



“A wonderful place that makes so many things possible”¹

Resource Centre user survey 2022

Listening and responding to the needs of our user groups is at the core of the Resource Centre’s work. One of the ways we ask groups about their needs, and their experiences of Resource Centre services, is through a snapshot survey every two years. Feedback from these surveys is consistently supportive, with a clear message from groups that they find the Resource Centre extremely valuable.

In 2022, after two years of the Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating impacts, the positive message feels particularly profound: the Resource Centre has survived, small groups have survived, and the Resource Centre is as useful and needed as it has always been!

Our survey painted an overwhelmingly positive picture of how groups experience the Resource Centre. Our services, and the responsive and personal way we deliver them, are extremely useful for groups. Of the 108 groups that filled in our survey:

- **100%** agree that Resource Centre **staff are helpful**
- **94%** agree the **prices are affordable**
- **98%** agree that the Resource Centre **makes life easier for their group**
- **72%** agree the Resource Centre is **the only place they can get the equipment they need**

Comments about the Resource Centre



When groups were asked the open-ended question “Do you have any comments about the Resource Centre?”, 50 groups took the time just to say thank you, tell us how much they value us and what a difference we make to their group. The words they chose paint a picture of a welcoming place with caring staff, providing efficient and effective support to groups across the city.

Our front-desk services are open to any local not-for-profit group, and include equipment hire, printing, information and advice. Over the six week survey period in June and July 2022, 172 different groups used our front desk for at least one service. 108 of these groups (63%) completed the survey.

¹ Quote from comment by Possability People

"Thank you for being there for us and supporting the little groups"

Knoll Community Association

"This organisation is a huge benefit to all volunteer-run community groups who don't have an income yet strive to serve the community on a shoestring."

Friends of Queens Park

"The Resource Centre makes so many things do-able for so many community groups, we quite literally could not do without them."

Friends of Royal Spa Nursery

"I am sure without their help we wouldn't do what we do for our community"

Soof Egg (Somali community group)

"Supporting the little groups..."

Resource Centre services are specifically aimed at small, volunteer-run groups based in Brighton and Hove. Small groups like these are organised by communities, for communities, because the community has needs that can be met by the group. During the Covid-19 pandemic, it was small groups who were responsive and flexible enough to meet the changing and unpredictable needs of their communities.¹

We're delighted that the Resource Centre is still reaching and supporting small volunteer-run groups. Many of the groups that use us don't access any other sources of external help or funding, and it is a key indicator of success that such groups continue to use our services. Of the 108 groups who filled in the survey:

- **77%** are run mostly by volunteers
- **56%** have 10 people or fewer involved in their organising meetings
- **97%** are based in Brighton and Hove
- **72%** had not received a grant from Brighton & Hove City Council in the last 12 months
- **42%** had not received any information, advice or practical help from any organisation other than the Resource Centre in the last 12 months

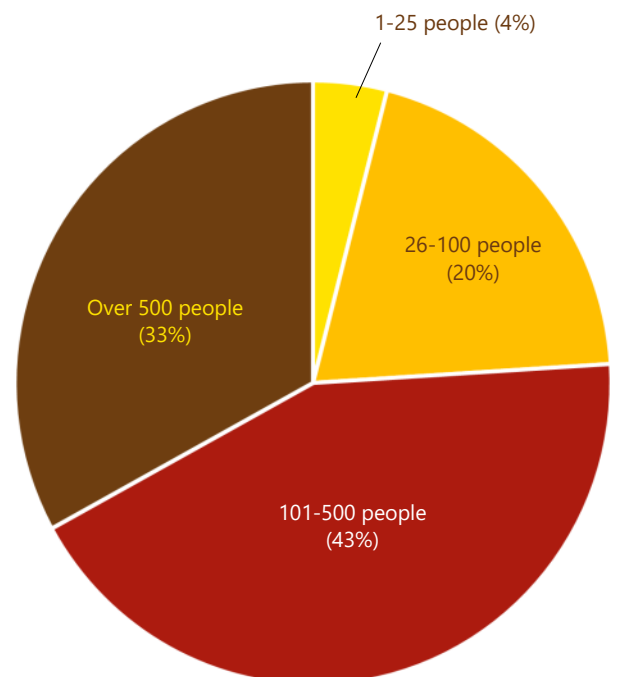
... to make a big difference

Small, self-organised groups operate without offices, paid staff or grant funding, but they benefit an astonishing number of people. 76% of groups said their work benefits over 100 people. If our survey respondents are representative of the 528 groups that used us between September 2021 and August 2022, we estimate that groups using Resource Centre services benefited over 160,000 people in the city this year!

We asked our user groups to describe what they do in their own words, and their answers revealed a broad range of activities supporting a huge diversity of communities. Small group organisers and volunteers are busy all over the city—making art, holding street parties, sharing food, fixing bikes, teaching and learning languages, growing flowers and fruit, playing sport, raising funds, welcoming refugees and improving neighbourhoods.

What all these groups have in common is that they bring people together, directly reducing loneliness and creating an opportunity for people to improve their own lives and those of their friends and neighbours.

How many people benefit from your group's work?



¹ See our report on the work of small groups during the Covid-19 pandemic: www.resourcecentre.org.uk/about-us/the-work-of-the-resource-centre-and-our-member-groups-in-2021-22/

“Invaluable” equipment for schools and communities

Resource Centre equipment is used in a wide variety of community events and activities and groups often use our equipment for fundraising. One of the Covid-19 impacts that emerged from our survey is about school PTFAs (Parents, Teachers & Friends Associations). For many schools—particularly those in more deprived areas—PTFAs play an essential role by raising extra funds to support the school.

10 PTFAs filled out our survey and every one of them told us that the pandemic had prevented them raising money for up to two years and that this has had a real impact on their school. They said that equipment, printing and information from the Resource Centre has been really valuable for organising and running events again.

The summer fairs and other events these 10 PTFAs ran using equipment from the Resource Centre raised a total of £25,000—an average of £2,500 per event. If we extrapolate this to the 38 PTFAs that used us between September 2021 and August 2022, we can estimate that the Resource Centre has helped PTFAs in Brighton & Hove raise £95,000 over the 2021-22 school year as we came out of the pandemic.

Of the 10 PTFAs that completed our survey, eight strongly agreed that the Resource Centre is the only place they can get the equipment they need for such events (the other two said they didn’t know), and all 10 of them strongly agreed that the Resource Centre is affordable.

“Resource Centre is brilliant for running events. The reasonable prices mean we are not spending loads of money on equipment which means we can make more valuable profit. It’s easy to book, and the staff are always friendly and helpful.”

Friends of Peter Gladwin School

“Brilliant resource, well used and loved by our school!”

Friends of Hertford Schools

“An invaluable service. I hope it never goes away!”

Healthwatch

“It’s invaluable to us as a youth group. A real value for money.”

Kidz Klub Brighton & Hove

What Resource Centre equipment is used for



Groups were asked what they had used our equipment for most recently. Answers were wide-ranging, including activities from protests to hybrid meetings, and conferences to celebrations. Our equipment was used across all seasons from summer BBQs to Diwali light parties to Christmas fairs. With so much uncertainty and fear about Covid-19 and changing lockdown regulations over the past two years, groups were thrilled to be able to organise events to bring communities together again. During the pandemic, groups’ needs often changed rapidly and survey respondents expressed gratitude for the Resource Centre’s willingness to change or cancel equipment bookings without cost to the group. The Resource Centre’s flexibility and responsiveness helps enable groups to be flexible and responsive to meet the changing needs of their communities too.

Printing “above and beyond”

100% of the groups that answered questions about the Resource Centre’s print service said they were very satisfied (91%) or satisfied (9%) with the service they received. When we asked the open-ended question “Why do you use the Resource Centre to print?” a clear set of reasons emerged as to why groups like and use us for printing. The most common answers were:

- The Resource Centre is **affordable**
- The print service is **quick, reactive and efficient**
- The staff are **helpful** and always **give good advice**

Every group who answered this question gave multiple reasons for choosing to print at the Resource Centre, and this shows that groups value our unique combination of qualities. Unlike many commercial printers, the Resource Centre not only offers a wide range of printing and finishing services at good prices, we are also flexible and adaptable, willing to change orders at the last minute, and happy to do short print-runs of any type of printing.

Because we understand groups and the ways they are going to use their printed material, we are able to offer useful suggestions about artwork. If we see an error or something we don’t think will work very well, we’ll talk to you about it before we print. This responsive and personal service helps small groups to make the most of their limited resources and keep making a big difference in their communities.

“We have always received an exceptionally good service from the Resource Centre: they go above and beyond, helping with design, timescales and budgets. I honestly cannot fault them.”

Coldean Community Organisation

“It’s an amazing service. The staff go above and beyond to get the job done and we are very grateful.”

East Brighton Food Co-op

“We are very happy that the Resource Centre edits, lays out and prints the articles and updates submitted by various community groups for the Coldean newsletter. This is a brilliant service, without which we probably wouldn’t be producing a newsletter at all!”

Coldean Residents’ Association

“A real asset to have in our community.”¹

“The city wouldn’t be the same without them.”²

Listening to our user groups and developing our services

We pay attention to every comment in our survey. Many groups had suggestions for how we could run things slightly differently, or make our services more accessible or flexible. Our staff team will consider each of these and assess their viability in the broader context of Resource Centre work.

This year, after the turmoil of the pandemic, we have decided to close the Centre for a whole week of development discussions, where we can regroup and check we are still providing the best services we can. Continuing to support small groups to meet their own needs and bring about positive change in their communities will be at the heart of our discussions.

We’ll be taking into account all the comments and data from our 2022 survey, formal feedback from member groups who use our additional services, and all the knowledge and insight we gain from the informal chats we have with groups as they use our services.

Resource Centre information and advice: “The best we found”³

100% of groups that had received advice from a Resource Centre worker in the last 12 months rated the advice as very useful. For groups that had used the information service, 95% rated it as either very useful (78%) or useful (17%).

“You always have an answer for any questions we ask.”

Bevendean Food Bank