

**Feedback from**

**Pride 2010 Exhibition**

**Count Me In Too**

5<sup>th</sup> August 2010 at Preston Park, Brighton

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In consultation with:  
The Count Me In Too research team

## **Acknowledgements**

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*The organisers, staff and volunteers of Pride in Brighton & Hove;*

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*And everyone who attended the exhibition and engaged with the project.*

# **Feedback on Count Me In Too Pride Week Exhibitions**

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## The exhibition

The Count Me In Too Research Project has been exploring LGBT lives in Brighton & Hove since 2005, working in partnership with LGBT people, LGBT groups, and service providers to identify issues for local LGBT people. The project has produced 10 detailed reports with local service providers on a range of themes. These include recommendations on how to address issues and needs identified from the 819 questionnaires completed by respondents and testimonies of 69 people who took part in 19 focus groups.

On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, the Count Me In Too project held a Community Consultation event at the Friends Meeting House in Brighton. One of the goals of this event was to show what the project had done so far, and another was to think about potential future plans. To display the work completed, a poster exhibition was designed to highlight the role that Brighton and Hove's LGBT community played in its development. It also presented findings and recommendations from the 10 reports published to date, as well as information about Count Me In Too's methods and methodology and a retrospective on the history of the project.

This exhibition proved popular, and visitors urged that it be shown more widely. Feedback called for the project to engage more with 'mainstream' LGBT communities. Responding to this feedback, the Count Me In Too research team organised an extended poster exhibition for Pride Week 09 (July 25<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>). This exhibition was successful (see Pride 2009 report) and so an additional 2010 exhibition was planned. This would take place in a new University of Brighton tent in Preston Park on August 5<sup>th</sup>, and Count Me In Too would have a space in this tent to showcase LGBT research being done by the university.

### **This report outlines who attended, their feedback from the project so far, and their thoughts about the continuing workplan for the project.**

Unlike 2009, the 2010 Pride exhibition was shown only on August 5<sup>th</sup>, in Preston Park, as part of a University of Brighton tent. This tent was supervised and organised by University of Brighton staff and staff from the Aim Higher project, rather than by the Count Me In Too research team.

Count Me In Too exhibited alongside other University of Brighton-related departments and projects. These were:

- **Aim Higher** (a national project that aims to encourage school leavers to access higher education) – <http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/sites/practitioner/home/index.cfm>
- **University of Brighton Student Services** - <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/aboutus/departments/studentservices.php?PageId=380>
- **Learning Opportunities in the South East** (a project that helps those seeking higher education or professional development) – <http://www.learning-opportunities.org.uk/>

Count Me In Too used 2 tables in the University of Brighton tent, but used its own branding, signs, fliers and posters.

## The posters

Count Me In Too has a suite of around 18 posters, each of which describes a different facet of Count Me In Too, though unfortunately not all of these could be displayed due to considerations of space. The posters used at this exhibition included:

### Introductory Section:

- 'Count Me In Too Exhibition' – an overview poster explaining the project;
- 'What is Brighton & Hove like for LGBT people?' – describing some of the project's initial findings;

### Findings Section:

- 'Bi Lives'
- 'Trans Lives'
- 'General Health'

### Outcomes Section:

- 'Using the Data' – a poster listing some uses of Count Me In Too's research in Brighton & Hove, as described by voluntary and statutory organisations.

These posters were chosen to introduce the project to those who would be unfamiliar with it, to highlight some of its key findings for those often excluded in LGBT research (eg. bisexual and trans people) as well as findings of general interest (health), and to demonstrate the real impacts that the research has had – this final poster has proven vital in previous exhibitions.

The highly limited space (compared with other Count Me In Too exhibitions) led to some key posters, particularly those detailing the project's funders and its participatory research methodology, being excluded. Though Count Me In Too research team members and volunteers were on hand to explain these and took pains to do so, in future it would certainly be desirable to have these posters displayed.

## Takeaway resources and feedback mechanisms

Visitors were invited take away Community Summary sheets which outlined key findings and issues, and to respond to the exhibition. The exhibitions also gave information about the LGBT Research Information Desk, and provided eye-catching flyers which detailed ‘tasters’ of the project. This answered an issue with the 2009 Pride exhibitions, at which there was not enough take-away information available.

Visitors and were invited to give brief feedback to 4 statements posed by the research team, circling an answer on a rating scale to indicate extent to which individuals (dis)agreed with the statements. They were also invited to add written comments (either about a statement or about something else). The feedback form appears on page 9.

Visitors were also invited to write down what they wish for on tags and hang it on a ‘wish tree’ where the wishes of all visitors and volunteers were displayed. This provided space for framing and sharing of aspirations not linked to aspects of the project. The wish tree was first used at the April 1<sup>st</sup> community consultation event and has been a popular feature of Count Me In Too exhibitions since then.

The contributions to the wish tree will be presented as an on line display linked to the Count Me In Too website ([www.countmeintoo.co.uk](http://www.countmeintoo.co.uk)).



Finally, Count Me In Too invited some other LGBT-related groups and events to disseminate information as a part of the exhibition. These included the Hastings & Rother Rainbow Alliance (HRRRA), an LGBT community group based in Hastings (<http://www.hrra.org.uk/>), and Lesbian Lives, a

large and popular conference focused on Lesbian Studies and lesbian issues and experiences. The promotional materials provided by these groups proved popular, suggesting that there may be scope in forging more links with other groups to exhibit in future.

## **Who attended?**

No formal monitoring was done at this, but some assertions can be made about the visitors to the exhibition based on feedback forms received, tags placed on the Wish Tree and information from staff and volunteers.

As with previous Count Me In Too exhibitions, formal monitoring would have been impractical given the staff:visitor ratio and the 'free-flowing' nature of the event. Quantitative monitoring data would have provided inaccurate data regarding the number of visitors to the Preston Park exhibition, primarily because the exhibition was part of a larger University of Brighton tent, and therefore it is impossible to accurately measure which visitors engaged solely, mainly or even tangentially with the Count Me In Too research.

According to the staff and volunteers, despite being the best-attended Pride in Brighton & Hove since the celebration began, the Pride 2010 exhibition was not as well attended as the Pride 2009 exhibition. This is confirmed by the absence of any feedback forms received. Possible reasons for the low attendance include:

- Lack of Count Me In Too signage outside the tent.
- Limited of University of Brighton signage inside and outside the tent.
- A tent located on the outskirts of the community village area of Preston Park.

### **Identities:**

While we did not ask people to complete qualitative monitoring feedback regarding their identities, during conversations with staff visitors identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans, as well as queer and straight. Some visitors expressed their identity as a part of their verbal feedback and comment on the project.

### **Previous Involvement with Count Me In Too:**

As with the Pride 2009 exhibition, several visitors stated that they had previously completed the Count Me In Too survey and that they were pleased to see what had happened to the project following this. Again, for some visitors this was the first time that they had engaged with the research since completing the survey, and they were not aware of the considerable body of work that the project had undertaken since that time.

### **Reasons for Interest:**

When discussions took place between staff / volunteers and visitors, these were often initiated by visitors and communicated the reasons for their interest in the exhibition/research. These visitors expressed interest in the research due to its relevance to their own identities, the identities of friends/family members, previous participation in CMIT research, and because some posters encouraged them to ask about certain other community stalls – for example, several visitors were interested in trans issues and asked about local trans organisations.



## Feedback

Though feedback forms (below) were available at the Count Me In Too exhibition and volunteers encouraged their completion, no completed feedback forms were received this year. This is likely due in part to the low attendance rate of the exhibition as a whole. The wish tree received some attention but considerably fewer tags than usual at Count Me In Too exhibitions.

So what do you think? If you would like to, please circle the answer that most represents your view in the box below. Please add your own comments below each question and use the back of the page to add anything else you would like to say. Only the research team will have access to this information, and you do not have to complete or submit the form. We will use this to evaluate the exhibition and the research, and may use it as part of our publications. You will not be identifiable in any way.

1) 'I think this exhibition is useful and informative.'
Strongly disagree   Disagree   Don't know   Agree   Strongly agree
Comments:

2) 'I think the Count Me In Too research will effect positive change for LGBT people.'
Strongly disagree   Disagree   Don't know   Agree   Strongly agree
Comments:

3) 'The Count Me In Too research has changed how I think about LGBT people.'
Strongly disagree   Disagree   Don't know   Agree   Strongly agree
Comments:

4) 'Research projects should involve people from the communities that they investigate in developing and carrying out the research.'
Strongly disagree   Disagree   Don't know   Agree   Strongly agree
Comments:




Figure 1: Exhibition Feedback Sheet

However, visitors did share feedback about the project with volunteers and research team members at the exhibition, which was overwhelmingly positive. The 'Bi People' and 'Trans People' posters attracted attention from those identity groupings, and their foregrounding was greeted with approval. Additionally, one particular comment that was made by several visitors is that the research could be improved by a temporal dimension – specifically, they asked whether there was research about how LGBT lives in Brighton & Hove are affected by the influx of summer tourists and visitors for Pride Week.

Just as in 2009, at this exhibition a noticeable proportion of visitors to the LGBT research tent were people from outside of Brighton and Hove, visiting for Pride. And again, although some expressed frustration that the Count Me In Too research is specific to Brighton & Hove and suggested that national research would be more desirable, many in turn commented that they wanted this kind of

research in their home regions, and wondered what results it would show for those regions. Some explicitly expressed a desire for a 'Count Me In Too' in their home location.

Other visitors included University of Brighton students, who were unaware that this kind of LGBT research was going on at the university and were pleased to find out about it. Some young people mentioned that they were preparing for undergraduate entry to the university in September and said that the fact LGBT research is being done there makes them feel it is more LGBT-friendly.

## Conclusions

This report aims to inform the planning of the Count Me In Too exhibition and other activities in the future.

### Feedback on the Exhibition:

- **Visitor numbers were low.**

Visitor numbers were much lower than at previous Count Me In Too exhibitions. This is likely due to a combination of factors, including: a tent situated away from the centre of the Community Village; lack of University of Brighton signage; sparse university promotional materials; and limited space for Count Me In Too signage.

- **No completed feedback sheets were received.**

Unfortunately no visitors to the exhibition filled in the feedback sheet. This is likely due to the small numbers of people attending the exhibition. Visitors' verbal feedback to exhibition staff and volunteers was more complex, but mostly positive.

- **As with Pride 2009, this was the first time some participants in the research had encountered the project again, and they were pleased to do so;**

Several visitors remarked that, having completed the Count Me In Too survey in 2006, this was the first time that they had heard anything about the results and what had happened to the survey data. This suggests that there is still scope for disseminating information about the project, even within Brighton & Hove, but also suggests that there is an appetite for hearing more about it.

- **Posters about Bi and Trans people were welcomed, particularly by members of those communities.**

The use of the Bi and Trans findings poster was appreciated by some bi and trans people who visited the exhibition. While it would be best to have a range of posters on display, in situations where space is limited these particular posters do attract bi and trans people.

### Feedback on the University of Brighton tent at Pride:

- **Future exhibitions under an 'umbrella' such as University of Brighton need more coordination.**

There was a lack of capacity and planning when it came to setting up and taking down all exhibitions, and all exhibitors had different expectations of what would and would not be provided by the University of Brighton. Additionally, the university provided little promotional material of its own, leaving the tent looking sparse, unprofessional and the four stands lacking cohesion. While Count Me In Too has a great deal of eye-catching promotional material it was felt that this could not be used as it would overshadow the other stands.

- **LGBT-specific materials are vital.**

While Count Me In Too materials are always aimed at LGBT people, much of the material present in the University of Brighton tent was not. This may turn visitors off at events like Pride, where visitors may be cagey about marketing with no LGBT relevance. In future LGBT-specific materials would be a good idea, showing that the University of Brighton has LGBT people specifically in mind.

- **‘Freebies’ and takeaway promotional materials remain very important.**

More than ever, visitors at this year’s Pride exhibition expected handout materials – particularly young people. Most other community stalls had items such as pens, keyrings, etc, as well as leaflets and other promotional materials. Though Count Me In Too has produced more eye-catching materials than it had last year, particularly in terms of leaflets and handouts, ‘freebie’ items increasingly appear to be the norm at Pride stalls.