

yOUTH Service – LGBT Young People

Mystery Shopping Project Report – Phase 2

December 2019



The Brunswick Centre would like to thank all involved in the project, especially the young people who have given their time, shared their experiences and contributed to the project. Without them it wouldn't have been possible.

We would like to thank all the organisations who have been involved in the project for being mystery shopped and for being supportive of our young people.

Thank you to all the staff and youth workers who have been involved in the sessions, giving ideas and being great role models for young people.

The term LGBT is used throughout this report. LGBT refers to those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered as well as those identifying as other gender and sexual minorities.

Introduction

The mystery shopper project was delivered by the Brunswick Centre through the yOUTH (Youth Out) Service. The yOUTH Service works with young people across Kirklees aged 11 - 24 who identify as LGBT. The current provision involves a weekly youth group, a monthly trans group for young people and parents, and 1-2-1 support as well as supporting local schools and colleges. The mystery shopper project was funded to see how accessible local services are for LGBT young people, what barriers may exist and what could be done to improve access for LGBT young people.

Phase one of the mystery shopper project concluded in April 2019, with services receiving feedback. If you would like to see the full report and get further information on the context and approach of the project, please go to:

<https://www.thebrunswickcentre.org.uk/news/lgbt-young-peoples-mystery-shopper-report>

Phase two follows on from this report and ran over the summer and resulted in another three different services receiving visits from young people.

Mystery Shops

Prior to commencing the shops, a discussion was had about services most-use by young people. Young people were trained as part of phase 1 and were ready to undertake further mystery shops.

The young people agreed on three further services to mystery shop. These services had not been shopped before. As with phase 1, the services were not notified of the mystery shop happening as we wanted to ensure an authentic experience of the service by the young people which they could evaluate against the set criteria.

The shops were planned a week in advance and included the young people researching the opening times, booking appointments and then attending the booked appointment or drop in where applicable.

Mystery Shop 1

Two young people undertook a mystery shop to an evening drop in. They report that it was easy to find information online. The service's website gave information about what to expect from the service, as well as having an up-to-date social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. The website has a section for LGBT people which the mystery shoppers found useful. However, there was no information available in other languages nor a 'hide me' option in case someone wished to exit the site quickly.

The service is easy to access by public transport with regular buses available. There is one entrance to the service, but the car park can be confusing, however parking is available.

Accessibility to the building can be problematic. For example, the building is accessed via an intercom with no alternative for those unable to use an intercom, there is also no lift to upper floors, and young people described 'labyrinth like floors, small rooms and narrow corridors.' Young people reported not having to wait long for their appointment and the waiting area being described as 'OK'. The organisation showed signs of being an LGBT-friendly organisation with gender neutral toilets. Staff at the service were described as 'very good and friendly' by the young people. The young people stated that they felt at ease, listened to and the worker used open and inclusive language. The services' confidentiality policy was made clear from the start, with the member of staff showing a good level of awareness for the issues discussed. Access to resources and supplies was positive with condoms on display on the ground floor and first floor toilets.

Mystery Shop 2

One young person undertook a mystery shop to this service which they described as 'good, fast, friendly, confidential service. They found the website easy to use as it came up in a search engine with the first search. However, they felt that the website didn't explain the process of what to expect when a young person accesses the service. The young person also found that the website had a translation tool for speakers of other languages but that it wasn't designed for people with a visual impairment. The young person noted that the website had a specific section for LGBT

young people which they found useful. However, there wasn't anything in the waiting room aimed at LGBT young people.

The young person reported that the organisation had up-to-date social media accounts. The young person was impressed with the response and subsequent contact by email with the service.

The service is easily accessible by public transport and is close to the bus station. The entrance is easy to find and is well signposted. The young person pointed out that the service was downstairs and that it was well laid out and accessible.

The young person noted that drop ins were open between 10am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 10am to 4pm on Fridays. The young person felt that this was restrictive for young people who work/study full time and are wanting to look for face-to-face support, their opportunity for this was only available online. They suggested that a late-night opening or a weekend opening would be more accessible.

The young person reported that the range of information provided by the service was good and that the confidentiality policy was shared immediately. The young person reported that the member of staff dealing with them listened intently and was very understanding, giving them resources that suited their needs as well as emailing this out afterwards.

Mystery Shop 3

One young person visited this service. It is a service which a larger organisation commissions to provide services to young people. The commissioned service was shopped and reported on in this instance.

The young person described the larger organisation's website as cumbersome and difficult to use. The information provided on the website is easy to understand, however the young person reported that the interactive map on the website is difficult to use.

There wasn't a specific social media account for this service but there is one for the organisation that coordinates this specific provision. Information is available in other

languages, but the larger organisation states that they cannot be responsible for the accuracy. The services offered to young people has to be access via the 'Adult Services' section on the website – which may mean that young people don't use/can't find the services offered – there is no specific section for LGBT people.

The service is easily accessible to the Town Centre bus and train stations. The entrance was easy to find and has multiple street facing entrances. Opening hours reflect the different needs of young people with the smaller service opening evenings and on Saturdays. Accessibility wasn't an issue – the entrance, is easily accessible for those with a disability – examples include an easy-to-open door and black and yellow tape on the step.

The young person reports that there wasn't anything in the window advertising the service, they only knew about the service form using the website. The young person reported that the confidentiality policy wasn't mentioned nor were there any visible information for LGBT people, people who don't speak English or those that need resources in a large print format.

Conclusion and recommendations

As detailed in the Phase one report, the mystery shopper project continues to identify several areas for further development across a range of services offering interventions. Again, as before, there were some excellent examples of where services listen to young people – in two of the shops, confidentiality was very thoroughly explained. Services have offered feedback and have said that websites are being updated, and the reports will be passed to their management teams.

Recommendations

- Liaise with LGBT youth groups - services should engage LGBT young people, consider visiting youth groups, have open days for young people, and undertake consultations with LGBT young people to get to know their needs.

- LGBT resources - services should include LGBT identities within resources and be inclusive with their posters and displays.
- Training - services should consider LGBT awareness training for all staff which includes the unique issues that LGBT young people face.
- Flexible accessibility and opening times - ensure that service opening times meet the needs of young people, taking into young people who work full-time.
- Websites - ensure organisations or services' websites are regularly kept up to date and are user-friendly and engaging - think about how youth friendly and LGBT friendly the websites are
- Confidentiality Policies - ensure young people are informed of the service confidentiality policy - where possible have this on display.