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SURE START CLIFTON LOCAL EVALUATION

User Satisfaction Survey

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Executive Summary for the User Satisfaction Survey

This report provides details of the results of a user satisfaction survey undertaken for Sure Start Clifton in the summer of 2005. The survey collected demographic information, views on Sure Start Clifton's facilities and services and the impact of these on the respondents' lives. The questionnaires were distributed by Sure Start Clifton. Sixty were returned - all from users of Sure Start.

Although 80% of the respondents had a child aged 4 or under, 20% did not - and 53.7% of the respondents children were older than 4. This may account for the frequent comments in the survey about Sure Start's provision being almost exclusively for younger children. Two thirds of the respondents were long-term users of Sure Start, suggesting that the recruitment of new users might be an issue. However, a third of the respondents expressed willingness to become Sure Start volunteers.

Forty-two of the 60 respondents felt that Sure Start Clifton had changed their lives (2 did not and 16 did not answer). Child development, services, emotional health and well-being, family support and opportunities for social contact and education/training were the main areas of change. Sure Start Clifton had offered support in these areas and also in terms of listening/counselling, parenting and the provision of benefits, resources, information and advice. No common themes were apparent from the small numbers of respondents who were not currently using Sure Start or felt that they had not been supported by Sure Start.

An open-ended question about 'the most important thing about Sure Start' produced responses from most of the respondents, who identified the key themes of staff, childcare provision, children's development, social opportunities, employment/education/training, community development and emotional health and well-being.

Most services were well used and over 95% of ratings of satisfaction with services were 'happy' (22.3%) or 'very happy' (73.3%). In terms of improvements to Sure Start, service development and the future, most responses were around the issues of re-starting the café, re-locating to a more central location, offering a broader range of services and catering for older children and larger families. Although there were some general comments about improving communication and about rebuilding, by far the most frequent responses reflected the degree to which Sure Start is valued on a personal and community level.

The main strengths of Sure Start Clifton that were identified through the survey can be summarised as follows:

- High use of provision
- High satisfaction with provision
- High impact of provision, i.e. respondents felt valued and supported.

Recommendations arising from the overall report can be summarised as follows:

1. make the rebuilding a priority - in a central location and with a cafe
2. consider broadening provision by developing facilities for older children
3. draw on the untapped pool of volunteers
4. focus on the recruitment of new users.

Sure Start Clifton User Satisfaction Survey

Background and Objectives

In line with national Sure Start guidance to undertake consultations regarding service provision and development with local residents, a user satisfaction survey was constructed. The key aims of the survey were to:-

- determine the services used by parents/carers in the Clifton area and to obtain their perceptions concerning the range of service provision available.
- understand why parents/carers are not currently accessing Sure Start services identifying barriers that prevent access.
- explore the extent to which available services meet the needs of the local community, with recommendations obtained for future service development
- acquire detailed user satisfaction information upon which future comparisons can be made with regard to service utilisation and development.

The survey had an additional aim related to the fire at the Sure Start building in May 2004, after which services were re-located to other community venues, including the local primary school. Respondents within the survey were asked specifically about the location of a new Sure Start building, the development of café facilities and the extension of services (including covering a wider age range).

Questionnaire Construction

The survey was constructed to collect demographic information in relation to the parents and the numbers and ages of their children. The current and previous use of Sure Start facilities and perceptions of these services were also assessed. Participants were also asked to identify the impact of Sure Start on their lives and to make recommendations for future service development, including whether or not they would be interested in becoming a volunteer for Sure Start. Further questions asked parents to prioritise what they believe should be included within the new Sure Start premises, and how they think Sure Start Clifton should operate in five years time. An open ended question for any general comments was also included.

The user satisfaction questionnaires were distributed in various ways by Sure Start Clifton personnel. Sixty were completed and returned. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 1.

Data Collection and Results

The results from each question within the user satisfaction questionnaire data are shown and discussed below in numerical order.

Survey Data: Part 1

1. About you and your children

a) Number/Ages of Children

Size of family

Forty-eight (80%) of the families surveyed had a child aged between 0 and 4 years. Table 1 shows that the families had a total of 134 children.

Table 1: Numbers of children within each family.

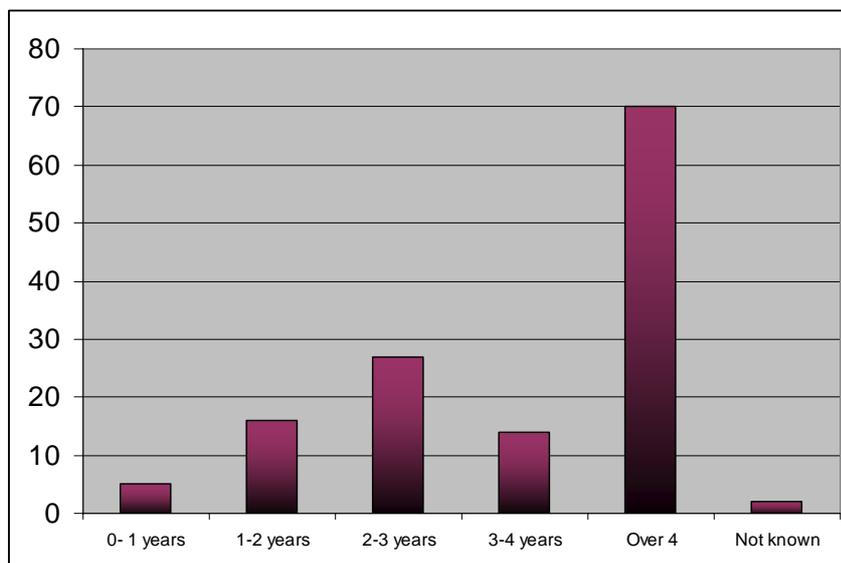
Number of children	Frequency of Parents	Percentage of Parents	Total Number of Children
1 child	14	23.3%	14
2 children	27	45%	54
3 children	12	20%	36
4 children	5	8.3%	20
5 children	2	3.3%	10
Total	60	100%	134

Only 19 families (31.6%) are classified as 'large', i.e. consisting of >2 children.

Age and Gender of the Children

Sixty-one of the children (45.5%) were female and 59 (44%) were male, with the remainder not recorded. The age distribution is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure One: Age of Young People



The data show that only 62 (46.3%) of the children were within Sure Start targets of between 0-4 years. However, 48 of the families (80%) had at least one child in this age range.

b) Marital Status

The marital status of the respondents is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure Two: Marital Status of Parents

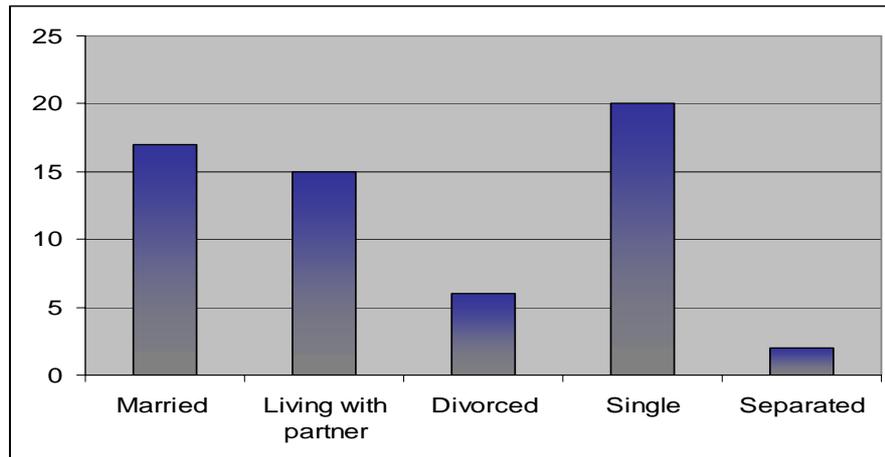


Figure 2 shows that 53% of the sample are in two-adult families (married or co-habiting). The remaining families are lone parent families (single, divorced or separated).

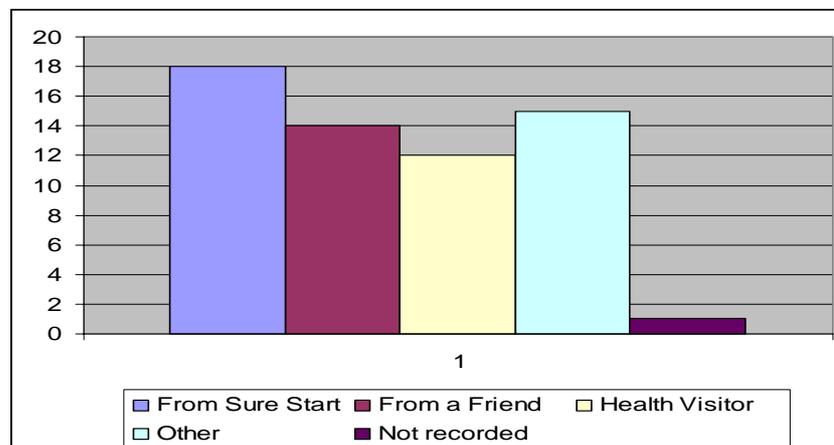
Survey Data: Part 2

2. Sure Start and You

a) How did you hear about Sure Start?

Participants were asked how they had heard about Sure Start services. Figure 3 shows that four sources of information were more or less equally represented.

Figure 3: Introduction to Sure Start Services



The replies given in the 'Other' category were:-

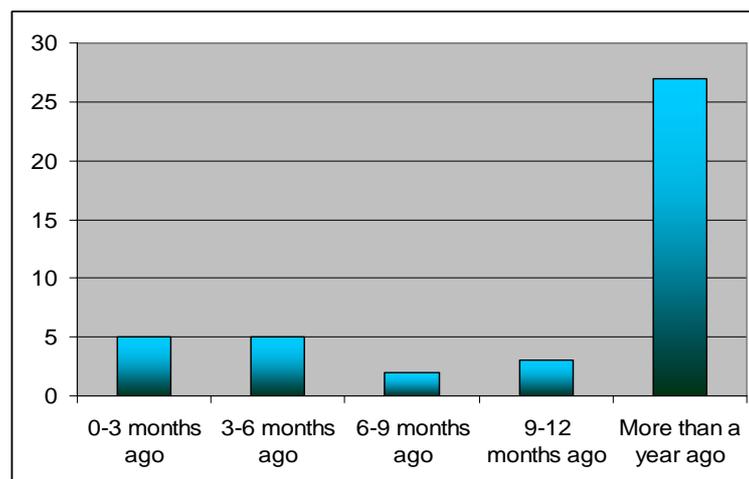
Family Member	2	Never heard of it	1
Leaflet	1	Newspaper	1
Social Worker	1	GP surgery	1
Other agency	1	Saw it on the estate	1
Childminder	3	Worked at Sure Start	2

Thus, members of the local community are introduced to Sure Start through a wide variety of sources, with friends, Health Visitors and promotion through Sure Start identified as the most frequent.

b) *Current use of Sure Start*

Questions were included to record whether parents were currently using Sure Start, and if so, how long they had been using the services. A total of 42 families (70%) are presently engaged with Sure Start activities, and the length of time they have been accessing the services is illustrated within Figure 4.

Figure 4: When parents started using Sure Start services



These findings demonstrate that 27 (64%) of the 42 families accessing Sure Start Clifton have been attending activities and services for more than 12 months, reflecting positive engagement of local residents. However, this implies that only 15 families (36%) have been recruited in the last year.

c) *Do you feel your life has changed as a result of Sure Start?*

Forty-two of the parents felt that Sure Start had changed their lives, 2 felt that Sure Start had not made any difference, and the remaining 16 did not respond to this question. From those who did not reply, 15 were not currently accessing the services.

An extensive range of qualitative comments were received to this question. The key themes to emerge from the data are presented below in their order of significance, together with illustrative quotes:-

1) *Child development*

A number of parents cited the developmental opportunities for their children through engagement with Sure Start:-

- “My little girl goes to nursery and I feel that it has brought her on loads”
- “They have been a blessing, child is more independent”
- “My youngest daughter is now interacting with children her own age and I get to chat to other mums”
- “My children learn through play”
- “Help children to mix with others”
- “Chance for children to socialise”
- “It has changed both my children and my lives because it has encouraged my children to mix with other children and to get me out of the house and meet new people”
- “Gives children chance to socialise with others”
- “Sure start helps your child to mix with others and meet other parents”
- “Children happier and developing well”
- “Liam has been a lot happier being at nursery”

2) *Broadening social opportunities*

Parents identified that Sure Start had changed their life through the socialisation opportunities afforded to them:

- “Social life through Dad’s Group”
- “More friends, getting out of the house”
- “Made friends, meet new people, get out of house, Got me out of the house and made new friends
- “Got me out of the house”
- “Loads new friends”
- “Before Sure Start was built there was nothing for the children to do and no courses for parents”
- “I am a single data, they have helped with lots of stuff”
- “Able to get out, meet new people for myself and my children”
- “Have 2.5 days to myself”

3) *Emotional health and well being*

Respondents highlighted improvements within their emotional health and well-being through engagement:-

- “More confidence”
- “It made me more confident”
- “I feel happier and I know people cause I never knew anyone till I started going to the groups”
- “After giving birth I had postnatal depression so it helped me to have something to go to and enjoy”

4) *Quality of services*

A small number of comments also reflected the high quality services provided by Sure Start Clifton:-

- “Very helpful good services”
- “They provide extremely good childcare support”

5) Educational/training opportunities (including the provision of childcare)

Parents recorded impact of engagement through the training and development and ultimate employment opportunities provided via Sure Start:-

- “learning further education”
- “Gone back to work”
- “Because of excellent, reassuring, comprehensive 0-3 yr care it has meant we can work full-time hours without worrying about our son’s welfare”
- “Go out to work now”
- “Able to work with childcare”
- “Baby unit has enabled me to go back to work”

6) Use of family support

- “They have been a god send, especially family support, my life has changed”

d) Reasons for not accessing Sure Start services

The main reasons provided by the 18 parents who are currently not accessing Sure Start were:-

Living outside catchment area	1
No need (children are at nursery or school or parents are in full time work)	13
Don't know what's available/Not interested in access	5

This indicates that the key reason why families are not accessing Sure Start is that they no longer have a child aged between 0-4 years, i.e. they access other childcare provision or are working full-time. Examples of responses were:-

- “Children too old to access”
- “Live out of Sure Start area and hadn’t heard of it until before a few weeks ago”
- “Never heard of them”
- “None useful to my needs”
- "Do not know enough about what's on offer"
- “My daughter now attends Mereside Nursery”
- “Don’t use as much mainly as the children are now older”
- “Working full-time”
- "My child now goes to school nursery"
- "My children are all school aged, so Sure Start no longer seems relevant"
- “Didn’t know what services they offered”
- “My daughters are at school we don’t need any services at the moment”
- “Don’t know anything about them”

e) Likelihood of accessing Sure Start services in the future

Thirty-six (60%) parents were likely to use Sure Start services in the future and half the families not currently accessing services would like to do so in the future. Eight parents (13.3%) were not likely to use Sure Start in the future,. For the remaining parent “it depends on what they offer”.

If parents had stated that they would *not* be likely to use Sure Start in the future, they were asked to record their reasons why. The main reason was that families

were unable to access the services, because their children were over 4 years. For example:-

- “Children too old”
- “Because from nursery my daughter will be going to school”
- “95% of Sure Start things and activities are for people with younger children”
- “Because its aims are only for families with 0-4 year olds”

f) Why Sure Start is not currently used (if previously accessed)

Parents who had previously accessed Sure Start, but no longer did so were asked to give reasons why they no longer used Sure Start services. As above, the key issue was the ages of their children, though a small number referred to no longer having a need for the services offered. For example:

- “Because my daughter started nursery” (3 comments)
- “My children are now at school therefore most courses and groups are no longer relevant”
- “Because my course had finished”
- “I have had to withdraw my daughter from the nursery because she kept getting ill. I have having to take a lot of time off college and I fell too far behind to catch up”

g) Support from Sure Start

A total of 43 parents (71.7%) felt that Sure Start had supported them. Eight felt that Sure Start had not supported them (none of whom were currently accessing Sure Start). Parents were also asked how Sure Start has supported them, and, whilst a number of the specific activities were identified, e.g. speech and language, portage, fun trips, etc, the key issues emerging from this data were:-

1) Childcare

Fourteen responses reflected childcare related issues such as:- access to nursery place, provision of parent and toddler group, baby club and access to activities by older children:

- “providing all round childcare”
- “they provide good childcare services. I have confidence in the staff that provide care for my child”

2) Family Support:

Six of the responses highlighted family support:-

- “Family support workers have helped me so much, advise and practical help”
- “I was supported into groups”

3) Listening/Counselling

Five parents identified the listening and counselling skills of Sure Start staff in their responses:-

- “they have always been there to listen to anything that has been bothering me”
- “Sure start staff make you feel comfortable to ask for advice without feeling like you’re being judged”

4) Social Opportunities

Five of the participants referred to the social opportunities provided by Sure Start:-

- “Confidence and making new friends”
- “Helped myself – confidence and made new friends”

5) Training/Education/Employment

Four parents referred to the development opportunities provided to them:

- “Giving me the chance to do courses I would not normally have done”

6) Benefits/Resources

Six of the parents identified support through the benefits/resources provided by Sure Start:-

- “they helped me out when I needed a washing machine”
- “Helped me when I separated from my husband and needed re-housing”
- “They even provided me with some brand new clothes for my child”

7) Parenting:

Three of the participants highlighted support via the parenting skills they had developed through input from Sure Start:-

- “By giving me advice on parenting skills”

8) Information/Advice

Six of the parents reported that they had been supported through information and advice provided by Sure Start:-

- “Providing trusting staff to talk to and offer advice on issues with the upbringing of my daughter”
- “Advice and ideas”
- “Helped me with practical problems”

The principal reasons provided by parents who felt that they had not been supported by Sure Start was that they “never asked for support”. One parent claimed that they “...didn’t know what was on offer”. In one instance a parent felt that the issue of providing nursery children with school lunches had not been resolved satisfactorily and that there had been a breakdown of communication regarding this issue.

h) Meeting Needs

Only five (8.3%) recorded that they had needs which were *not* being helped by Sure Start. The answers provided related to a range of issues, .e.g. requests for specific activities, additional services and lack of information, as follows:-

- “More messy/painting activities needed”
- “Lunches at Mereside they are using school lunches which are not appropriate and has been a breakdown in communications regarding it”
- “Older children”
- “Don’t know what you offer”

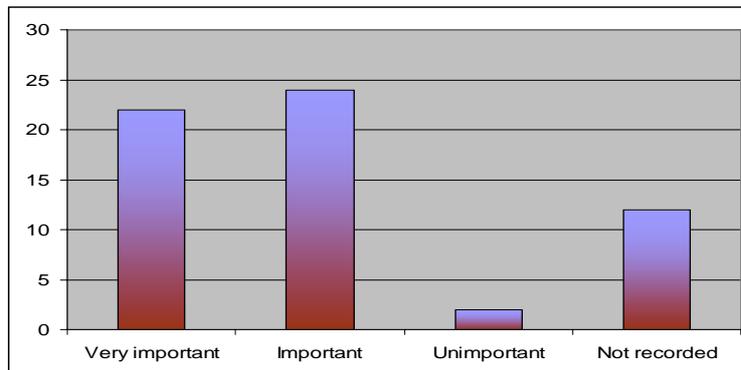
i) Contacting Sure Start

47 of the forty-eight parents who answered this question believed that it was easy to contact Sure Start staff.

j) How important does Sure Start make you feel?

Respondents were asked to report how important Sure Start made them feel in. The results for this question are shown in Figure 5 below:-

Figure 5: How important does Sure Start make you feel



This data illustrates that the vast majority of respondents replying to this question (95.8%) feel valued by Sure Start.

k) Most important thing about Sure Start

An open-ended question was provided for parents to record what they believed was the most important thing about Sure Start. Almost all the parents included a comment in this section, again reflecting key aspects of service provision. The key thematic issues were:-

- 1) **Staff:** seventeen participants rated the staff who work in Sure Start as being the most important feature of Sure Start. In general, the accessibility, approachability, skill and support of staff were referred to. One parent stated:

“The staff are always really friendly, and also approachable, and are there if you need them for anything from form filling etc. They also keep you informed about things going on through the post.”
- 2) **Childcare Provision:** Eleven responses directly related to the childcare provision which had either enabled them to return to work/training or had given them time for other activities, e.g.:

“Having affordable child care so I can return to work”
“regarding the quality of the staff providing childcare - it is run with the most highly skilled staff and staff that care”
- 3) **Children’s Development:** Ten responses highlighted the importance of the role of Sure Start in promoting their children’s development, e.g.:
 - *“The quality of the child care staff and stability it provides our son in the nursery”*
 - *“Really good nursery and play group”*
 - *“Convenient with good stimulus and care for my child”*
 - *“The children’s progress as they play and learn”*
 - *“That my son enjoys going and his development is coming along brilliantly”*
- 4) **Social Opportunities:** Six participants referred to how Sure Start had enabled them to widen their social opportunities or promote their social development, e.g.:
 - *“Got me out of the house and made new friends”*

- *“More confidence, loads of new friends”*
- *“Social life through dad’s group”*

5) Employment/educational/training opportunities were important for six of the parents.

6) Community Development Four respondents regarded the community based role of Sure Start as important to them. A further 4 responses reflected family support services received.

- *“About what they can provide locally to families and to interact socially with community”*
- *“The caring ethos”*
- *“Availability, all through the community”*

7) Emotional Health/Well-being: Three responses related to the emotional health and well being issues which they felt Sure Start helps with:-

- *“After giving birth I had postnatal depression so it helped me to have somewhere to go and enjoy”*

Survey Data: Part 3

3. Sure Start Services and Activities

a) First Service accessed

Parents were asked to record the first service they had accessed through Sure Start. A number of respondents identified several services. The responses were categorised as follows:-

- *Family support was the first service accessed by 5 respondents.*
- *Childcare services were cited by 7 parents. Child and parent activities was the most frequent response (n=17). These included mainly parent and toddler groups (n=16)*
- *Child development activities (baby weighing was the first service accessed by two respondents*
- *Midwifery was cited in two responses.*
- *Other responses included Parenting course, coffee morning, keep fit, art craft, volunteering*

b) Previous/Current Access to Services

Parents were requested to identify which of the Sure Start Clifton services they were currently accessing, as well as those previously attended. In addition, participants were asked to provide a rating of the service on a scale where:

- 4 = 'very happy' **(VH)**
- 3 = 'happy' **(H)**
- 2 = 'unhappy' **(U)**
- 1 = 'very unhappy' **(VU)**

Some responses were not recorded **(NR)**. The services are presented in order of popularity/extent of access as follows:-

Service	Use Now?	Used in Past?	Rating VH/H/U/VU
Little Stars Nursery	24	8	27/3/0/0 NR = 2
Bumbles Parent and Toddler Group	15	12	17/8/1/0 NR = 1
Parent and Toddler Group	14	9	13/8/0/1 NR = 1
Playgroup	10	13	14/4/3/1 NR = 1
Fun Days	14	6	18/1/0/0 NR = 1
Parent Talk	6	11	13/4/0/0
Tweenies Fun Time Group	9	8	9/4/2/1 NR = 1
Health Visitor Home Visits	4	12	11/3/2/0
Friday One Stop Shop	8	7	10/3/2/0
Antenatal Drop-Inn		15	10/4/0/0 NR = 1
Hanen You Make the Difference	1	14	12/3/0/0
Family Support Home Visits	7	7	12/2/0/0
Arts & Crafts	9	5	8/5/0/0
Speech and Language Therapy Appointments	6	7	11/0/0/1 NR = 1
Baby Massage		13	8/3/0/0 NR = 2
Family Support Drop In	6	5	8/1/0/0 NR = 2
Story-Time with Sue	5	5	7/2/0/0 NR = 1
Midwife Home Visits	2	7	7/1/0/0 NR = 1
Portage	1	8	8/1/0/0
Story sacks Session	1	8	5/3/0/0 NR = 1
Toy Library Workshop	1	7	5/3/0/0
Jelly Babies Drop-In Group	4	4	6/2/0/0
Early Learning in Families	2	5	2/2/1/1 NR = 1
Feel Good Thursday	5	2	6/1/0/0
Time for Meetings	3	4	3/4/0/0
Breast Put Forward	2	4	4/1/0/0 NR = 1
Welfare Rights Drop In Session		5	3/2/0/0
Dads Group	2	2	2/2/0/0
Babysitting Course	1	1	2/0/0/0
Allotment Group	2		1/1/0/0
Additional Services mentioned			
Relate Counselling Services		1	Very happy
First Aid Course		1	Very Happy
Computer Course		1	Very Happy
Friends of Sure Start		1	Very Happy
Childminder		1	Very Happy
Signing for Fun		1	Very Happy
Basic Skills		1	Happy
Sewing Course		1	Very Happy

The table below shows that the overwhelming majority of respondents were 'very happy' or 'happy' with the services available through Sure Start.

	<u>'Very happy'</u>	<u>'Happy'</u>	<u>'Unhappy'</u>	<u>'Very unhappy'</u>
Total number of responses	269	82	11	5
Percentage of total responses	73.3	22.3	3.0	1.4

The most used services were mainly related to childcare provision and playgroup (toddler) facilities. Other popular activities related to Antenatal, Hanen, Health Visitor, Parent Talk and Family Support. Parents who indicated unhappiness gave eight explanatory responses, as detailed below:-

- One parent's children were older and, therefore, unable to access services
- "Some staff not welcoming"
- Crèche times and reliability
- parent and toddler group too structured
- Missing the café
- The language of adults attending playgroup was an issue for one respondent
- One parent raised the issue of staff turnover
- it was taking time to build up the provision after the fire

d) *Reintroducing Services*

Parents were asked to highlight whether there are any services that are no longer provided by Clifton Sure Start, that they thought should still be provided.

- The café featured in 7 responses, with one participant suggesting this could be a cyber café.
- Training and education opportunities - specifically basic skills, and accredited courses (n=3)
- Keep fit/exercise was cited by two respondents
- "A building" was highlighted (n=3)
- Early learning for families
- Play and activities for 2-3 year olds (n=2)
- Provision of activities for older children again featured within these responses (n=1)

d) *Service Development*

Respondents were asked to cite whether there are any services that have never been offered by Sure Start that they think should be offered. Eleven responses mentioned extending and developing existing provision to include more choice of courses, activities for older children and young people, e.g.

- "childcare for school age children during school holidays and after school hours"
- "service delivery isn't wide enough, 0-4 isn't enough"

Respondents believed that Sure Start can help to initiate innovative support such as cheap driving lessons, free stair gates and fireguards. In addition, leisure/training opportunities were also cited by four parents (two cited keep fit and courses, one

concerned use of drugs and alcohol by children and one respondent named a course 'Picking up the Pieces').

e) Improvements to Sure Start Clifton

A question was included for parents to make recommendations for improvements/changes in Sure Start services. Twenty-one of the participants made suggestions for improvement, as follows:-

- Seven responses related to the new building, seeing this as a vital and much needed central meeting and communication point for service users, professionals and the wider community, e.g. "to have a new building – a base for everyone once again"
- Involvement of grandparents as volunteers
- Provision of keep fit for wider members of community not just new mums
- Role of staff in tackling what is perceived to be inappropriate behaviour by other parents, e.g. "staff speak to parents if not acting/speaking properly"
- More information: as one respondent put it; " I personally never knew Sure Start offered as many services as those listed"
- Extension of provision beyond the ward to enable access by those families who live outside the boundary
- Activities and opportunities for older children and young people, including; youth club, outreach work.

Survey Data: Part 4

Sure Start and the Future

Specific questions were included about the planning of the new Sure Start building in relation to the café facilities, the location of the building, accessibility and the development of services for older children. Parents were asked whether they would be interested in volunteering activities within Sure Start.

a) Café Facilities

Thirty-seven parents reported that they had used the Sure Start café prior to the fire, while 20 had not and three did not respond. However, 59 parents stated that they would like the new premises to include a café (the remaining parent did not answer).

b) Location of the Bowness Avenue Sure Start building

From the fifty-six answers received, 42 stated that the Sure Start building was easily accessible. Eight believed the location was not easily accessible. 6 parents were unsure.

c) Rebuilt in more central location

Thirty-five of 58 respondents (60%) wanted the Sure Start building to be rebuilt in a more central location within the Clifton ward. Twelve parents did not want the premises relocated to a more central site, and six of the parents were unsure.

d) Broader range of services

Forty-four out of fifty-seven replies (77.2%) requested that Sure Start offer a broader range of services in the future. Two of the parents did not want extended service provision and 11 were not sure.

e) Sure Start catering for a wider age range of children

Fifty-two of the respondents (89.7%) wanted Sure Start to extend their services to a wider age range of children/young people. Two did not and 2 were unsure.

- f) Volunteer Opportunities
 Nine of the parents were currently volunteers at Sure Start (15%) and 18 parents (34.5%) indicated that they would be interested in becoming a Sure Start volunteer.
- g) Most important thing about Sure Start
 Thirty nine respondents' opinions on the most important service or feature that the new Clifton Sure Start premises should include were obtained around the following key areas of Sure Start provision:
- a) **Young People Activities**
 Nine respondents requested provision of activities and opportunities for children and young people, including after school/holiday care. Again the limitations of Sure Start 's focus on early years were mentioned (“*activities for older children /teenagers might be added*” “*open for older children,*” “*youth club*”). One participant highlighted the need for children to be actively involved in order to prevent vandalism
- b) **Cafe**
 Eight respondents cited the café as being an important service, with one respondent stating “*I notice a lot of people lost contact, no meeting place, I miss it a lot*”. Another participant stated that; “*there must be a café as it was the heart of Sure Start, possibly with a cyber section*”.
- c) **Childcare**
 Six participants cited the provision of good quality affordable childcare/early years education and activities for the preschool age ranges.
- d) **Family Support**
 There were 4 comments about provision of family support, with additional comments on the needs of larger families in the community, e.g. “*things for families who struggle or have larger families*”
- d) **Environment/Atmosphere**
 Environment and atmosphere featured in a number of responses, e.g. “*An interesting, warm, friendly, caring and interactive environment*”; “*friendly atmosphere*”.
- e) **Additional services/resources**
 There were requests for additional service provision around arts/crafts and home making courses and the development of an outside seating and play area. Additional facilities for babies/toddlers were also requested, including a baby changing room and somewhere to warm baby bottles/feeding.
- h) **Future of Service Start**
 Respondents were finally asked to record what they would like Sure Start Clifton to be like in 5 years time. The responses of thirty-eight parents are presented below:-

a) **Services Developed for Older Children**

A key theme in the responses was to open Sure Start to wider groups within the local community. Respondents were keen, for example, that children and older young people should be able to access resources, as were extending childcare provision to meet the changing needs and circumstances of families, as their children grow and develop, and a recognition that older children would want different activities. Specific examples of the responses included:

- “*I would like to do something with my older son but I am not able to due to child minders being limited and I do not have a large family network*”

- *“good if some clubs could be accessed in the evenings with crèche facilities for younger children”*
- *“Similar childcare, family support volunteers community involved”*
- *“a positive resource for families with children of a variety of ages”*
- *“I would like to see clubs running for older children”*
- *A thriving centre with services for everyone, drop-ins with staff and health visitors, café and evening courses for parenting/socialising. “*
- *“Offering after-school clubs for older age range up to 13 years”*
- *“Offering support to parents with school aged children so I can continue to use and benefit from Sure Start Services”*
- *“Centre of the community, hub for all children’s activities”*

b) **Community Development**

Suggestions also included references to meeting the wider needs of members and groups within the local community and the role of Sure Start in continuing to develop to provide a resource for local people. It was recognized that funding of services would also be required:

- *“Be able to fund raise and be self-sustaining”*
- *“Accessible to people from a wider area”*
- *“A place where the majority of Mereside community can gather for social events with their children”*
- *“To be well known and utilised by the local community”*
- *“Well known in the area”*
- *“Computer classes to encourage people who are trying to get back into work”*
- *“Full healthcare service available and provision for initial assessment of, and advice for mental health needs”. “Working with and in community going from strength to strength”*
- *“A community one stop show providing services, information and space for community needs”*
- *“To be a central part of the community working together with community centre and others like Barnardos”*
- *“A reputable service enjoyed by all people from different backgrounds in this area”*
- *“A place to learn new skills, somewhere with childcare so you can learn and meet new people”*

c) **Resources**

Responses also related to the building, environment, atmosphere, security and the services which respondents would like to be available.

- *“Thriving café with a kitchen garden.”*
- *“Being in its own premises, moving to the playing field”*
- *“A lovely new building with a range of services for a wider age range of children that is accessible to all people in the area”*
- *“A safe and friendly place for moms and kids to enjoy themselves”*
- *“A large building with a close knit network of staff and families... one building with a central (heart) meeting places for parents, staff, families and agencies”*
- *“Promoting environmentally friendly things, i.e. recycling, breastfeeding, organic food, etc, as a good role model to everyone”*
- *“Maybe cameras up at night”*

5. General comments

At the end of the survey, parents were offered the option to provide any general comments. Twenty parents recorded additional comments, themed as follows:-

a) **Additional Information/Communication**

Four parents made requests for addition information or improved communication within Sure Start:-

- *“I am unaware of the services/groups which the Clifton SS run, this maybe due to them being in a temp building but I would be interested in finding out more especially seeing the list written in this questionnaire”*
- *“Glad I’ve had the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire and find out about Sure Start”*
- *“Sure Start Clifton provides a good service but the management could better communicate this to the parents”*
- *“I don’t know anything about the services offered. Perhaps you could get Health Visitors to hand out a leaflet about you in the future so that I will. Sounds like you may offer some good things”*

b) **Back to where they were**

Three parents wanted back what they have lost:-

- *“Just to get Sure Start rebuilt”*
- *“When the new building is finished I hope that the over 3’s will be on their own and not sharing facilities with Mereside school”*
- *“I hope to see Sure Start Clifton all in one place very soon so that it can be what it once was and more. It would make such a different to existing families and families of the future”*

c) **Value of Sure Start**

By far the most frequent responses reflected the degree to which parents value Sure Start on a personal as well as community level:-

- *“Don’t ever get rid of Sure Start”*
- *“I would like to thank Sure Start for all the help and services they provided I’d feel lost without them”*
- *“Please let’s have more Sure Starts especially like this one at Clifton, they are like my guardian angels”*
- *“Sure Start has made such a difference to my whole life”*
- *“There are places to take young children. I love going to the fun days and finally I have made lots of friends.”*
- *“Sure Start Clifton changed my life. I have learning difficulties and would not have been able to bring my son up without support”*
- *“Just to say thank you for all the support everyone has given myself and my children”*
- *“I worked as volunteer with Sure Start once I got involved when my daughter was born Sure Start helped build my confidence and eventually I went back to work continuing my loyalty to Sure Start and already having a great trust in Sure Start. I used Little Star nursery and I haven’t been disappointed”*
- *“Sure Start has helped me and my daughter. I was living in an area with a toddler and my health visitor suggested I engaged some of the parent and toddler groups and my daughter really enjoyed them and made new friends and so did I”*
- *“The nursery staff are fantastic and the only let down are the lunches. I would participate more in other services, however, we only work in the area and do not live near Blackpool. If I did*

have Sure Start near home, I am sure I would go to evening groups and volunteer as I am already a family support volunteer”

- *“Although the fire at Clifton was very disappointing it has proven that it is not just the surroundings and environment that are needed to provide care. The staff at Clifton have always made our son welcome, happy and cared for and we as parents have always felt reassured and satisfied our son received complete care”*
- *“I think Sure Start is great”*
- *“I believe Sure Start is going to change next year to a Children’s Centre. I hope it can continue to offer the same services, so other pregnant and new mums can benefit like I did. It would be terrible if it was no longer there and all their hard work was lost”*
- *“Sure Start has improved since the fire by going into the community. When new building is up, still use the community. Use the building as an added bonus. Cater for older kids, after school clubs, youth clubs”*
- *“Sure Start has made a difference to the area”*

d) Additional Activities

One parent again requested extended service provision for older children:

- “Some more summer days out would be nice even, early event such as the cinema 6.30 or 5.30 showing or something. I don’t think people mind paying if its value for money”

Conclusions

Strengths of Sure Start Clifton

Overall this consultation has provided highly positive feedback towards Sure Start Clifton and many strengths have been identified, as follows:

- There are high levels of access to wide range of service provision
- The vast majority of service users were happy with Sure Start activities and felt that these services were appropriate to meet their needs
- Almost all the respondents felt valued and supported by Sure Start.
- the impact of engagement for parents on socialisation opportunities and enhanced emotional health and well-being is high
- Sure Start provides opportunities for education, training and development, all of which improve employment prospects.
- Children benefit through the developmental opportunities provided by high quality childcare and play provision
- Parents identified the wider impact of Sure Start on enhancing community cohesion as well as capacity.

Recommendations

Despite the strengths of Sure Start Clifton, the user satisfaction survey has identified areas which might be considered further. Specifically, these are:

- The loss of the café was a recurrent theme throughout the consultation - demonstrating the importance of an informal central meeting place for local residents.
- The loss of the building was also a recurrent theme and there was some support for rebuilding it in a more central location

- There were many requests for provision for older children. (72 (56.3%) of the respondents' children were over the age of 4 years).
- A third of parents were willing to become Sure Start volunteers, suggesting that there is further capacity within the local community to enhance and develop current service provision.
- The parents showed awareness of wider community needs. This should be considered within future consultation exercises.
- There would appear, however, to be limited awareness of funding issues and sustainability. It may be important for the partnership to encourage dialogue with the local community regarding their longer-term goals and funding regimes and plans.

Appendix 1

User satisfaction survey questionnaire