET MEADOW 2 – 4 attendees of which 3 were male

Question: How involved do you feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved: (one person didn't take part)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Respondents					1	2				

Average: 6

Question: The good things about Restore:

Summary:

Positive Environment	7
Structure/Variety of things to do inc: exercise	3

Food	2
Work experience/contacts with other agencies	2
Friendly/Helpful staff	2
Socialising	2

Words/phrases Used:

To-do-something
 Meet-people
 Being-outdoors
 Workmates
 Gardening-Relaxing
 Variety-of-things
 Easy-going
 'Copeable'-even-on-a-bad-day
 Nice-homemade-soup
 Nice-coffee
 Staff-friendly-&-helpful-with-outside-problems
 Contacts-with-LEAP-&-Mind
 Work-experience
 Somewhere-to-stay
 No-time-or-age-limits
 Non-discriminatory
 Exercise-session

Question: Things we'd like to change:

Summary:

Practicalities i.e. Heating, bigger premises	8
More activities/More trips out	2
More staff	1

Words/phrases Used:

Too-cold-in winter
 More-heaters
 Bigger-building
 Bigger-Loos
 Bigger-capacity-for-clients
 Separate-seating-area
 Another-activity-(Rug-making)
 More-staff-(Aileen-on-Friday)
 More-trips-e.g.-museums-pubs-Elder-Stubbs
 New-Hoover

Out-building-for-Boots-etc...

THE BEEHIVE – 6 attendees of which 5 were male

Question: How involved do you feel in the decision making at Restore – from 1 to 10 with 10 being most involved:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Respondents					1	1	2	1	1	

Average: 7

Question: The good things about Restore:

Summary:

Understanding environment/Staff	5
Learning new skills/Getting something back	4
Structure	3
Developing personal skills	2
Socialising	1

Words/phrases used:

Increase-confidence
Helps-me-to-work-with-others
Talking-to-team
Provides-a-structure
Constructive
Talk-to-staff-someone-to-listen-advice-problems-sort-things-out
Provides-somewhere-to-go
Individuals-input-given-&-output-received
Opening-opportunities-gives-choices
Socialising-&-meeting-people
Accepting
Non-judgemental
Understanding
Try-new-things
Learn-new-skills

Question: Things we'd like to change:

Summary:

Work orientated – not a drop in centre	2
Practicalities	2
Longer Hours/Open at weekends	1

Words/phrases for Used:

Open-at-weekends

For-people-to-turn-up early-rather-than-late

Longer-hours

Larger-premises-for-woodwork

More-machines

Work-orientated-rather-than-a-drop-in-centre

Illustration for the "Pick and Mix"

