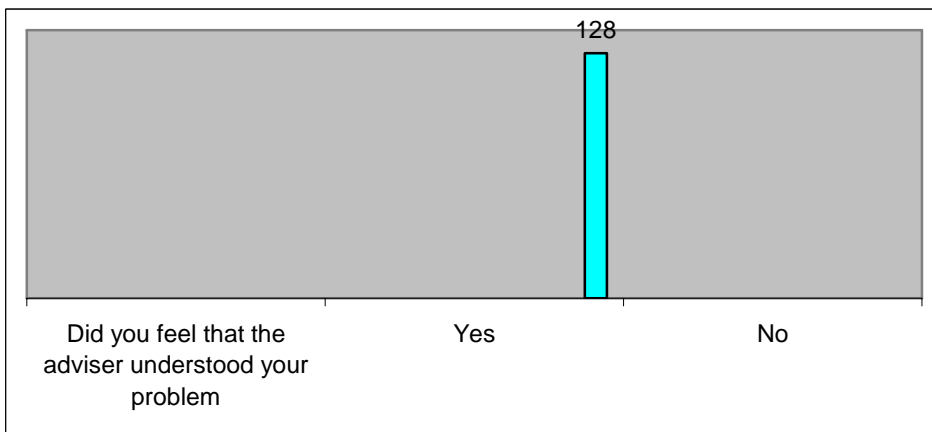
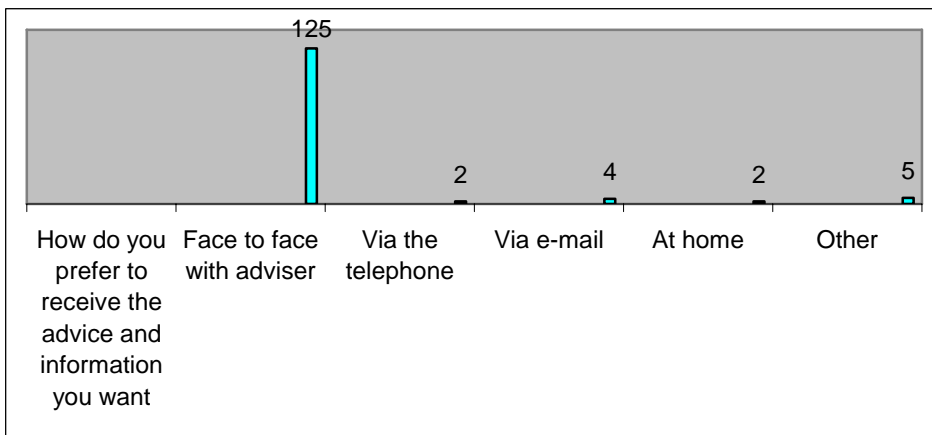
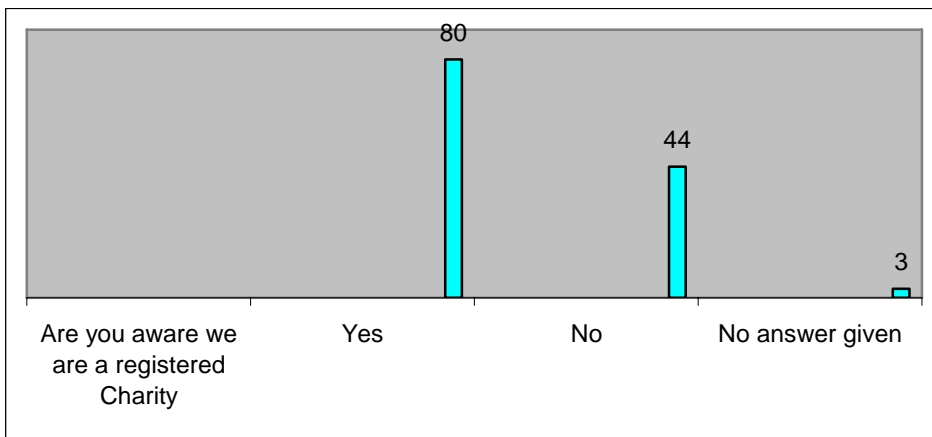
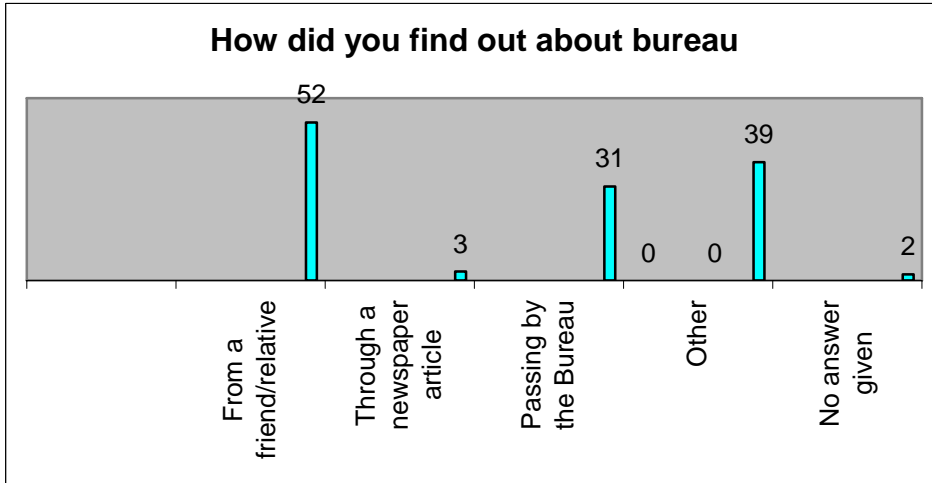
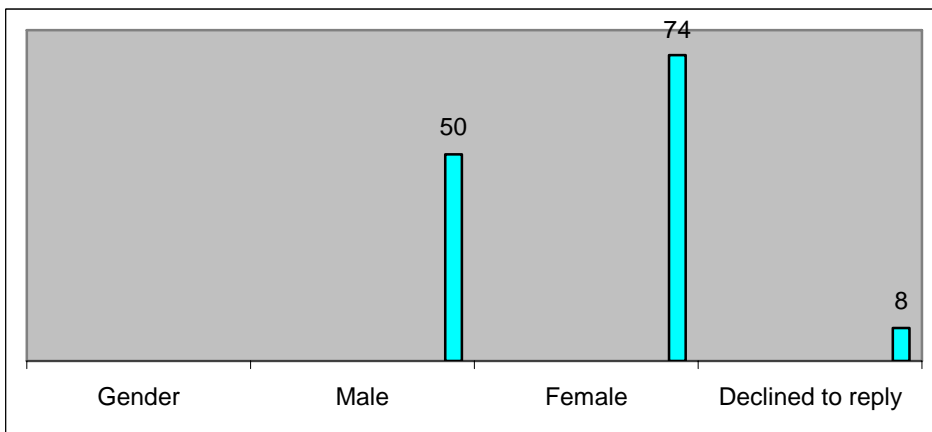
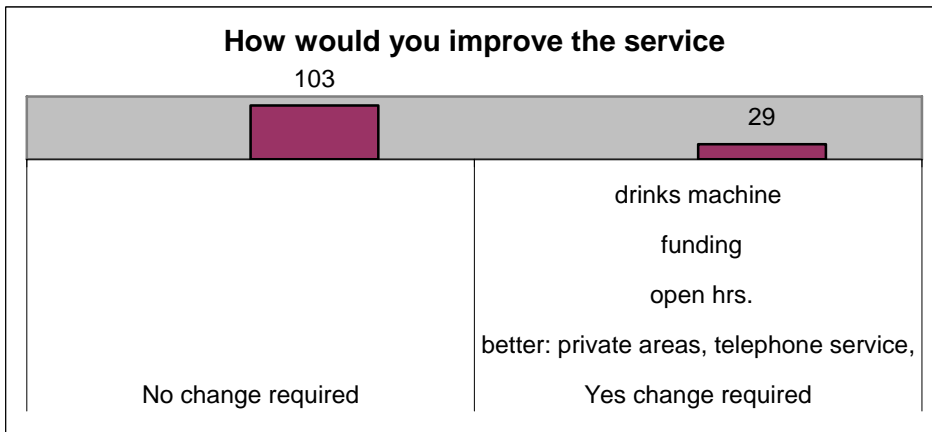
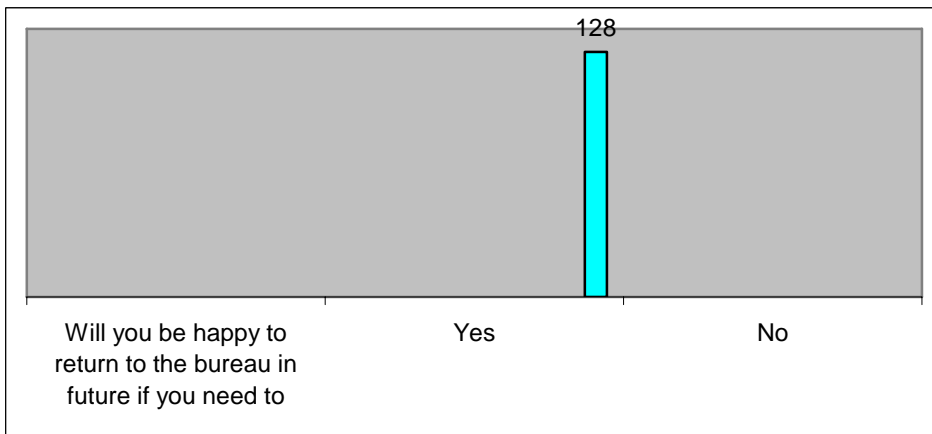
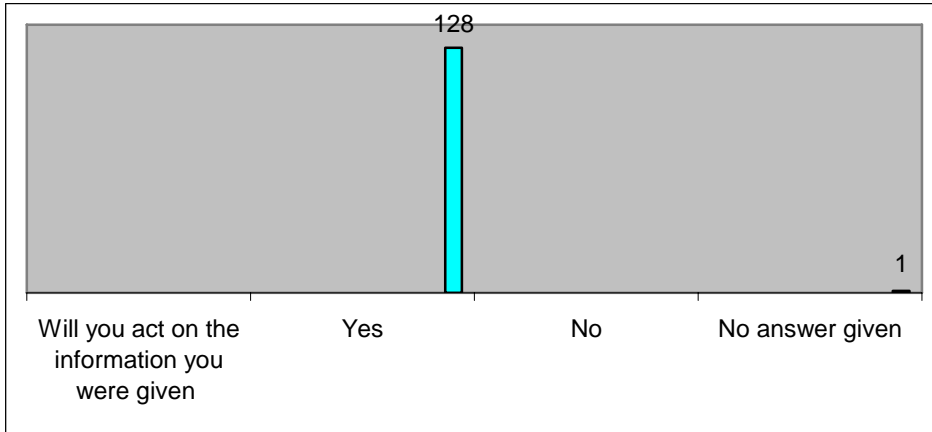


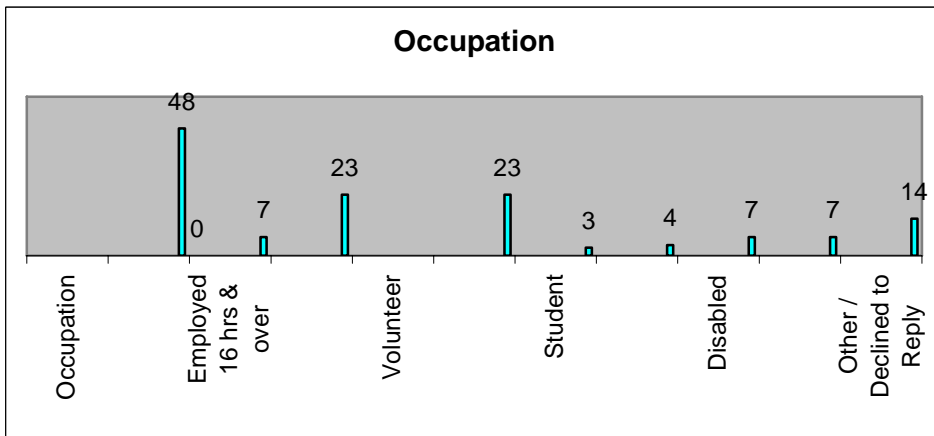
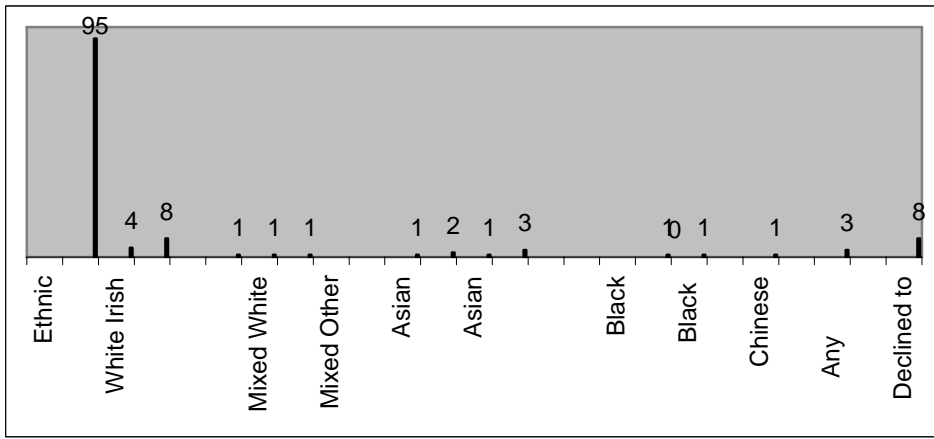
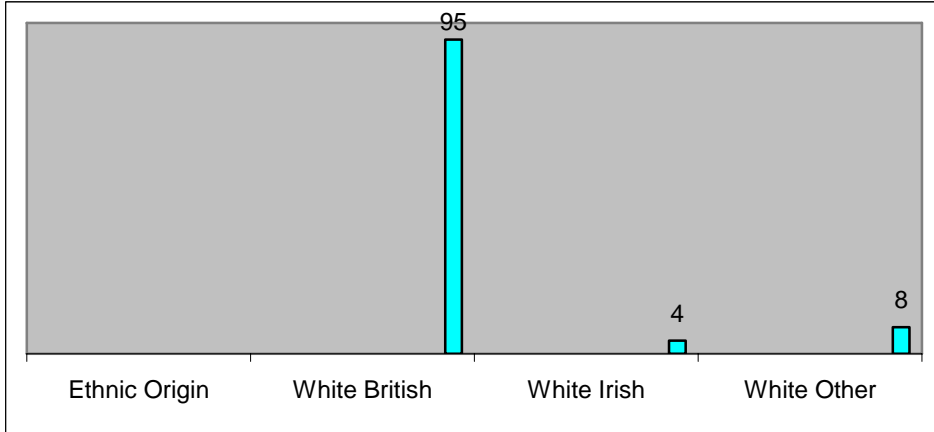
**Reigate and Banstead District Citizens Advice Bureaux
Client Satisfaction Survey 2007- 8**



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In **analysing the results** of the survey it became evident that the clients who had visited the Bureaux throughout 2007/2008 were expressing the view that the adviser had not only understood their problems, but having been advised and given options, that they would also **act on that advice**. Of those same individuals who had been surveyed, all would return to use the service again at some point in the future. This underlines not only the value of the service on offer but is an endorsement of how invaluable that service is to the community.

When asked what might be done to **improve the service** 22% indicated the need for longer opening hours, better waiting areas and an improvement in general facilities such as drinks dispenser and better interviewing areas. This group also identified that funding was a critical aspect of enabling change to occur. An extension to the provision of telephone services being offered following expansion in that area last year.

Whilst an over whelming majority realised we were a **charity** (63%), that left a third believing we were a government funded agency. The only realistic approach to meeting the aspirations of the fifth that expressed a need for change, would be through **better resources** to income and that falls largely on existing funding providers. Income regeneration opportunities that are challenging at the best to access, and at worst do not meet the level of the income needed to meet the challenges we seek to address.

The **location** of our offices is also a critical aspect to our success and sustainability; many more members of the community would be able to access the bureau were it financially viable to introduce extending hours in locations convenient to users, especially those at work or acting as carers.

27% of **existing users** are employed, with 11.6% being unemployed and equal number being retired. Only 7% of the sick and disabled and 2% of carers access the service at the present time. Of those, many who wish for a home visit which is often difficult to provide within current constraints, and at worst impossible to offer without the capital investment to enable it to occur.

Sustainability of services is perhaps the greatest challenge the service faces as the loss of regeneration projects that are not financially sustainable beyond the life of the project they fund. Current core funding cannot meet anything much beyond the very basic provisions, and to retain the specialists we need requires new financing to be obtained on a regular basis. This would ensure that the expansion of the service was more widespread and indicative of local need and aspirations.

At present we see 56% of women using our services and that perhaps reflects our hours of business and the need to **offer an out of hours** service above and beyond the current provision of a Tuesday evening in Redhill. It is also a challenge to find staff and volunteers willing to work on after other offices have closed and it is perhaps an area, which we could link to together with

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other agencies in providing a joint out of hour's service. Already we have demonstrated a significant approval and demand for the service and now we have to evaluate how we might adapt and grow within the existing community. The loss of funding streams from The Big Lottery will have a significant impact on many members of the voluntary sector which will move us in the positive direction of **partnership working** to acquire sustainable outcomes in project working. This can also directly involve Citizens Advice own "Campaign in Partnership"¹ strategy which would encourage the opportunity to access the experience and evidence of others, particularly of groups who may be under-represented amongst users of our service.

Local businesses depend upon many factors to sustain their position, from top-up cards for mobile phones through to electric key meters illustrating their usefulness, never mind the odd bottle of milk and other sundry items. The work of the bureau to capitalise benefit entitlement and the maximisation of income for those dealing with personal debt, has long been recognised as being of a **value** which far exceeds the funding we receive. Any risk to this valuable resource will impact negatively on the entire community as well as those businesses both large and small that operate in the area.

Action - The user involvement in our annual Client Satisfaction Survey can also be used to influence our Social Policy work which in turn can be provided to regulators and policy makers in government. Those clients who indicated a willingness to discuss matters further regarding the CSS will be contacted to see if their comments and suggestions can also allow us to develop new initiatives in advice giving. This will also enable us to continue to build on existing services especially in areas such as benefits, debt, employment and discrimination. We should also consider expansion into preventative services such as skills development, education and training, where provision needs to be addressed.

¹ CitA Service Strategy 2008-11 "Whoever you are, whatever the problem"

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