

COUNT ME IN TOO – AN INTRODUCTION TO WHAT WE DID

Between 2005 and 2010, the Count Me In Too Research project held over 80 meetings and events with people concerned with LGBT issues and needs in Brighton and Hove, including activists, practitioners, policy makers, academics, and people who came along as interested individuals, with the aim of progressing social change for LGBT people through research.

Working in partnership with local LGBT people, and the organisations and structures it sought to influence, the project gathered the views and experiences of LGBT people who live, work and socialise in Brighton and Hove, and brought to the notice of the local community, service planners and providers, and the wider academic and practitioner community concerned with LGBT lives, contemporary issues for local LGBT people, highlighting the various ways in which LGBT people can be marginalised. The project gathered data in ways that enabled reporting of findings for specific identities (fig 1): it was devised to look in detail at differences within the LGBT collective, working to connect with hidden and harder to reach identities.

In the design and data collection phase (2005-2006), a steering group of LGBT people connected with a range of local LGBT community organisations, designed and promoted a questionnaire and series of focus groups that gathered the views and experiences of LGBT people who live, work and socialise in Brighton and Hove. Service providers were invited to stakeholder meetings for information and updates on the project, and suggested questions to ask participants, and in initial analysis of data. Facilitated by the researcher, final decision making about what to ask and how to word, structure and promote the questionnaire lay with the community steering group.

Figure 1 - Identities

a) Groups identified as disenfranchised by the steering group and public consultations

Asylum seekers / refugees	People in residential / institutional care
Bi people	People in supported accommodation
Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) people	People of faith
Carers	People on isolated estates
Celibate people	People on low incomes
Deaf people	People with learning difficulties
Disabled people	People with mental health difficulties
Hate crime victims	Sex workers
Homeless people	Substance + alcohol users
LGBT parents	Survivors of domestic violence
Men who have sex with men	Trans people
New to Brighton	Travellers
Older people	Women who don't access mixed spaces
Overseas students	Young people
People coming out later in life	
People in prison + ex-prisoners	



b) Focus groups

Bisexual	Hate crime survivors
BME (x2)	Mental health
Deaf	People living in an outlying estate
Disabled	Parents
DV survivors	Pilot
Elderly	Trans (x2)
First generation immigrant	Women
General group (x2)	Young people (x2)



c) Identities that the action group labelled as significant and that are used as categories for quantitative analysis

Age	Income
Deaf, hard of hearing, deafened or- deaf-blind	Isolation
Disability	Mental Health
Ethnicity	Sexual identity.
HIV positive	Trans

819 people completed a lengthy questionnaire, which was available online or on paper, that looked at a range of issues (fig 2), and included routed sections that explored the experiences of identity groups like older people, bi people and BME people, and certain experiences, such as experiencing domestic violence or using drugs, in more detail. 69 people took part in focus groups, convened around identities and experience, such as trans people, survivors of Hate Crime, and first generation immigrants.

Figure 2 – Main themes

- About you
- Going out
- Safety
- Health and wellbeing
- Support and services
- Relationships
- Housing
- Brighton & Hove

Initial analysis of findings was carried out by an action group of local LGBT people who identified headline findings and worked with the researcher to produce two initial findings reports: an academic report, and a community report. The reports described the research process and outlined findings with statistics and comments and accounts from focus groups and questionnaires, and looked at difference within the LGBT collective.

The initial findings were presented at a well-attended meeting in June 2007, where LGBT people who had been involved in initial analysis presented findings to an audience of community members, practitioners, and key service planners including local councillors and chief execs from statutory services. Over the next two years, the project completed a further 8 themed analyses (fig 4), working with staff from local organisations and structures concerned with meeting the needs of LGBT people, including staff from the local council, health services, and community and voluntary sector organisations (fig 3) and concerned individuals (forming a nominal 'community reference group').

Figure 3 – Organisations Count Me In Too connected with

- 3Sixty
- A Place at the Table
- Allsorts Youth Project
- Bi & Trans Working Group
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council Social Care & Housing
- Brighton & Hove Domestic Violence Forum
- Brighton & Hove Federation of Disabled People
- Brighton & Hove Libraries
- Brighton & Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange
- Brighton & Sussex Sexualities Network (BSSN)
- Brighton Bothways
- Brighton Ourstory
- Calabash
- Clare Project
- Community University Partnership Project (CUPP)
- Crime Reduction Initiatives
- Drugs & Alcohol Action Team
- eb4u
- Gender Trust
- Gscene
- Lesbian Link
- LGBT Domestic Violence & Abuse Working Group
- LGBT Drug & Alcohol Working Group
- LGBT Goal
- LGBT Health & Wellbeing Working Group
- LGBT Housing & Support Working Group
- LGBT Suicide Prevention Working Group
- LGBT Switchboard
- MindOut
- NHS Brighton & Hove
- One80 News
- Partnership Community Safety Team
- Press For Change
- Pride in Whitehawk
- RealBrighton
- Rise
- Spectrum
- Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Sussex Police
- Terrence Higgins Trust
- The Hub
- University of Brighton

Figure 4 – Further themed analysis

Additional Findings Report	Partners	Funders
All reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust Brighton & Hove City Council
Domestic Violence & Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove City Council Rise University of British Columbia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove Partnership Community Safety Team
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sussex Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove Partnership Community Safety Team Sussex Police
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove City Council's Directorate of Adult Social Care & Housing
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allsorts Youth Project LGBT Switchboard MindOut Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sussex Partnership NHS Trust
General Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers Centre Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust 	
Bi People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton Bothways 	
Trans People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Trust Clare Project Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust 	
Drugs & Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terrence Higgins Trust Drug and Alcohol Action Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drug & Alcohol Action Team

Key local people were recruited to look at each theme, including difference within the LGBT collective, and each analysis group outlined recommendations to address issues identified by the research and presented these at findings launches where local politicians, practitioners, policy workers and concerned people discussed issues, responses and ways forward.

Count Me In Too produced 12 practitioner-orientated research reports and shared findings more widely through its website (www.countmeintoo.co.uk), exhibitions and community summaries of reports.

Learning from the project has also been presented in academic settings through publications in peer-reviewed journals and at conferences, capturing new information and ways of thinking about LGBT lives. Dissemination of learning from the project continued through to 2010, with the project presenting findings at 7 local events and exhibitions (fig 5), including 'Transforming LGBT Lives', a conference organised jointly with the Brighton and Sussex Sexualities Network (BSSN) in Sept 2010.

Figure 5 – Wider dissemination events

- With Us, By Us, For Us community consultation event (2009)
- LGBT Research Tent at Pride in Brighton & Hove (2009)
- LGBT History Month pre-launch at the British Museum (2009)
- Count Me In Too exhibition at Brighton's Jubilee Library (2010)
- Golden Handbags Awards Ceremony (2010)
- University of Brighton Tent at Pride in Brighton & Hove (2010)
- Transforming LGBT Lives Conference (2010)

In June 2010 the project was awarded the Beepurple Research Innovation Awards first prize, in recognition of the inclusive nature of the research, and its ongoing impact through dissemination activities.

Beyond the end of the project, researchers are working on a book that seeks to honour the stories, hopes and views entrusted to the project. Drawing on academic thinking, the book brings together insights into LGBT lives and activism the era of 'equalities', sharing findings and learning with a wider audience, to enable ways of understanding LGBT lives that capture diversity of experiences, commonalities and power struggles that (re)create LGBT 'communities'.

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