

# The Advice and Support Needs of Unemployed People

## Consultation Results Report:

### New advice and information project on learning and employment – Hove, Portslade, Hangleton and Knoll

This report details responses from a sample of people interviewed on a one-to-one basis about:

- a) Their employment, training, personal and job-seeking situations, and
- b) What they might want from a new support, advice and information service.

Mostly people 'not in work' were targeted and interviewed. A balance of men, women, disabled people and people from minority ethnic communities was achieved. 51 respondents were interviewed in all (see Appendix One for a demographic breakdown of the sample group).

#### SOME KEY POINTS FORM THE FINDINGS:

1. Respondents to the survey want to change and improve their situations. Simply job seeking as an activity on its own was rarely the sole priority – people want to improve their skills and their personal situations all of which is material to improving employment prospects.
2. People who are not in work and want work are not a homogenous group – their circumstances and needs vary. For instance the survey interviewed a few groups with related needs such as younger parents, people with mental health issues and people who were under-employed or looking to better their job prospects. Another significant group was people 55+ with out of date skills and disadvantaged in the competition for jobs.
3. Any new service needs to prioritise building a quick and trustworthy rapport with clients. Also independence is valued as many respondents were disappointed with agencies that appear able to advise and support as regards employability but don't do so effectively from the user point of view.
4. Support needs in the area of 'improving work skills' was rated as importantly as 'support with job searching'. Also 'looking for training, opportunities and courses' was rated as the highest importance for people.

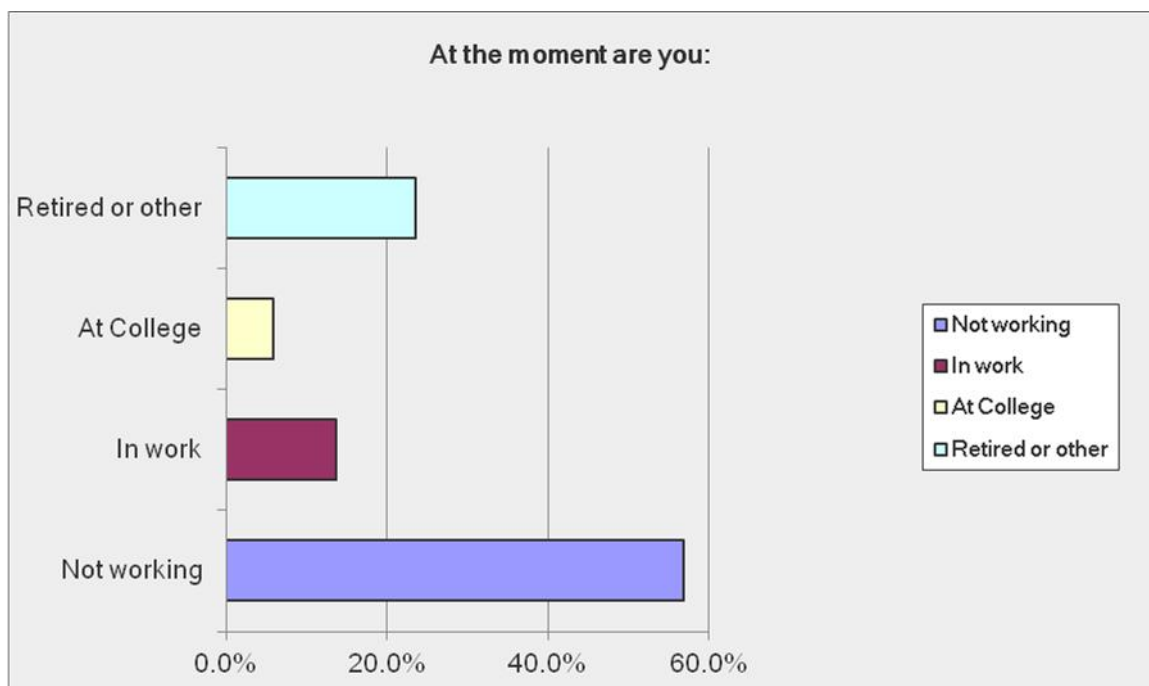
## RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION:

### Question 1: Working status of the survey respondents

#### Main points:

Two-thirds of the sample were not working or economically inactive and of working age. This was the target the survey was aiming at. Most of the people who identified as 'other' were not in work but preferred not to identify as such.

#### Results, statistics:



#### At the moment are you:

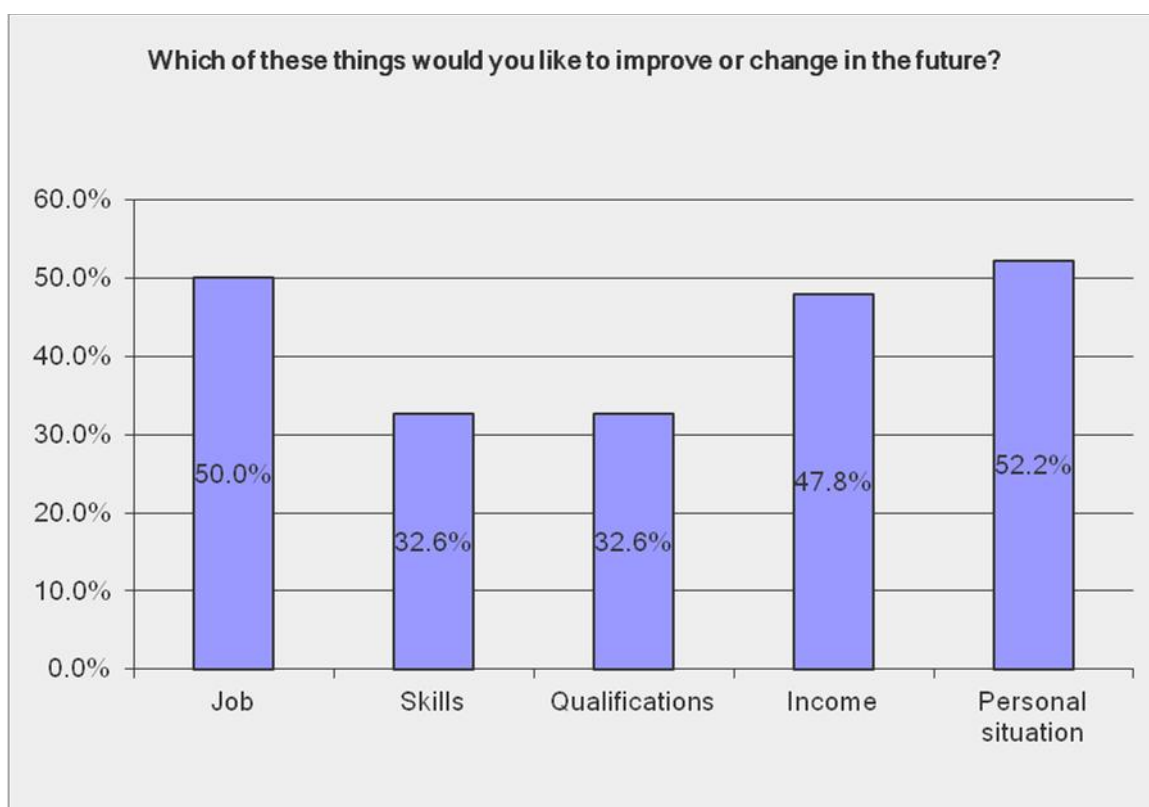
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not working	56.9%	29
In work	13.7%	7
At College	5.9%	3
Retired or other	23.5%	12
<i>answered question</i>		<b>51</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>

## Question 2: What do people want to improve or change?

### Main points:

The three things people most want to improve or change in their lives are: their personal situations (52.2%), job (50%), and income (47.8%). With a large group of job seekers they most want to change personal, health or/and housing situations and this they see as a dependent factor when it comes to being able to get a job, a better job or more hours.

### Results, statistics:



Which of these things would you like to improve or change in the future?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Job	50.0%	23
Skills	32.6%	15
Qualifications	32.6%	15
Income	47.8%	22
Personal situation	52.2%	24
Say more		28
<b>answered question</b>		<b>46</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>5</b>

**Results, comments:**

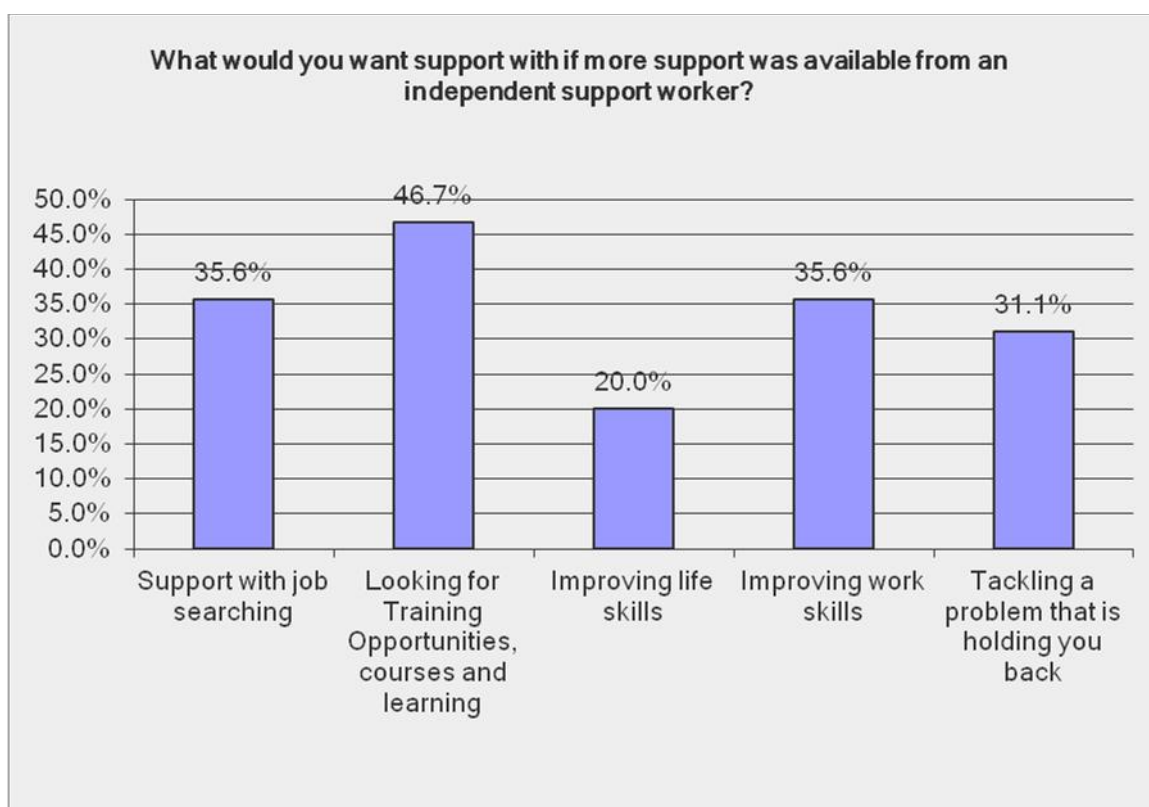
- 1 Mental health issues.
- 2 Been unemployed for 10 months and I am just 50 (male). I've got quite high and specialist skills (marketing pharmaceutical industry). Using Foodbank Hangleton.
- 3 I do voluntary work 2 days a week.
- 4 I'm a carer so don't work. I've attended courses at the Bridge and the Friends Centre. Bridge is a really good place. I come to HackIT to get help with my computer (I come from Moulescoomb). Achieved level 2 Maths and English.
- 5 Want help to master a laptop computer.
- 6 I volunteer doing accounts at an IT company; already highly trained to degree level. About to do AAT (Accounting technician course). Moved here in April from Holland. Hard to find a part-time job. There are far more full time jobs. In privileged situation of not having to work - paid work - right now.
- 7 I am part-time at college
- 8 Doing voluntary work more - I'm near retirement age. Doing some at Portslade Learning Centre right now.
- 9 Want to do HGV driving.
- 10 I'm caring for parents and children.
- 11 Living at home with my carer who sorts these things out. I use computer room HackIT
- 12 About to finish college and no job lined up.
- 13 Don't know how help could work for me. I am hoping to find some paid work to make up the shortfall between stopping work and pension age.
- 14 I want to update qualifications; I need to get more work to pay for training and pay for the course. I am seeking work to do this.
- 15 I volunteer at the moment. If you need qualification for a particular job and I am open to doing one.
- 16 My life is very complicated. I do part time work sometimes - on a self-employed basis.
- 17 Got a part time job plus universal credit. Training to be a tattoo artist; set up for life.
- 18 Self improvement is good. Stuck in part-time job at Tesco's.
- 19 Not in work at the moment - parent of three young children.
- 20 Income particularly important to me.
- 21 Getting employers to consider me - I am blind.
- 22 Income is the top priority.
- 23 Came to computer at a late age and it hit me hard. Can't afford broadband required for job applications/search.
- 24 I part-time work; not enough work available or money.
- 25 Making changes made difficult by jobcentre. Sanctioned when I tried to change one appointment due to having a meeting at housing plus appointment that I had been waiting on for months.
- 26 Important for my children I improve on British things
- 27 I am a career. I have done computer skills and photography courses at HackIT
- 28 Need more income. Trapped by increased pension age as I am 60 with no pension yet and no job.

### Question 3: What kind of support people want

#### Main points:

Accessing training opportunities and improving work skills are the most important priorities for respondents and, though supporting job searching is important, looking at training and tackling problems that hold people back are, together, most important.

#### Results, statistics:



#### What would you want support with if more support was available from an independent support worker?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Support with job searching	35.6%	16
Looking for Training Opportunities, courses and learning	46.7%	21
Improving life skills	20.0%	9
Improving work skills	35.6%	16
Tackling a problem that is holding you back	31.1%	14
Other (please specify)		26
<b>answered question</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>6</b>

**Results, comments:**

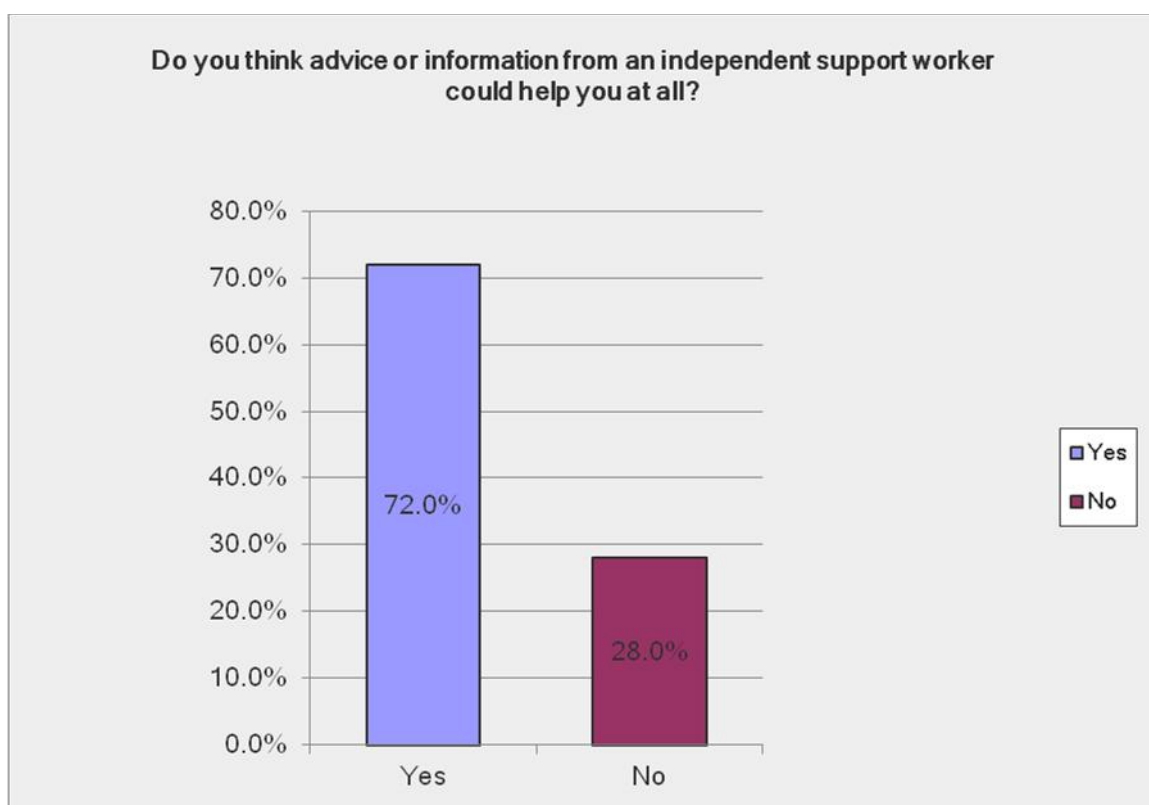
- 1 Mental health issues can't work (male @30 yrs.). My friend with me has exactly the same responses to your questionnaire - i.e. can't work because of mental health (Female @ 25 years)
- 2 Wouldn't use this service. I've got lots of mental health issues - cant deal with crowds; don't understand things. I can't read.
- 3 I've had interviews but age is not working in my favour. This week a young interviewer made it plain they were looking for someone younger and with more diverse knowledge and skills.
- 4 Age against me in job hunting as I am 63 (male). See job adviser at jobcentre which is sometimes helpful I but they repeat themselves a lot. Really bad that you can't get on Universal Credit without using the premium charged helpline; plus they've ripped out the phone at the jobcentre. This all just puts more obstacles in your way.
- 5 An adviser to help give you confidence and belief in yourself. Help you work towards a goal. I plan to and hope to go to college part-time if a course comes up. Can only attend 1 or 2 days a week. I've got depression ongoing.
- 6 Learn English ways of doing things including ways of doing things in work.
- 7 Training courses opportunities especially important.
- 8 I don't need support; I know what I want but could use some job searching help.
- 9 Housing and related problems.
- 10 I'm ok on computers; did Euro Driving License IT for 7 months; not done part two. Got good IT skills.
- 11 I'm not a job-seeker but had to attend job centre for benefits. I am long term ill and disabled. Limited mobility.
- 12 I'm a recruitment consultant taking time out of work to look after my father.
- 13 Anything as regards qualifications. Not sure right now what I want - got young children.
- 14 I have mental health issues this is quite a problem with some jobs. Need a flexible employer. Also I am a single parent so need to work around school hours.
- 15 Only working part-time need to find a better job and get a qualification.
- 16 Job searching is the most important thing - other things important too.
- 17 Work skills the most important thing to improve.
- 18 My personal situation affects all the other things: job possibilities; skills; income or getting a job.
- 19 Already have a trade - need help applying for jobs in my type of work
- 20 Presentation of myself
- 21 I want a PGCE course at some point in the future. Did a useless degree - music.
- 22 By doing things online saves money like comparing utilities prices or using e-bay. I need a job I enjoy otherwise it is not good for your health.
- 23 I want to go full time in a different type of job 2/25/2016 5:17 PM
- 24 "Homemove" is meant to be an incentive but instead it is causing me lots of problems partly caused by the jobcentre. Homemove caused me a problem by not sticking to their word - after a long wait - affecting all things.
- 25 Caring and benefits advice; more training or access to different subjects related to computers; help with home work from courses and use of a PC.
- 26 Not much support around for older people I find.

#### Question 4: Could independent support help?

##### Main points:

This is a high and encouraging result with 72% - on first impression - thinking an independent support service might help them. Many respondents have a negative experience of information and advice with the support offered by some agencies not meeting expectations.

##### Results, statistics:



##### Do you think advice or information from an independent support worker could help you at all?

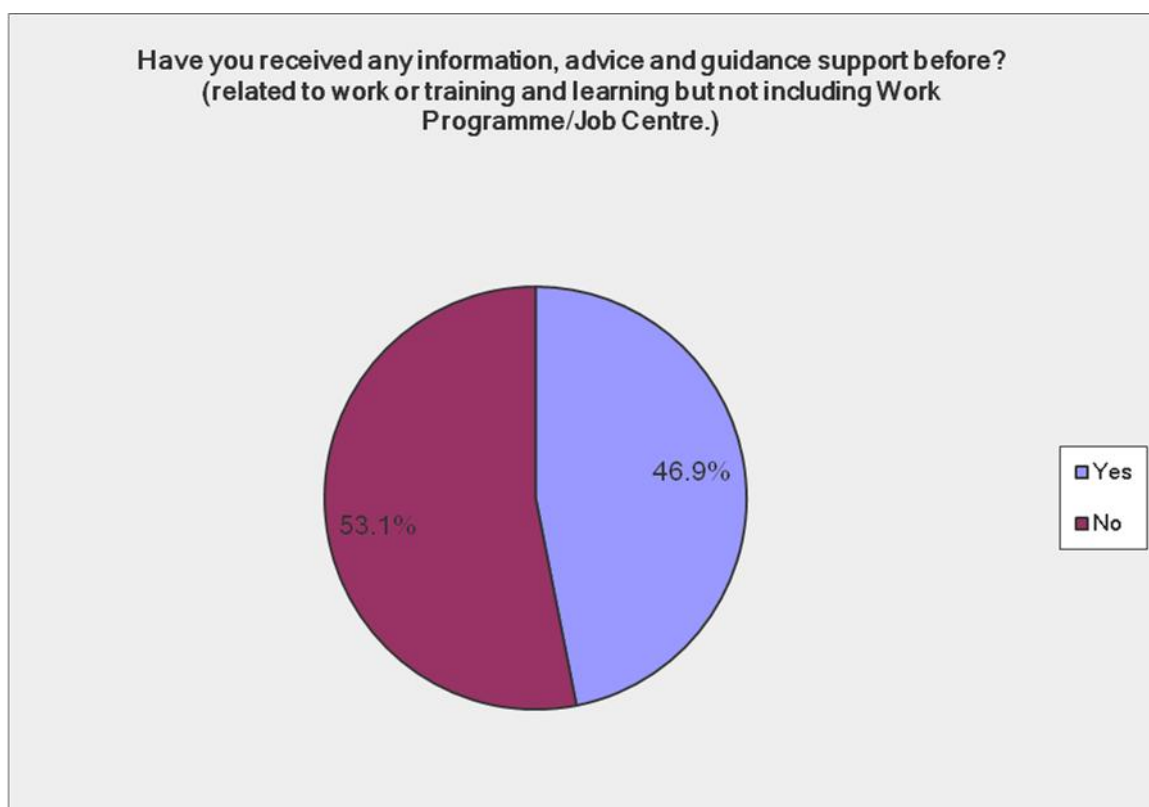
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	72.0%	36
No	28.0%	14
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>50</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>1</b>

## Question 5 and 6: Information, advice or guidance people have received before

### Main points:

Those respondents who had received any guidance or support amounted to just under 47%. The nature of advice was highly varied – from friends and old workmates, the internet, family and support agencies such as in mental health. 53% of respondents had not had any information advice or guidance.

### Results, statistics:



Have you received any information, advice and guidance support before? (related to work or training and learning but not including Work Programme/Job Centre.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.9%	23
No	53.1%	26
<b>answered question</b>		<b>49</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>2</b>



**Results, comments:**

- 1 Had OT interview at Millview hospital. Limited help in my supporting housing where I used to live.
- 2 Done a course in mental health. Did train years ago (about 25) working on electric circuit boards.
- 3 Job centre can't help me at all. Know nothing about helping me to get a job in my industry.
- 4 Went to 'Skills Training' once a week and saw adviser.
- 5 Hope this service could help me.
- 6 Did job training provided by Whitehawk Inn in Hangleton/Knoll. Great to do this in English and learn that way.
- 7 Through City College doing counselling Level 2. Before this did a first steps course there.
- 8 Only jobcentre.
- 9 On line; agencies; job sites
- 10 Different people: friends, family, different people from work.
- 11 This is my carers' area. I have won certificates here (in computer related things)
- 12 I've used many agencies. Been helped to get on a college course.
- 13 Helped finding job suitable for me; one-to-one support.
- 14 I go to Fire Safety Institute meetings; Ask a lot among my colleagues in voluntary work and YMCA and fire service; done some health and well-being training
- 15 Never needed advice - had jobs with in house training.
- 16 I am CIPD qualified. Got advice and support through my training.
- 17 Advice on the internet; suggestions of what else you could do.
- 18 Important its after 10.00 a.m. I cant get there otherwise.
- 19 Did apprenticeship trained as a Gym instructor for one-and-a-half years - no good for me.
- 20 Used A4E/Now People Plus) Not helped me much - a waste of space if you ask me.
- 21 Agencies of various sorts.
- 22 Had advice from a college when returning after children. Did a course, advice was good.
- 23 RNIB useful
- 24 Not had advice since school. I assume this service could help me.
- 25 From people I know where I used to work - managers. Good advice from him that was useful in making applications.
- 26 In Iran and in the UK - been advised well so far.
- 27 Photo course; job-seeking help; NVQs at Portslade Community College; Job centre use some time ago.
- 28 I'm involved with a 50 plus Action Group in local area (Hangleton).

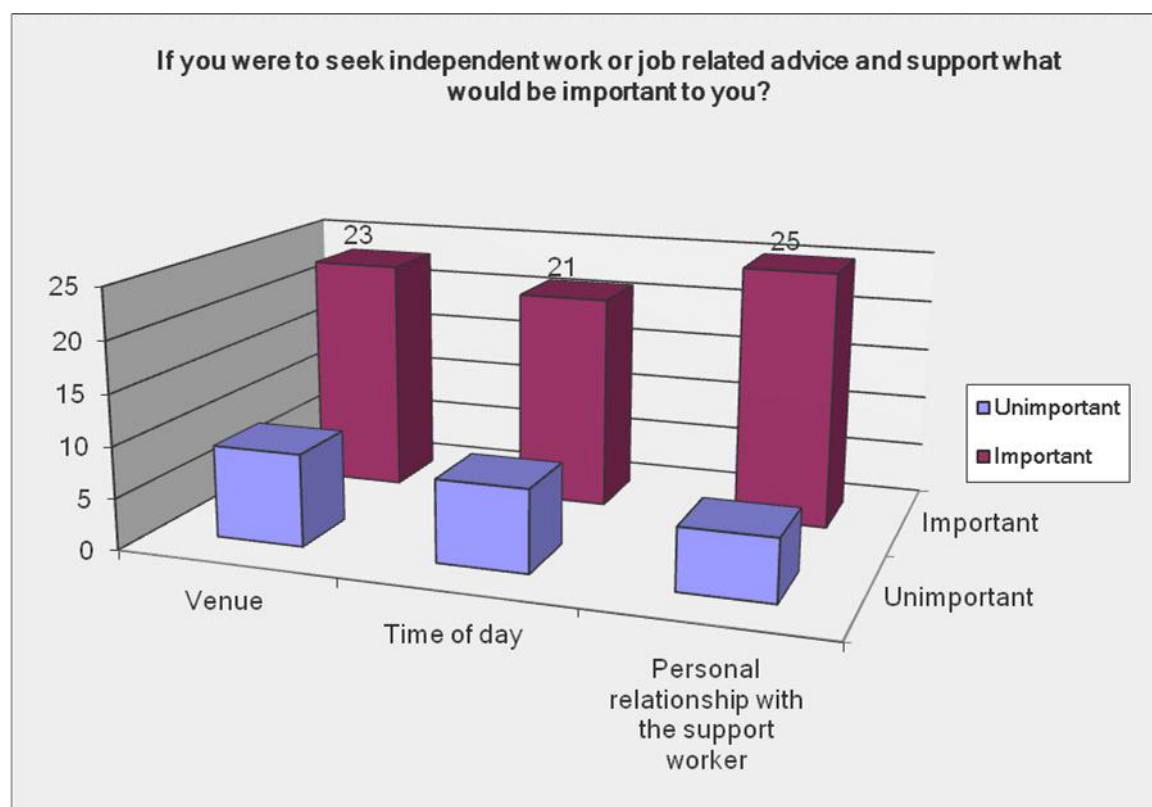
## Question 7: What is important to people in seeking and using independent work or job related support

### Main points:

Most respondents did not at this point have strong views about accessing a service that they do not yet know about. Friendly and helpful staff who can understand people's situations and strike up a good relationship was a priority. As far as venue is concerned accessibility is important and people prefer daytime accessibility. By a small margin most of those who expressed a view preferred mornings and the middle of the day.

Most people who used the jobcentre who we interviewed did not find the staff helpful as regards any activity to do with job-seeking or related training, advice or support. Strong criticisms were voiced mostly on punitive sanctions and the agency putting barriers in the way of improving employability rather than working on solutions.

### Results, statistics:



### If you were to seek independent work or job related advice and support what would be important to you?

Answer Options	Important	Unimportant	Response Count
Venue	23	9	32
Time of day	21	8	29
Personal relationship with the support worker	25	6	31

Other (please specify)	13
<b><i>answered question</i></b>	<b>42</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>	<b>9</b>

### Results, comments:

- 1 Relationship with the adviser is paramount!
- 2 Had advice from jobcentre. There is too much bullying there. Need someone who can support you a little bit not someone who is going to dig you a hole.
- 3 Daytime availability important
- 4 In Hove somewhere
- 5 Personal relationship and trust really important.
- 6 Venue always helpful. Flexibility needed and in school hours. Personable people you get on with who understand your situation is really important.
- 7 Need daytime availability and local - evenings no good to me.
- 8 I would use support worker if my situation changed but don't need now. I'm in Brighton and work in West Hove. Venue important that its local.
- 9 Need general, open, accessible friendly advice and help in a centre.
- 10 Daytime mornings please
- 11 I get double booked (not under my control) and with public transport can't get to computer room sometimes. Computer room needs to be open more often (HackIT)
- 12 Mornings
- 13 Government has not provided support for older people that they said they would.

## Question 8: Other comments

### Main points:

The comments below speak for themselves. At the very least they identify significant gaps in the availability of support, guidance, information and training (some short and lower level). Clearly for many jobseekers under-employment or unemployment require many personal, skills-based and supportive activities and interventions to be made available if the prospects for these people are to improve.

### Results, comments:

- 1 Advice/support needs to be local or easily accessible by bus.
- 2 Some people - including some 'jobseekers' - can't fend for themselves and need support. I wish the people at the jobcentre would not discriminate. It matters a lot who you see at the job centre. Some help but mostly it's just a job to them.
- 3 HackIT works with many high needs clients. Adults with learning disabilities, sensory impairment and mental health included - also people with very low computer skills without broadband or computer at home.
- 4 I can do most things myself so probably wouldn't need an adviser. Barrier of transport and finding money for travel is really difficult for people. Important help is close by. Face-to-face is important too. Lots of people have not got access to a computer.
- 5 Trying to get the basic of computers. I realise the problem this causes me in the job market. David (trainer) has far more patience than my son-in-law!
- 6 Don't want to answer any more- intrusive.
- 7 Need trust otherwise there is no point in seeing them.
- 8 I pay bus ticket expenses every week. Not paid every week (repaid back) Paid back after two weeks - impossible on the money I get.
- 9 Personal relationships the most important thing in helping me improve myself.
- 10 Nowhere safe as an unemployed person. Don't think they should be allowed to stop your benefit if you can't get work. You are treated like the pits.
- 11 Help at looking at job options. Important it is independent not punitive.
- 12 Access to computer rooms too limited restricted to certain times of the week. It is good that here is less structured learning here (at HackIT). The hike in retirement age has caught lots of people. Limited access to the job market (for older people) as employers want to concentrate of developing younger people.
- 13 Computer room at jobcentre is no good - no help and a bad atmosphere. Can't afford bus fares and job centre don't always pay; and they pay late when they do pay expenses.
- 14 Lots of things are important to me; this country has given me a lot - I'm grateful

## Appendix One - Demographic breakdown of the Respondent Sample

<b>Gender</b>		<b>Ethnic Background</b>	
Male	29	White	
Female	22	English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish	43
		Any other White Background	1
		Asian	
		Bangladeshi	4
		Other Asian background	3
<b>Age</b>		<b>Do you have a disability?</b>	
Under 29	14	Yes	12
29-49	19	No	39
50 or more	18		
<b>Do you have a job?</b>		<b>Are you?</b>	
Yes	4	A member of the public	42
No	46	An existing service user of this Organisation	9