



Client Feedback

on Refugee Action's One Stop,
Choices and Reception Advice Services

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This aim of this survey was to provide information and insights into the experiences and views of Refugee Action's service users as at October and November 2005. The survey covers clients' experiences of Refugee Action as well as their experiences and anxieties about their personal situation and the wider society. In total, 114 clients were interviewed using a standard questionnaire. The data was analysed by Michael Bell Associates using SNAP software. The results show that across a wide range of quality measures clients continue to rate Refugee Actions services very highly and, on virtually all measures ratings had improved since the previous 2003 survey. However service users' personal situation and their experiences of the wider society were generally worse than in 2003 with higher levels of abuse and fear of abuse reported as well as higher rates of destitution and its associated problems. Physical health problems remain well above the national average, 52% reported health problems and 31% of clients reported mental health problems. Recommendations appear at the end of this summary.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Refugee Action is an independent national charity, which was founded in 1981. Refugee Action works with refugees and asylum seekers to build new lives in the UK and provides practical advice, support and assistance for refugees, from arrival to their longer-term settlement. As one of the country's leading agencies in the field, Refugee Action has 25 years' experience in pioneering innovative work in partnership with refugees and other agencies.

This survey covers three different services provided by Refugee Action:

- The One Stop Service which provides independent, confidential advice and support to asylum seekers and refugees from 7 offices across 4 English regions the South West, South Central, East Midlands and the North West. In addition to direct advice services The One Stop Service works in partnership with a wide range of partner agencies at local, regional and national level to ensure access to other services and to meet gaps in service delivery. The One Stop Service has been operating since April 2000 and is funded by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS).
- The 'Choices' project which provides impartial advice and support to refugees and asylum seekers who are considering returning home. Choices is funded through the European Refugee Fund and the Home Office. Choices has been providing services since 1999 and offers both telephone and face-to-face advice and support. Clients can access Choices from any Refugee Action office, and dedicated staff are based in Leeds, London, Manchester and Leicester.
- Reception and Initial Accommodation services for newly arrived asylum seekers are provided in Bristol and Manchester, and reception only services in Liverpool. Services include independent, confidential advice and support and initial orientation and welcome. These services are funded by NASS.

In October and November 2005 Refugee Action carried out a user feedback survey of its Asylum Advice (One Stop Service and Reception) and Choices services. A total of 114 clients were interviewed in person (27 of whom were Choices clients) using a standard questionnaire.

The aims of the survey were to:

- gain an up-to-date picture of the problems faced by service users
- obtain feedback on how users perceived Refugee Action's advice services
- provide insight as to how Refugee Action can work to improve its services
- provide information to assist with the development of new services to better meet client needs.

The key findings are summarised below, together with an outline of the methodology and recommendations for service improvement and development. Findings from the survey will be used by Refugee Action to develop its forward strategy to take the service to 2010 and beyond.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this research project was one-to-one, face-to-face interviews with clients who visited Refugee Action offices within a two-week period during October and November 2005. The interviews were undertaken by Refugee Action staff and, where appropriate, supported by interpreters. A questionnaire was developed using the 2003 survey¹ as a template and is included in Appendix 1.

To try to ensure consistency of the interview process, interviewers were briefed and issued with guidance notes. The briefings were given via cascade through the Deputy Managers. Interviewers were asked to carry out two practice interviews prior to interviewing clients.

All clients who called into an office during the period of the survey were given a translated information sheet about the survey in the 10 most frequently used languages plus English. Clients were then asked if they would be willing to participate; those who agreed to be interviewed were provided as necessary with interpreters in their preferred language. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Analysis of the data was undertaken using SNAP software and the results are presented in both tabular and graphical form. Where there was any significant regional variation cross tabulations are provided showing disaggregated results.

The results apply to clients across all three services, except for those reported in section 5.5 which apply to Choices clients only.

¹ See *"Client Feedback on Refugee Action's One Stop Services"* Refugee Action and Michael Bell Associates (December 2003).

2 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section highlights key findings from the survey and follows up with key conclusions and recommendations for consideration by Refugee Action.

2.1 PROFILE OF SERVICE USERS

Background of respondents

- A total of 114 responses were achieved: 27 Choices and 87 Asylum Advice clients.
- The gender breakdown of responses was 79% male and 21% female with 34% aged 18-25, 43% aged 26-35 and 19% aged 36-54. Most (67%) lived alone and a minority (13%) had caring responsibilities for children and none for older people.
- Kurds and black Africans made up the majority of respondents, 40% and 29% respectively. The main first languages spoken were Kurdish (60%), Farsi (17%) and Arabic (10%), with English the most widely spoken second language (84 clients).
- The majority of clients arrived between 2000 and 2005 (94%). Only 5% arrived before 2000.
- Most significantly 39% of all clients had been refused asylum. This figure is four times higher than two years ago (Client Feedback report December 03). There were significant regional variations, with 100% of Leeds clients and 82% of Plymouth's clients having been refused asylum. Manchester had the lowest number of refused asylum seekers (6%).
- A third (32%) of respondents were asylum seekers (this is half the figure of two years ago), 10% were voluntary return clients, 15% were appealing their decision, and only 3% were refugees with indefinite leave to remain.

Accommodation

- Just over a third (36%) were not satisfied with the quality of their accommodation, saying it was 'poor' or 'very poor'. This ranged across staying with friends or family, in NASS housing, Emergency Accommodation, Section 4, or private rented. This is 10% higher than in 2003.
- Those living with friends or family were most likely to provide a negative rating to their accommodation with 51% citing their living conditions as 'poor' or 'very poor'.
- The main reasons cited for poor quality accommodation were:
 - problems with overcrowding,
 - a lack of facilities or amenities,
 - structural problems, or feeling cold or unsafe.

- Overall, 30% of respondents felt that their accommodation was satisfactory. 39% of clients said NASS accommodation was satisfactory, 32% said the same for friends/family, and 31% reported satisfaction for Emergency Accommodation.

Health

- Fifty-two percent of respondents stated that they had a long-term illness or disability, with a significant number citing depression (31%).
- The level of reported ill health among the respondents is much higher than the national average. In the 2001 Census the overall proportion of men aged 16-44 reporting a long-term illness was 10%, with 24% for men aged 45-64. Eleven percent of women aged 16-44 and 35% aged 45-64 reported longstanding illness. (Chronic sickness, Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics).
- Around half of those reporting long-term illness stated that they were not receiving NHS treatment for their condition. However, 73% of respondents had access to a GP or doctor, with figures for access much higher for women (92%) than men (69%).
- The area where people were least likely to have access to a doctor was Leeds, perhaps reflecting that all interviewees from that office were failed asylum seekers. However this is taken from a sample of just five clients.

Education and qualifications

- Five respondents had gained qualifications in the UK - 3 had GCSEs, 1 a trade/vocational qualification and 1 achieved a Higher Degree. Fifteen respondents (13%) had the equivalent of NVQ Level 4 and above from overseas qualifications, and 35% had the equivalent of an A level and below.
- One in five respondents stated they held a professional qualification, with engineering the most frequent discipline, followed by health, teaching, public service and journalism, then legal, science or architecture. Respondents also cited their profession as tailor, plumber, secretary, vet, make-up artist, trader or barber.

Money and homelessness

- A high number of respondents (73%) stated they had experienced living without any money since arriving in the UK, mainly because NASS support had ceased and/or when asylum was refused. This is significantly higher than recorded in the Client Feedback Report two years ago (57%).
- Almost three fifths (59%) of respondents stated that they had experienced having nowhere to live since arriving in the UK. This was due mainly to NASS support stopping and/or when asylum was refused.
- Clients were asked an optional question of how having no money to live on had affected them personally. Sixty-five clients answered and reported

experiencing depression, despair, suicidal thoughts, insecurity and loneliness, sadness, stress, loss of weight, humiliation and degradation.

2.2 VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEE ACTION

Access to Refugee Action

- Four out of five (80%) of respondents had used Refugee Action services previously. The main route was via friends (50%). Referral by friends was greatest in Manchester and Bristol and lowest in Liverpool and Plymouth.
- Of clients who had an appointment 86% were seen on time, and 14% were seen late. Of those who were seen late 67% were seen in under 30 minutes and 33% over an hour late. This is a significant improvement on two years ago when 75% of appointments were on time and 35% were late.
- Most drop-in clients (64%) were seen in under 30 minutes. This is slightly down on two years ago (69%). Twenty-seven percent waited up to an hour and 4% between 1 and 2 hours.
- For 61% of clients, their journey time to the Refugee Action office was less than 30 minutes and 28% between 30 minutes and one hour. Most respondents (64%) walked to the Refugee Action office.
- Of clients who gave information about where they lived, only three said they lived outside a city where a Refugee Action office is based. This seems to support the journey times to Refugee Action. However clients who accessed the service by phone or partner agency are not included in these results. We would expect a higher number of clients living outside of the main cities to have contacted Refugee Action by phone or partner agency although this was not researched as part of this survey.

Trust and satisfaction

- The majority of clients (90%) said they either trusted Refugee Action a lot (54%) or said they trusted the agency (36%). This is an increase from two years ago (83%). Only 2 out of the 114 respondents stated that they did not really trust Refugee Action.
- The main reasons given for trusting Refugee Action were because the agency provides a good service, is very helpful, listens to clients and solves problems.
- Almost half (45%) of respondents used an interpreter at some point of which 96% of them were happy with the interpreter.
- Four out of five (80%) were aware that if they were not happy with the interpreter they had the right to complain. This is a significant improvement from two years ago when only 56% of clients were aware of this right (Client Survey 2003). This improvement is likely to be the result of a concerted

effort by Refugee Action to raise awareness of their clients rights to complain.

- Most clients (88%) felt their caseworker was either very (65%) or quite (23%) sympathetic and understanding. Only 3% of respondents stated that their caseworker was not sympathetic or understanding.
- Nearly all clients (95%) felt either highly respected during advice sessions (68%) or fairly respected (27%). Only four respondents stated that they did not always feel respected.
- The majority of respondents (92%) were completely confident (67%) or fairly confident (25%) that the advice was given in their best interests. Six percent were not very or not at all confident.
- Figures were equally positive around the clarity of the advice-giving process, with 93% of respondents feeling that the advice given to them was either very (73%) or fairly (20%) clear and understandable.
- Clients said the most important factor when seeking advice was the provision of clear and understandable advice, followed by friendly and helpful staff and confidentiality. The least important factor when seeking advice was finding out about groups from their community.
- Almost three quarters (71%) of respondents were aware that Refugee Action could offer them independent advice if they wished to consider returning to their country of origin, and 37% had received advice from Refugee Action regarding this.

2.3 DEALING WITH THE WIDER WORLD

Experiences and Anxieties

- A high percentage of clients had experienced problems with their asylum and immigration status (83%), with money or vouchers (81%), with their accommodation (76%), their dealings with the immigration service (63%) and finding a legal adviser to help with their asylum claim (62%).
- More than half (54%) had problems contacting friends or family at home and 51% had experienced health problems.
- Over a third (38%) had experienced problems making new friends in the local community.
- The most common problems experienced were related to immigration status (83%), money (81%) and housing (76%).
- The least common problems were keeping links with their own cultural group (27%) and finding education for themselves or their children (34%). Childcare was the least common problem (4%) but this probably relates to

the relatively smaller number of women and clients with childcare responsibilities.

- The factors that raised the greatest concerns, with clients saying that they were either 'extremely' or 'quite worried' were:
 - asylum status (77%)
 - money and housing (both at 72%)
 - their dealings with immigration services (55%)
 - finding a legal adviser to help with the asylum claim (58%)
 - contacting friends and family at home (52%).
- Fewer clients were worried about making new friends in the local community (30%) and keeping links with their own cultural group (17%).

Abuse and harassment

- A high number of respondents (57%) were frightened that they might be harassed or abused because they were an asylum seeker or refugee. This compares to 46% who stated that they were fearful of harassment or abuse in the 2003 Client Survey.
- A high proportion of clients (44%) said they had suffered harassment or abuse. Clients were more likely to report suffering harassment or abuse from Portsmouth (64%), Plymouth (59%) and London (57%).
- Clients from Leeds (0%), Nottingham (23%), Bristol (35%), and Liverpool (36%) were least likely to report having suffered harassment or abuse. But this still represents a high proportion of clients who had experienced abuse or harassment apart from Leeds where there were no reports of abuse. However, the Leeds sample was very small and therefore may not be very representative.
- Clients from Portsmouth (86%), London (71%) and Leicester (71%) were more likely to report that they were frightened of harassment or abuse. Clients from Leeds, Nottingham and Bristol were less likely to report this. But in all cities (apart from Leeds) over half of all clients were frightened of being abused or harassed.

Access to other services

- Information was given to clients for a range of services and the most frequently accessed were housing, health, education and legal services.
- Some services were not accessed despite being given information for them.
- Overall, respondents felt that the services from other agencies received were very helpful. The most highly rated services in terms of being helpful were education and health.

- The services that respondents found the least helpful were for employment, bereavement, legal aspects and housing.

Local community

- Overall, 26% of the respondents felt that their local community was very friendly and welcoming, with 41% finding it quite friendly and welcoming.
- The most welcoming local communities were Leicester (86% said it was quite welcoming) and Liverpool (64% said it was very welcoming). Also Nottingham scored highly with 85% of clients finding the city very or quite welcoming, as well as London (71%) and Bristol (71%).
- The lowest ranking in terms of welcome and friendliness was for respondents from Portsmouth - 36% clients did not find the city friendly. However, the same proportion of clients found it to be the opposite, with an extra 14% finding it very welcoming.
- Overall, 53% felt they were part of the local community.
- Respondents from Liverpool were significantly more likely to feel very much part of the local community (64%), while 78% of clients in Leicester felt quite (57%) or very (21%) part of the community.
- Clients in Nottingham (54%), Bristol (52%) and Manchester (46%) also felt very or quite a part of their local community.
- Plymouth and Portsmouth respondents were more likely to state that they did not feel part of the community at all (35% and 28% respectively), however a higher proportion did feel quite and/or very involved.

2.4 CHOICES - VOLUNTARY RETURN CLIENTS

All the preceding responses apply to all Refugee Action clients, including Choices. The following points apply to Choices clients only.

- Six Choices respondents stated that they did not make the decision to return of their own free will.
- Choices respondents (around 60%) felt the most helpful things to assist them plan returning home would be provision of information about the situation in their home country, and hearing about the experiences of other returnees.
- Respondents (about 60%) also rated these aspects as highly important in helping them plan their return home: having someone to talk to in confidence about their feelings about return, and help to access a training course or paid work, both in the UK and in the country of origin.

2.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. Refugee Action's client base is predominately young and male reflecting the profile of asylum seekers. The services provided are highly regarded, however, efforts should continue to be made to ensure that other groups of current or potential service users such as women, older people or those with caring responsibilities are equally well served either through Refugee Action's mainstream provision or through special projects.
- R2. A significant proportion of service users have been refused asylum and there are some significant variations between offices. This may be due to variations in the country of origin and their likelihood of being granted or refused asylum. Refugee Action should consider doing some further analysis as to why these differences exist.
- R3. A very high proportion of clients reported they had experienced homelessness and destitution and some described how this had affected them personally. Refugee Action is carrying out more detailed research in this area which will be published in 2006. In addition, given the impact of destitution on the clients themselves - ranging from depression to suicidal thoughts - Refugee Action intends to provide specialist training to front line staff to help them support people in this situation.
- R4. This report highlights satisfaction with the management of advice services with high levels of trust, relative ease of access and reasonable waiting times. It remains the case that most clients hear about Refugee Action through friends and this may have some bearing on the high level of trust invested in the agency by clients. However, repeat visits by asylum seekers for advice appear high. This may be due to the follow-up work often required for complex casework (16% of repeat visits) or re-occurring (35%) or new problems (27%). Some follow-up investigation on a team-by-team basis should be carried out to see if there is any potential to reduce the frequency of repeat advice sessions.
- R5. While the Choices project is regarded positively by clients, due to changes in Government policy, there are concerns that it may not be seen as extending an individual's options but part of wider coercive elements at removal. The research indicated in R3. above will enable a deeper exploration of why clients make the choices they do with regards to facing destitution or returning home. The survey showed that 40% of interviewees did not consider that they had made the decision to return of their own free will.
- R6. Satisfaction levels with accommodation are low. The least satisfied group are those living with friends or family and many of these are failed asylum seekers. However, the levels of satisfaction with NASS and emergency accommodation are also low.

Since the survey was carried out, Refugee Action has taken significant steps to ensure an improvement in how clients rate initial accommodation in Manchester and Bristol (the two sites where this service is provided). In

Manchester (300 bed spaces) a housing officer has been recruited and is undertaking regular inspections of properties. The housing provider, which Refugee Action received most complaints about, is no longer commissioned to provide accommodation. Contact with clients has increased as some staff are now based in one of the provider's offices and a client questionnaire has been developed to enable regular evaluation of client experiences in Initial Accommodation so that any problems can be picked up and addressed more quickly.

In Bristol (30 bed spaces), Refugee Action requested inspections by Bristol City Council environmental services and as a result one of the kitchen areas in a hostel has been extended. A new service level agreement is under development to be agreed with providers and all clients are advised of the standards they should expect and are encouraged to complain if those standards are not met. Bristol will, in the next few months, adopt the evaluation system currently being piloted in Manchester.

- R7. More than two fifths of respondents reported a long term limiting illness or disability with only half currently accessing NHS treatment for their condition. A third reported mental health problems. However, 73% of respondents had access to a GP or doctor, with figures for access much higher for women (92%) than men (69%). Refugee Action needs to continue to raise these issues with their local Primary Care Trusts to ensure better access to treatment services. Refugee Action should continue with its partnership approach to develop projects that promote access to appropriate mental health services.
- R8. The fear of abuse and harassment, as well as the actual experience of abuse and harassment, has increased significantly since the 2003 Client Survey. Refugee Action should continue its work with NASS, the police and other statutory services and voluntary sector agencies to improve this situation. In addition Refugee Action should aim to build on its projects - such as the racial harassment prevention project currently running in Manchester, Bolton and Salford and its Refugee Awareness project running in Bristol, Liverpool and Nottingham and other community cohesion projects - in working towards positive change.
- R9. Although services are regarded very highly by the majority of clients across all measures, a small number of the individual comments show that some of the issues that relate to a high level of demand for services have not been fully addressed. For example, some clients are asked to wait outside when the waiting room is full. Refugee Action needs to try to address this on a team by team basis via service reviews to reduce this as far as reasonably practicable.
- R10. There are some both some encouraging and less encouraging indicators of community cohesion in that three quarters of respondents felt that their locality was friendly or welcoming and more than half of respondents overall felt part of their local community. However, there are significant regional variations. Refugee Action should continue to identify the factors creating low rankings in certain areas (Portsmouth, Plymouth and

Manchester) and make the best use of its direct experiences with clients, the host communities and its wide range of partner agencies to identify the best approaches - such as community development initiatives, awareness raising and training - that may positively impact upon these factors.

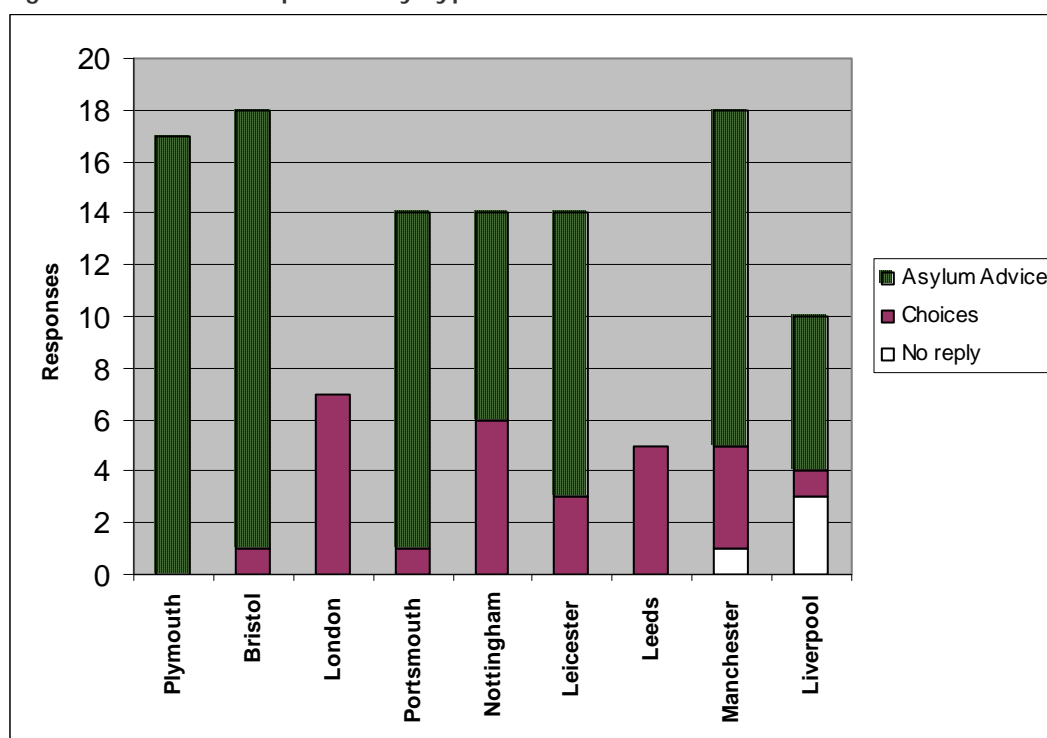
- R11. Finally Refugee Action should continue to aim for year on year improvements in terms of the quality of its services for its clients as well as continuing to work to meet their changing needs.

3 ABOUT THE SERVICE USERS

This section provides the findings on the background, status and profile of the respondents who participated in the survey. A total of 114 responses were achieved and Fig 1 below shows the responses by office.

Twenty-eight of the respondents were clients using the Choices service. In terms of regional variation the Plymouth, Bristol and Manchester offices achieved the most responses, 17 each, and Leeds and London the least, 5 and 7 responses respectively. The lower numbers of Leeds and London are because only one type of advice service is provided from these offices i.e. Choices so there are a relatively smaller number of clients compared to other locations.

Fig 1: Number of responses by type of service and office



3.1 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Clients were asked their gender, age, ethnic origin, country of origin, the languages they spoke, the year they arrived in the UK and their asylum status. The responses are set out below.

3.1.1 Gender and age

The gender breakdown reveals that three quarters of respondents were male (79%). Nearly 80% of clients were between the ages of 18 and 35; only two clients declared their age as over 55 (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Age of Clients

Age of client	Base = 114 100%
Under 18	1 0.9%
18-25	39 33.9%
26-35	50 43.5%
36-54	22 19.1%
55+	2 1.7%
No reply	1 0.9%

3.1.2 Ethnic origin of respondents

Most clients described their ethnic origin as Kurdish (40%) and black African (29%) - see Table 2 below. Most Kurdish clients are based in Plymouth and Bristol. The next most frequently described ethnic origins were Iranian, Pakistani, Somalian and Arabic. Other ethnic origins recorded were: Algerian, Albanian, Caribbean, Asian and Palestinian. Fifteen respondents declined to give information on their ethnic background.

Table 2: Ethnic origin of clients

Ethnic origin	Base = 114 100%
Kurdish	46 40%
Black African	33 29%
Iranian	14 12%
Pakistani	5 4%
Somali	5 4%
Arabic	2 1%
No reply	15 13.0%

3.1.3 Country of origin

Most respondents were from Iraq (36) and Iran (25) and the remaining clients were mainly from African countries (see Table 3 below). These clients were spread quite evenly across the regions. Refugee Action saw clients from a total of 27 different countries.

Table 3: Country of origin of clients

Iraq	36	Ivory Coast	1
Iran	25	Jamaica	1
Sudan	7	Kosovo	1
Somalia	6	Kurdistan	1
Eritrea	4	Liberia	1
DR Congo	2	Mongolia	1
Ethiopia	2	Nigeria	1
Kenya	2	Pakistan	1
Afghanistan	1	Palestine	1
Algeria	1	Saudi Arabia	1
Angola	1	Sierra Leone	1
Bolivia	1	Uganda	1
Cameroon	1	Zimbabwe	1
Chad	1		

3.1.4 Languages

Clients were asked which was their first language and any other languages they spoke. Table 4 (below) shows the six most frequently spoken first languages, with Kurdish by far the most common (60%), followed by Farsi (17%) and Arabic (10%).

Table 4: First language of clients

Language	Base = 114 100%
French	4 5%
Arabic	8 10%
Kurdish	47 60%
Somali	4 4%
Farsi	13 17%
Swahili	3 4%

The following first languages were also recorded: Amharic, Bajuni, Edo, English Kosovan, Lingala, Luganda, Massalit, Mongolian, Ndebele, Oromo, Pashto, Portuguese, Punjabi, Shona, Spanish, Sorani, Tigrinya and Urdu, giving a total of 25 first languages spoken by respondents.

In addition, respondents stated they spoke these second languages: Arabic, Amharic, Bahdini, English, Farsi, French, German, Shona, Sorani, Turkish, Urdu and Zulu, making a total of 12 second languages. The most frequently spoken second language by far was English (84 clients).

3.1.5 Year of arrival

The majority of clients arrived between 2000 and 2005 (94%), which links to the beginning of the National Asylum Support System. Only 5% arrived before 2000 (see Table 5).

Table 5: Date of arrival in the UK

Year of arrival to the UK				
1995	1998	1999	2000	2001
2	1	3	11	14
1.70%	0.90%	2.60%	9.60%	12.20%
2002	2003	2004	2005	
22	23	21	17	
19.10%	20.00%	18.30%	14.80%	

3.1.6 Status

When asked about their status, a high percentage of clients (39%) stated they had been refused asylum (see Table 6 below). This figure is four times higher than two years ago (Client Feedback report December 03).

Thirty-two percent of clients were asylum seekers. Two years ago this figure was nearly double (61%).

Ten percent had signed up to voluntary return and 15% were appealing their asylum decision. Three percent of clients described themselves as refugees/with indefinite leave to remain, compared to 6% two years ago. Two respondents did not know their status.

Table 6: The asylum/refugee status of clients

	Base	Do you know your asylum/refugee status?									
		Asylum seeker	ELR	Refugee/ILR	Refused asylum	Awaiting removal	Voluntary return	Asylum appeal	Judicial Review	Human Rights Act application	Don't know
Base	114	37	2	3	45	1	12	17	3	2	2
		32.20%	1.70%	2.60%	39.10%	0.90%	10.40%	14.80%	2.60%	1.70%	1.70%
Plymouth	17	4	-	1	14	-	1	2	-	-	-
		23.50%	-	5.90%	82.40%	-	5.90%	11.80%	-	-	-
Bristol	17	4	-	-	5	1	-	5	-	1	2
		23.50%	-	-	29.40%	5.90%	-	29.40%	-	5.90%	11.80%
London	7	-	1	-	2	-	4	1	-	-	-
		-	14.30%	-	28.60%	-	57.10%	14.30%	-	-	-
Portsmouth	14	2	1	2	4	-	1	2	-	1	-
		14.30%	7.10%	14.30%	28.60%	-	7.10%	14.30%	-	7.10%	-
Nottingham	13	1	-	-	6	-	1	2	3	-	-
		7.70%	-	-	46.20%	-	7.70%	15.40%	23.10%	-	-
Leicester	14	7	-	-	6	-	2	4	-	-	-
		50.00%	-	-	42.90%	-	14.30%	28.60%	-	-	-
Leeds	5	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	100.00%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manchester	17	11	-	-	1	-	3	1	-	-	-
		64.70%	-	-	5.90%	-	17.60%	5.90%	-	-	-
Liverpool	11	8	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
		72.70%	-	-	18.20%	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.2 ACCOMMODATION AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Clients were asked if they lived alone, with a spouse or partner or with others. They were also asked if they cared for other people. In addition, respondents gave details on the type and quality of their accommodation.

The majority of respondents lived alone (67%). This is double the figure from two years ago (Client Feedback Report December 03). Fifteen percent of clients are living with a spouse or partner.

3.2.1 Living with others

Of those respondents who did not live alone, 19% lived with friends and 5% with relatives. Half of those living with friends shared with four or more people (see Table 7 below).

Table 7: Clients living with relatives or friends

	Base	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of relatives sharing household	114	4 3.5%	1 0.9%	- -	1 0.9%	- -	- -
Number of friends sharing household	114	6 5.2%	2 1.7%	5 4.3%	4 3.5%	1 0.9%	4 3.5%

3.2.2 Caring for other people

Thirteen percent of clients care for children under 18, with most looking after young children below 12 years old. None of the respondents cared for people over the age of 65 (see Table 8).

Table 8: Caring responsibilities

	Base	No reply	1
Base	575	No 86.4%	Yes 13%
Do you care for any other children under 5?	114	107 94%	7 6%
Do you care for any other children 6-12?	114	109 96%	5 4%
Do you care for any other children 13-15?	114	111 98%	3 2%
Do you care for any other children 16-18?	114	112 98%	2 1%
Do you care for people aged over 65?	114	114 100%	- -

3.2.3 Quality of accommodation

The majority of respondents either lived in NASS accommodation (28 clients) or with friends and family (31). Twenty clients lived in Section 4 housing and 16 in Initial Accommodation.

A high number of respondents (36%) were not satisfied with the quality of their accommodation (citing 'poor' or 'very poor'), regarding friends/family, NASS housing, Initial Accommodation, Section 4 accommodation or private rented. This is 10% higher than in 2003.

There were slight variations between Initial, NASS and Section 4 accommodation but the most significant finding was that of those respondents staying with friends or family, 51% cited their living conditions as poor and very poor.

Those who stated their accommodation was poor were asked to elaborate. Thirty-seven people gave extra comments. Of these, 11 said the main reason was overcrowding, 8 cited structural problems, 7 said there was a lack of facilities, 5 stated a lack of amenities, 4 said the home was cold or dirty and 3 said they felt unsafe. Here are some of the comments:

"I have no cooker in my room"
"I have been staying with friends"
"I am homeless"
"I feel very unhappy and unsafe"
"It is cold and dirty"
"There is a small window, in a small room"

However, 30% of clients described their accommodation as satisfactory, with 18 clients describing NASS accommodation as satisfactory or good, 11 found staying with friends or family to be good or satisfactory, and 8 said Emergency Accommodation was satisfactory or good.

Table 9: Rating of current accommodation

	Base	How would you rate your accommodation?					
		No reply	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Base	114	12 10%	8 7%	17 14%	35 30%	24 20%	19 16%
No reply	12	6 50.0%	- -	1 8.3%	1 8.3%	- -	4 33.3%
Emergency accommodation	16	3 19%	1 6%	3 19%	5 31%	2 13%	2 13%
NASS accommodation	28	- -	2 7%	7 25%	11 39%	7 25%	1 4%
Friends or family	31	3 10%	1 3%	1 3%	10 32%	9 29%	7 22%
Local authority	2	- -	1 50%	- -	- -	- -	1 50%
Private rented	6	- -	- -	1 16.7%	3 50.0%	2 33.3%	- -
Section 4	20	- -	3 15%	4 20%	5 25%	4 20%	4 20%

3.3 HEALTH

Clients were asked if they suffered from any long-term illness and if they received NHS treatment and had access to a GP. They were also asked if they cared for anyone with an illness.

3.3.1 Long-term health issues

A high number of respondents reported they had a long-term illness (52%). Thirty-one percent of people said they were suffering from depression (see Table 10 below). Bone related problems (22%) and eye problems (14%) were also common complaints. While 21% of these respondents stated they received treatment on the NHS, 27% clients were not getting any help.

Table 10: Long-term illnesses and receipt of NHS treatment

	Base	% with problems	Are you currently receiving NHS treatment?	
			Yes	No
Base	59		24 20.9%	31 27.0%
Bone related	13	22%	7 53.8%	6 46.2%
Eyes	8	14%	5 62.5%	2 25.0%
Ears	2	3%	1 50.0%	1 50.0%
Skin	2	3%	1 50.0%	1 50.0%
Heart	3	5%	2 66.7%	1 33.3%
Stomach	4	7%	- -	4 100.0%
Depression	18	31%	10 55.6%	8 44.4%
Mental	7	12%	5 71.4%	2 28.6%
Sexual health	2	3%	1 50.0%	1 50.0%

3.3.2 Access to a doctor

All clients were asked if they had access to a doctor and most of them did (73%). The sizes are too small to show robust regional variation, however table 11 below shows access to doctors by office. In terms of gender, 92% of women and 69% of men reported having access to a doctor.

Table 11: Access to doctors

	Base	Do you have access to a doctor/GP?		
		No reply	Yes	No
Base	114	5 4.3%	84 73.0%	27 23.5%
Plymouth	17	- -	14 82.4%	3 17.6%
Bristol	17	- -	12 70.6%	6 35.3%
London	7	- -	4 57.1%	3 42.9%
Portsmouth	14	- -	13 92.9%	1 7.1%
Nottingham	13	- -	9 69.2%	4 30.8%
Leicester	14	- -	12 85.7%	2 14.3%
Leeds	5	- -	2 40.0%	3 60.0%
Manchester	17	4 23.5%	10 58.8%	3 17.6%
Liverpool	11	1 9.1%	8 72.7%	2 18.2%

3.3.3 Caring for people with health problems

Clients were also asked if they cared for people with physical or mental health problems. A minority of clients were caring for people with physical and mental health problems (4 and 5 respondents respectively). Nine women were expecting a baby.

Table 12: Caring for others with health problems

	Base	Do you care for people with health problems?		
		No reply	Yes	No
Base	230	110 47.8%	9 3.9%	111 48.3%
Do you care for people with mental health problems	114	55 47.8%	4 3.5%	56 48.7%
People with physical health problems?	114	55 47.8%	5 4.3%	55 47.8%

3.4 EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Respondents were asked what qualifications they had achieved, in the UK and overseas.

3.4.1 Clients' qualifications

Twenty-three clients had gained trade, vocational, first degree, Masters or PhD qualifications. Thirty-one clients gained GCSE level qualifications. Just five respondents gained their qualifications in the UK (see Table 13 below).

Table 13: Qualifications of clients

	Base	Highest UK qualifications	Other	Highest overseas qualifications	Other
Higher degree/ Masters/PhD	6	1	2	3	-
1st Degree: BA/BSc	10	-	-	10	-
Trade or vocational	7	1	-	6	-
A Level/ Baccalaureate	12	-	-	12	-
GCSE/school leaver certificate	31	3	-	28	-
No qualifications	36				

3.4.2 Professional qualifications

Twenty-two respondents held professional qualifications. Table 14 shows that eight respondents gained these in the UK. Engineering was the most frequently cited profession, followed by health.

Table 14: Professional qualifications by sector

	Base	UK gained	Gained overseas
Science profession	1	1	-
Engineering profession	7	-	7
Health profession	5	2	3
Teaching profession	2	-	2
Legal profession	1	1	-
Architects, town planners, surveyors	1	1	-
Public service profession	3	1	2
Journalism	2	2	-

Other clients stated their professions from overseas as barber, secretary, plumber, tailor, vet, make-up artist and trader.

3.5 MONEY AND HOUSING

Clients were asked if there was a time when they had lived without any money since claiming asylum in the UK, or without any housing while they were in the UK.

3.5.1 Living with no money

A large number of respondents (73%) stated they had experienced living without any money since arriving in the UK - see Table 15 below. This is a higher percentage than recorded in the Client Feedback Report two years ago (57%).

The main circumstances cited for this was when NASS support had ceased and/or when asylum was refused. When asked to elaborate, 50 clients said they had lived with no money for long lengths of time, varying from three or four months to over a year (11 clients).

Table 15: Living in the UK without money

Base	Since claiming asylum in the UK, have you had a time when you had to live with no money?		
	No reply	Yes	No
114	2	84	29
	1.70%	73.00%	25.20%

Other comments given were:

- "I had no money when I had problems with my IND card"*
- "I had to live on a £10 voucher which was only enough to see the doctor"*
- "I lived with no money for about a year - my appeal was not sent in by the solicitor".*
- "I had to live with no money for about nine months when my NASS support stopped"*

3.5.2 Nowhere to live

A high number of respondents (59%) stated they had nowhere to live since arriving in the UK (see Table 16). Clients were asked to elaborate and 61 gave comments. The majority said that the main reason for having nowhere to live was because their NASS support stopped or their asylum claim was refused.

Table 16: Living in the UK without accommodation

Base	Since claiming asylum in the UK, have you had a time when you had nowhere to live?		
	No reply	Yes	No
114	1	68	46
	0.9%	59.1%	40%

Some of the responses are recorded below:

"I left a horrible hotel and was taken to the police station by a policeman"
"I begged to stay with friends"
"When I arrived, I slept in the street"
"I had nowhere to live for three months due to NASS eviction, and domestic violence"
"I had nowhere to live for about nine months when I was refused support"
"For a long time, moved from place to place"
"I have been homeless numerous times"

3.5.3 HOW DESTITUTION AFFECTED CLIENTS PERSONALLY

Clients were asked how having no money to live on and/or nowhere to live had affected them personally. This was an optional question. Sixty-five clients answered and reported depression, despair, suicidal thoughts, insecurity and loneliness, sadness, stress, loss of weight, humiliation and degradation.

Some responses are recorded below:

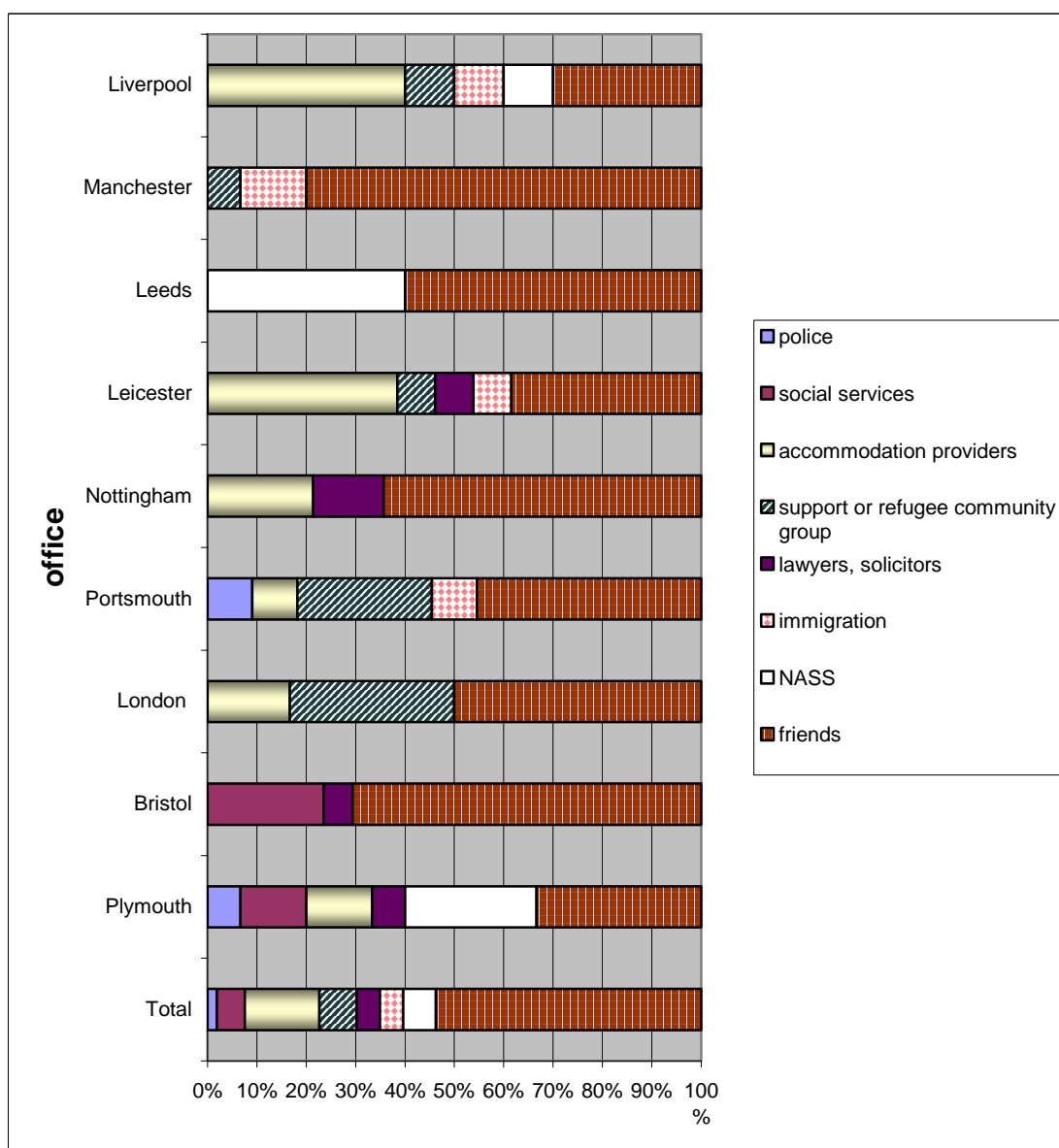
"I felt hopeless"
"I felt depressed"
"I felt degraded"
"I felt humiliated"
"I felt unsafe"
"I have been unable to communicate with family back home"
"I had suicidal thoughts".

4 ACCESS TO REFUGEE ACTION

4.1 AWARENESS OF SERVICE

Clients were asked how they knew about Refugee Action. Eighty percent of respondents had used Refugee Action services previously. Most clients became aware of Refugee Action services through friends - 50% across all offices (see Fig 2 below). The second most frequent way was through accommodation providers (14%), particularly in Liverpool and Leicester. This was followed by support and community groups (7%), particularly in London, and via NASS (6%), mainly in Leeds and Plymouth.

Fig 2: How clients became aware of Refugee Action



4.2 VISITS AND APPOINTMENTS

Clients were asked how many visits they had made to Refugee Action and if that day's visit was drop-in or appointment.

4.2.1 Number of visits

Thirty-five percent of respondents made less than five visits to Refugee Action. Thirteen visited more than 20 times, most often in Leicester, Portsmouth and Plymouth (see Table 17 below).

Table 17: Frequency of visits to Refugee Action

		Plymouth	Bristol	London	Portsmouth	Nottingham	Leicester	Leeds	Manchester	Liverpool
Number of visits	Total visits made	4%			4%	21%		17%	33%	21%
1	6	33%	17%				33%		17%	
2	10	20%		20%	20%	10%	20%		10%	
3	14	7%	21%	14%	21%	7%	14%		7%	7%
4	4	25%	25%			25%			25%	
5	7		43%				14%		29%	14%
6	10	30%		20%	20%	20%			10%	
7	4	25%			25%	25%				25%
8	4		25%			25%		25%		25%
10	9	44%	22%	11%	11%		11%			
12	1	100%								
15	4		25%		25%	25%				25%
20	2		50%				50%			

4.2.2 Appointment or drop-in

On the day they were interviewed, an almost equal number of respondents dropped into the office as had an appointment (see Table 18).

Table 18: Access to Refugee Action by appointment "drop in"

	Base	Did you have an appointment or did you just drop in?		
		No reply	Appointment	Drop-in
Plymouth	17	-	10 58.8%	7 41.2%
Bristol	17	-	1 5.9%	17 100.0%
London	7	-	6 85.7%	1 14.3%
Portsmouth	14	1 7.1%	12 85.7%	5 35.7%
Nottingham	13	-	9 69.2%	4 30.8%
Leicester	14	-	6 42.9%	9 64.3%
Leeds	5	-	4 80.0%	1 20.0%
Manchester	17	2 11.8%	6 35.3%	9 52.9%
Liverpool	11	-	5 45.5%	8 72.7%

4.3 WAITING TIMES

Clients were asked if they had an appointment or drop-in and how long they waited.

Of clients who had an appointment 86% were seen on time, and 14% were seen late (see Table 19). Of those who were seen late 67% were seen in under 30 minutes and 33% over an hour late. This is a significant improvement on two years ago when 75% of appointments were on time and 35% were late.

Table 19: Waiting times for appointment

	Waiting time for appointment
Seen on time	86%
Seen late	14%
Of those seen late:	
Under 30 minutes	67%
30 minutes - one hour	-
1-2 hours	33%
2 hours+	-

Most drop-in clients (64%) were seen in under 30 minutes (see Table 20). Twenty-seven percent had to wait up to an hour and 4% between 1 and 2 hours.

Table 20: Waiting times for “drop-in” services

	Waiting time for drop-in
Under 30 minutes	64%
30 minutes to one hour	27%
1-2 hours	4%
2 hours+	5%

4.4 REASON FOR VISIT

Most respondents came to Refugee Action about the same problem (35%), 27% for a new problem and 16% for a follow-up appointment (see Table 21 below).

Table 21: Reasons for visit to Refugee Action

Base	114
	100.00%
No reply	28
	24.30%
New problem	31
	27.00%
Same problem	40
	34.80%
Follow-up appointment	18
	15.70%

4.5 TRAVEL TO REFUGEE ACTION AND WHERE CLIENTS LIVE

Clients were asked how they travelled to Refugee Action on the day of the interview, how long the journey took, and where they lived.

Most respondents (64%) walked to Refugee Action (see Table 22 below). Of these, 57% took less than 30 minutes to get there, 33% between 30 minutes and one hour and 10% took one to two hours. Thirty percent travelled by bus, of which 60% took under 30 minutes to arrive. Seven clients travelled by car, one by taxi, five by train and one by bike.

Table 22: Travel time and distance to Refugee Action

	Base	How long did it take you to get to RA?					
		No reply	Less than 30 minutes	30 minutes - 1 hour	1-2 hours	2-3 hours	4-5 hours
<i>Base</i>	114	4 3.5%	67 61.0 %	31 28.0%	12 11%	1 1%	-
No reply	4	4 100.0%	-	-	-	-	-
Walked	70	-	40 57.1%	23 32.9%	7 10.0%	-	-
Bike	1	-	1 100.0%	-	-	-	-
Bus	33	-	20 60.6%	8 24.2%	4 12.1%	1 3.0%	-
Train	5	-	1 20.0%	2 40.0%	2 40.0%	-	-
Taxi	1	-	1 100.0%	-	-	-	-
Car	7	-	7 100.0%	-	-	-	-

Almost all the respondents lived in the same town or city where the Refugee Action office is located (see Table 23 below). Only three clients lived outside of a city where a One Stop Service was based.

Table 23: Place of residence

	Base	Which town do you live?	
		No reply	
Base	114	11 9.6%	104 90.4%
Plymouth	17	1 5.9%	16 94.1%
Bristol	17	-	17 100.0%
London	7	-	7 100.0%
Portsmouth	14	2 14.3%	12 85.7%
Nottingham	13	-	13 100.0%
Leicester	14	-	14 100.0%
Leeds	5	2 40.0%	3 60.0%
Manchester	17	3 17.6%	14 82.4%
Liverpool	11	3 27.3%	8 72.7%

5 VIEWS OF THE SERVICE RECEIVED

5.1 TRUST

Clients were asked if they could trust Refugee Action with their problem. The vast majority of respondents (90%) said they trusted Refugee Action (36%) or trusted the agency a lot (54%). This is an increase from two years ago when 83% reported this level of trust.

By office, London and Plymouth respondents were most likely to trust the agency a lot. Only two respondents said they did not really trust Refugee Action.

Table 24: Level of trust in Refugee Action

	Base	Did you feel you could trust Refugee Action?					
		No reply	Trust a lot	Trust	Not sure	Not really trust	Not trust at all
<i>Base</i>	114	1 0.9%	62 53.9%	42 36.5%	8 7.0%	2 1.7%	-
Plymouth	17	-	12 70.6%	5 29.4%	-	-	-
Bristol	17	-	11 64.7%	5 29.4%	1 5.9%	-	-
London	7	-	6 85.7%	1 14.3%	-	-	-
Portsmouth	14	-	7 50.0%	4 28.6%	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	-
Nottingham	13	-	3 23.1%	8 61.5%	2 15.4%	-	-
Leicester	14	-	4 28.6%	9 64.3%	-	1 7.1%	-
Leeds	5	-	2 40.0%	2 40.0%	1 20.0%	-	-
Manchester	17	1 5.9%	11 64.7%	4 23.5%	1 5.9%	-	-
Liverpool	11	-	6 54.5%	4 36.4%	1 9.1%	-	-

The main reasons given for trusting Refugee Action were:

- "They give very good advice"*
- "They have helped with my problems"*
- "They have been very helpful"*
- "They are genuine people"*
- "They help solve problems"*
- "They have helped a lot of people"*
- "There is no reason not to"*
- "They do their best to help"*
- "No other option but to trust Refugee Action"*

Clients were asked to elaborate and of the 51 comments received, only two were less trusting. These were:

"Communication barriers, problems not understood"
"Not sure until there is a result on my application"

5.2 INTERPRETER USAGE AND CASEWORKER SATISFACTION

Clients were asked if they had used an interpreter, if they were happy with the service, and if they were aware they had the right to inform Refugee Action if they were unhappy with their interpreter. Clients were also asked if they felt that their caseworker was sympathetic and understanding during their advice session.

5.2.1 Use of interpreters

Forty-five percent of respondents used an interpreter at some point (see Table 25). Almost all (96%) were happy with their interpreter and 80% were aware that if they were not happy with the interpreter, they had the right to inform them at the time. This is a significant improvement from two years ago when only 56% of clients were aware of this right (Client Survey 2003).

Table 25: Use of interpreters

When speaking to the caseworker, did you use an interpreter?	
<i>Base</i>	114
	100.00%
No reply	4
	3.50%
Yes	52
	45.20%
No	59
	51.30%

5.2.2 Empathy of caseworker

Sixty-five percent of respondents felt that their caseworker was very sympathetic and understanding and 23% found their caseworker quite sympathetic and understanding. Only 3% thought that their caseworker was not sympathetic or understanding (see Table 26).

Table 26: Rating of caseworker qualities

<i>Base</i>	114 100.0%
Very sympathetic and understanding	75 65.7%
Quite sympathetic and understanding	27 23.5%
Not very sympathetic and understanding	1 0.9%
Not at all sympathetic and understanding	3 2.6%
Don't know	7 6.1%

Respondents were asked to elaborate on why they felt their caseworkers were sympathetic and understanding. Fifty-three clients replied, with such comments as:

"They show respect and compassion"
"They take time to listen to my problems"
"They are helpful and patient"
"They try their best to help"
"They apologise when they can't help"
"They are always welcoming"

Of the 53 comments, only 8 clients were not sure, or felt that the caseworker was not sympathetic:

"Some have not shown compassion"
"Not very, because they have to attend to many in a short period of time"
"Communication barrier causes lack of understanding of client's problems and lack of sympathy"

5.3 RESPECT AND ADVICE GIVEN IN BEST INTERESTS

Clients were asked if they felt the caseworkers respected them during the advice session, and if the advice given was in their best interests.

Almost all the clients (95%) felt either highly respected (68%) or fairly respected (27%) during the advice session (see Table 27 below). This level of trust has remained the same since three years ago (Client Feedback Report 2003).

Table 27: Respect for clients

DID YOU FEEL RESPECTED DURING YOUR ADVICE SESSION? <i>Base</i>	114 100.0%
Highly respected	78 67.8%
Fairly respected	31 27.0%
Not always respected	4 3.5%
Not respected at all	- -
Don't know	1 0.9%

The respondents were asked to elaborate and gave the following reasons:

"They are patient and understanding"
"They show compassion"
"They make clients feel comfortable"
"They are polite and friendly"
"Good treatment"
"Willing to help even when tired"
"They were very welcoming"
"They are kind"

Of the 47 comments, only three were negative:

"My questions were sometimes ignored"
"They don't always listen to clients"
"They are not efficient in following up cases"

5.4 VIEWS ON ADVICE GIVEN & IMPORTANT FACTORS IN SEEKING ADVICE

Sixty-seven percent of respondents felt completely confident that the advice being given was in their best interests, and 25% were fairly confident (see Table 28). Only 6% didn't feel confident that the advice given was in their interests.

Table 28: Confidence that advice has been given in clients’ best interest

DID YOU FEEL THE ADVICE WAS GIVEN IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS?	Base - 114
	100%
Completely confident	77 67%
Fairly confident	29 25.2%
Not very confident	5 4.3%
Not at all confident	2 1.7%
Don't know	1 0.9%

Respondents were asked why they felt confident and below are some of the main reasons:

“Received donations and a lot of help”
“They always managed to solve problems”
“Because advice is for client's benefit”
“They are trusted”

Of the 37 comments received, six felt less confident:

“Because problems were not understood”
“Advice given was very complicated and difficult to understand”
“Because problems are still not resolved”

Clients were asked if they felt the advice given to them was clear and understandable. They were also asked what they considered to be important factors when they come to the office for advice.

Seventy-three percent of respondents felt that the advice given to them was very clear and understandable, with 20% finding it fairly clear and understandable. Only 5 respondents did not feel the advice was clear or understandable (see Table 29 below).

Table 29: Clarity of advice given

WAS THE ADVICE GIVEN CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE? <i>Base</i>	114 100.0%
No reply	2 1.7%
Very clear and understandable	84 73.0%
Fairly clear and understandable	23 20.0%
Not very clear or understandable	4 3.5%
Not at all clear or understandable	1 0.9%
Don't know	1 0.9%

Overall, around 90% of respondents felt all the factors listed below were important when seeking advice (see Table 30).

Ninety-seven percent of clients felt that the provision of clear and understandable advice was the most important factor when seeking advice, rating it either very important (87%) or quite important (10%).

This was followed by friendly and helpful staff with 92% of respondents rating it either very (71%) or quite important (21%), while 90% of respondents felt confidentiality was either very (81%) or quite important (9%).

Seventy-one percent of respondents were aware that Refugee Action could offer them independent advice if they wished to consider returning to their country and 37% had received advice from Refugee Action regarding this.

Table 30: Important factors in seeking advice

WHEN SEEKING ADVICE, WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO YOU?		No reply	Very Imp	Quite imp	Not very imp	Not at all imp	Don't know
<i>Base</i>	<i>920</i>	<i>43</i> <i>4.7%</i>	<i>604</i> <i>65.7%</i>	<i>157</i> <i>17.1%</i>	<i>73</i> <i>7.9%</i>	<i>23</i> <i>2.5%</i>	<i>20</i> <i>2.2%</i>
Clear and understandable advice	114	4 3.5%	100 87.0%	11 9.6%	- -	- -	- -
Good interpreters	114	7 6.1%	68 59.1%	19 16.5%	7 6.1%	9 7.8%	5 4.3%
Confidentiality	114	3 2.6%	93 80.9%	10 8.7%	6 5.2%	2 1.7%	1 0.9%
Finding out about groups from your community	114	4 3.5%	47 40.9%	26 22.6%	23 20.0%	8 7.0%	7 6.1%
Friendly and helpful staff	114	4 3.5%	82 71.3%	24 20.9%	2 1.7%	- -	3 2.6%
Finding out about UK systems and services	114	8 7.0%	72 62.6%	19 16.5%	13 11.3%	1 0.9%	2 1.7%
Finding out about other local services	114	6 5.2%	67 58.3%	25 21.7%	14 12.2%	1 0.9%	2 1.7%
Quick service	114	7 6.1%	75 65.2%	23 20.0%	8 7.0%	2 1.7%	- -

5.5 CHOICES: VOLUNTARY RETURN CLIENTS ONLY

Those clients that had applied for voluntary return (27 in total) were asked a further set of questions. Six of these stated that they did not make this decision to return of their own free will, of which five were of Kurdish origin and were based in the East Midlands. Clients were asked why they made the decision for voluntary return. Ten responses were received. The responses were:

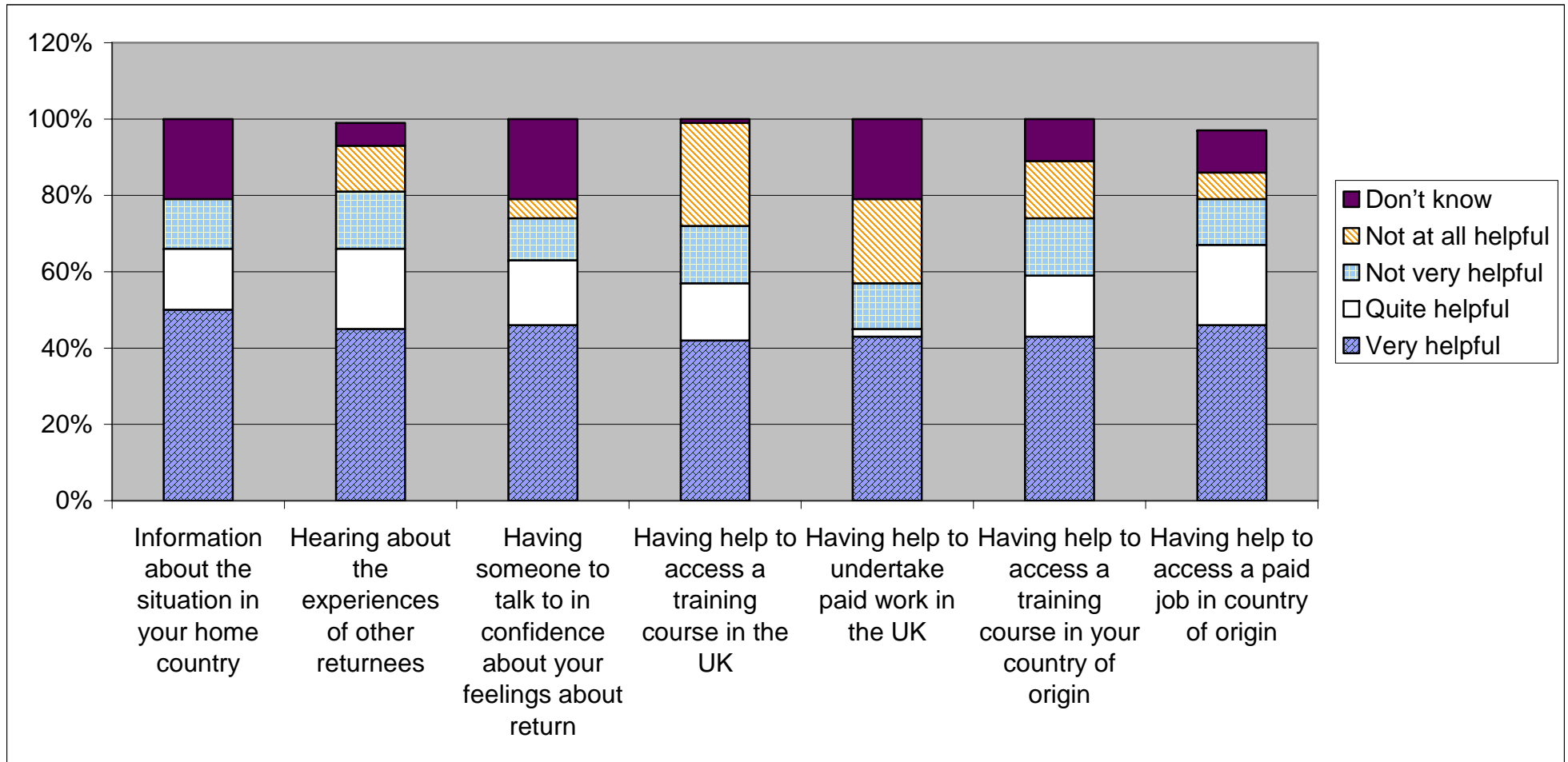
- Been told what to do by NASS system
- Due to circumstances
- Client happy to return
- Signing to go in order to receive support
- Not willing to go. Signing in order to receive support
- Decision made due to circumstances
- Decision made due to unfavourable circumstances
- Client's choice and decision
- Client's own decision
- Was pressured by Home Office

Respondents were given a list of suggestions as to what would help them to plan returning home. Fig 3 shows that overall, about 60% of respondents would find all suggestions either very or quite helpful.

The most helpful would be provision of information about the situation in their home country and hearing about the experiences of other returnees, followed by having help to access a paid job in the country of origin.

The least perceived helpful suggestions were help with accessing training or undertaking work in the UK.

Fig 3: Suggestions in helping to return home



When asked what they found most helpful about Choices advice on Voluntary Return, 23 clients replied, with 14 citing the clear, accurate or helpful advice or information they were given. Other comments were:

- Advice on reintegration fund
- Easy access to institutions such as IOM and NASS
- Entitlement to Section 4 support till return

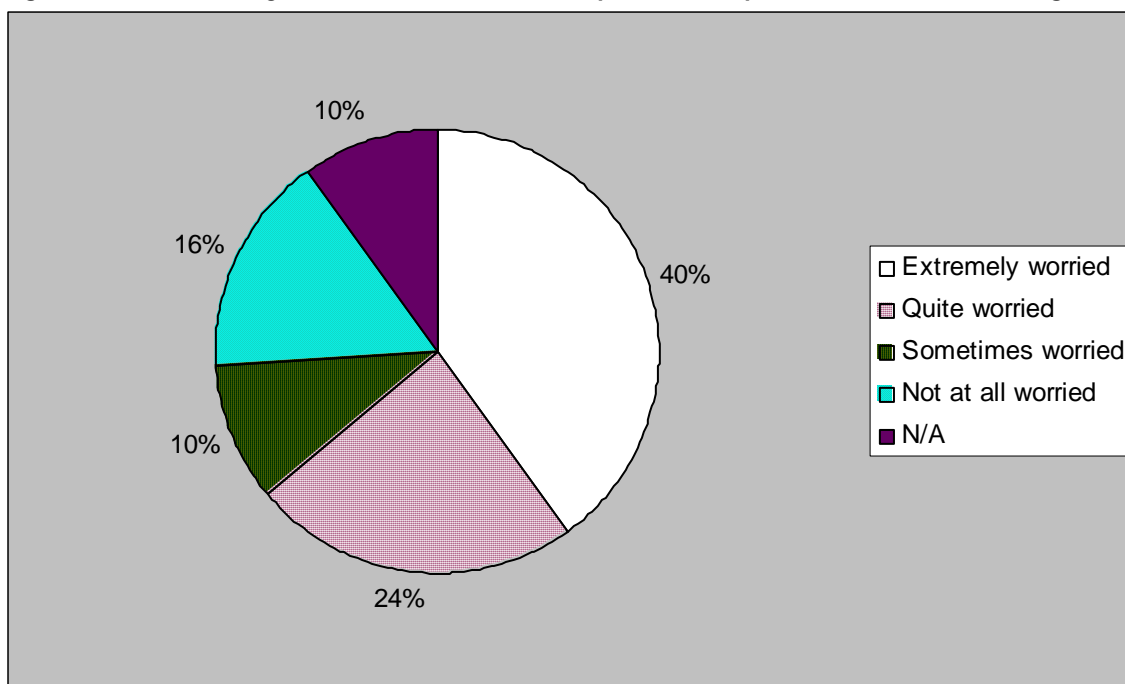
5.6 ANXIETIES AND EXPERIENCES - ALL RESPONDENTS

Respondents were asked if they had experienced problems around housing, money, their asylum claim, health, childcare, harassment, making friends, contacting family or accessing benefits, since arriving in the UK. They were asked to what extent they were worried about these issues.

Clients were also asked if they had suffered or were frightened of suffering harassment and abuse. Clients were also asked if they were worried about any other problems.

Fig 4 below shows that most clients experience a degree of anxiety over these problems. Sixty-four percent of respondents were very or quite worried, with a further 10% saying they were sometimes worried.

Fig 4: Level of worry for those who have experienced problems since arriving



Eighty-three percent of clients had problems with their immigration status, with 77% saying they were very or quite worried about this. Sixty-three percent had problems in their dealings with the immigration service, with 55% suffering anxiety over this. Sixty-two percent had problems finding a legal advisor, causing worry to 58% of clients. See Tables 31 and 32 below.

Eighty-one percent of clients had problems with money or vouchers, with 72% expressing worries about how this.

Seventy-six percent of respondents had problems with their accommodation, of which 72% were very or quite worried.

Forty-five percent of clients said they had suffered harassment or abuse because of their status as an asylum seeker or refugee, and 60% said they were frightened of suffering abuse or harassment.

Thirty-eight percent of clients said they had experienced problems making friends in the local community and 39% had experienced worries about this.

A number of respondents (27%) had problems keeping links with their cultural group of which two thirds of these were quite or very worried (17%).

Thirty-four percent of respondents had problems finding education for themselves or their children, with 4% having problems finding childcare.

Table 31: Type of problems experienced

	Base	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE
<i>Base</i>	<i>3145</i>	<i>1281</i>	<i>742</i>	<i>322</i>
		<i>41%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>10%</i>
Have you had problems contacting friends or family at home?	113	61	36	16
		54%	32%	14%
Have you had problems making new friends in the local community?	113	43	65	5
		38%	58%	4%
Have you had problems keeping links with your own cultural group?	113	31	76	6
		27%	67%	5%
Have you suffered harassment or abuse because you are a refugee or asylum seeker?	113	51	62	
		45%	55%	
Are you frightened you might be harassed or abused because you are an asylum seeker or refugee?	112	66	44	2
		59%	39%	2%

Table 31: Types of problems (Continued)

	Base	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE
<i>Base</i>	<i>3145</i>	<i>1281</i>	<i>742</i>	<i>322</i>
Have you had problems with money or vouchers to live on?	113	91	20	2
		81%	18%	2%
		41%	24%	10%
Have you had problems with housing?	113	86	25	2
		76%	22%	2%
Have you had problems with your health?	113	58	53	2
		51%	47%	2%
Have you had problems with finding education for yourself or your children?	113	38	51	24
		34%	45%	21%
Have you had any problems finding satisfactory childcare?	110	4	16	90
		4%	15%	82%
Have you had any problems with your asylum/immigration status?	113	94	14	5
		83%	12%	4%
Have you had problems getting benefits once you've got an asylum decision?	111	20	12	79
		18%	11%	71%
Have you had problems finding a legal advisor to help with your asylum claim?	113	70	41	2
		62%	36%	2%
Have you had problems in your dealings with the immigration service?	113	71	35	7
		63%	31%	6%

Table 32: Worry associated with particular problems

	Base	EXTREMELY	QUITE	SOME-TIMES	NOT AT ALL	N/A
<i>Base</i>	<i>3145</i>	<i>1281</i>	<i>742</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>311</i>
		41%	24%	10%	16%	10%
How worried have you been about contacting friends or family?	113	47	11	3	33	19
		42%	10%	3%	29%	17%
How worried have you been about problems with making new friends in the local community?	112	19	15	10	57	11
		17%	13%	9%	51%	10%
How worried have you been about problems with keeping links with your own cultural group?	112	7	12	3	75	15
		6%	11%	3%	67%	13%
How worried have you been about the harassment or abuse you have suffered?	112	28	10	9	58	7
		25%	9%	8%	52%	6%
How worried have you been about fear of harassment or abuse because you are an asylum seeker or refugee?	111	35	18	13	41	4
		32%	16%	12%	37%	4%
How worried have you been about voucher problems or having enough money to live on?	113	66	16	8	18	5
		58%	14%	7%	16%	4%
How worried have you been about housing problems?	113	64	17	3	24	5
		57%	15%	3%	21%	4%
How worried have you been about your health problems?	113	33	17	11	41	11
		29%	15%	10%	36%	10%
How worried have you been about problems with finding education for yourself or your children?	113	20	18	4	42	29
		18%	16%	4%	37%	26%

Table 32: Worry associated with particular problems (Continued)

	Base	EXTREMELY	QUITE	SOME-TIMES	NOT AT ALL	N/A
<i>Base</i>	<i>3145</i>	<i>1281</i>	<i>742</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>311</i>
		<i>41%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>10%</i>
How worried have you been about problems with finding childcare?	110	3	2	1	15	89
		3%	2%	1%	14%	81%
How worried have you been about problems with your asylum/immigration status?	113	75	12	6	13	7
		66%	11%	5%	12%	6%
How worried have you been about problems getting benefits once you have an asylum decision?	111	13	5	1	10	82
		12%	5%	1%	9%	74%
How worried have you been about finding a legal advisor to help with your asylum claim?	112	43	22	3	35	9
		38%	20%	3%	31%	8%
How worried have you been about dealing with the immigration service?	111	44	17	5	27	18
		40%	15%	5%	24%	16%

5.6.1 HARASSMENT OR ABUSE BY REGION

Clients were far more likely to report suffering harassment or abuse from Portsmouth (9 clients or 64%) and Plymouth (10, 59%). See Table 33 below.

Clients from Leeds (5, 100%), Nottingham (10, 77%), Bristol (11, 65%) and Liverpool (7, 64%) were least likely to report having suffered harassment or abuse.

Clients from Portsmouth (12, 86%), London (5, 71%) and Leicester (10, 71%) were more likely to report that they were frightened of harassment or abuse; clients from Leeds, Nottingham and Bristol were less likely to report this.

Table 33: Harassment or abuse

	Clients who have suffered harassment or abuse		Are you frightened you might be harassed or abused?	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
	51	63	66	45
	44%	55%	57%	39%
Plymouth	10	7	11	6
	59%	41%	65%	35%
Bristol	6	11	8	9
	35%	65%	47%	53%
London	4	3	5	2
	57%	43%	71%	29%
Portsmouth	9	5	12	-
	64%	36%	86%	-
Nottingham	3	10	6	7
	23%	77%	46%	54%
Leicester	8	6	10	4
	57%	43%	71%	29%
Leeds	-	5	-	5
	-	100%	-	100%
Manchester	7	9	8	8
	41%	53%	47%	47%
Liverpool	4	7	6	4
	36%	64%	55%	36%

Respondents were asked to state whether they had faced any additional problems since arriving in the UK. Thirty people replied and this is what some of them said:

"I was very ill and had not received an HC2 certificate. I was denied access to a doctor as a result of that"

"Mental illness, slow immigration process, problems with appeal"

"Racist behaviour from the police"

"Homeless for about a year, racial harassment (lost one eye due to this)... [and]... cultural differences"

"Having to walk a long distance for support voucher. Difficult, being seven months pregnant with a limp"

"Health problems, problems with cashing vouchers"

"Haven't seen my family in seven years"

"Worried about my family back home, and my mental state"

"Being unable to work"

"Problems with getting access to English classes"

"Could not afford legal fees, so my case was closed"

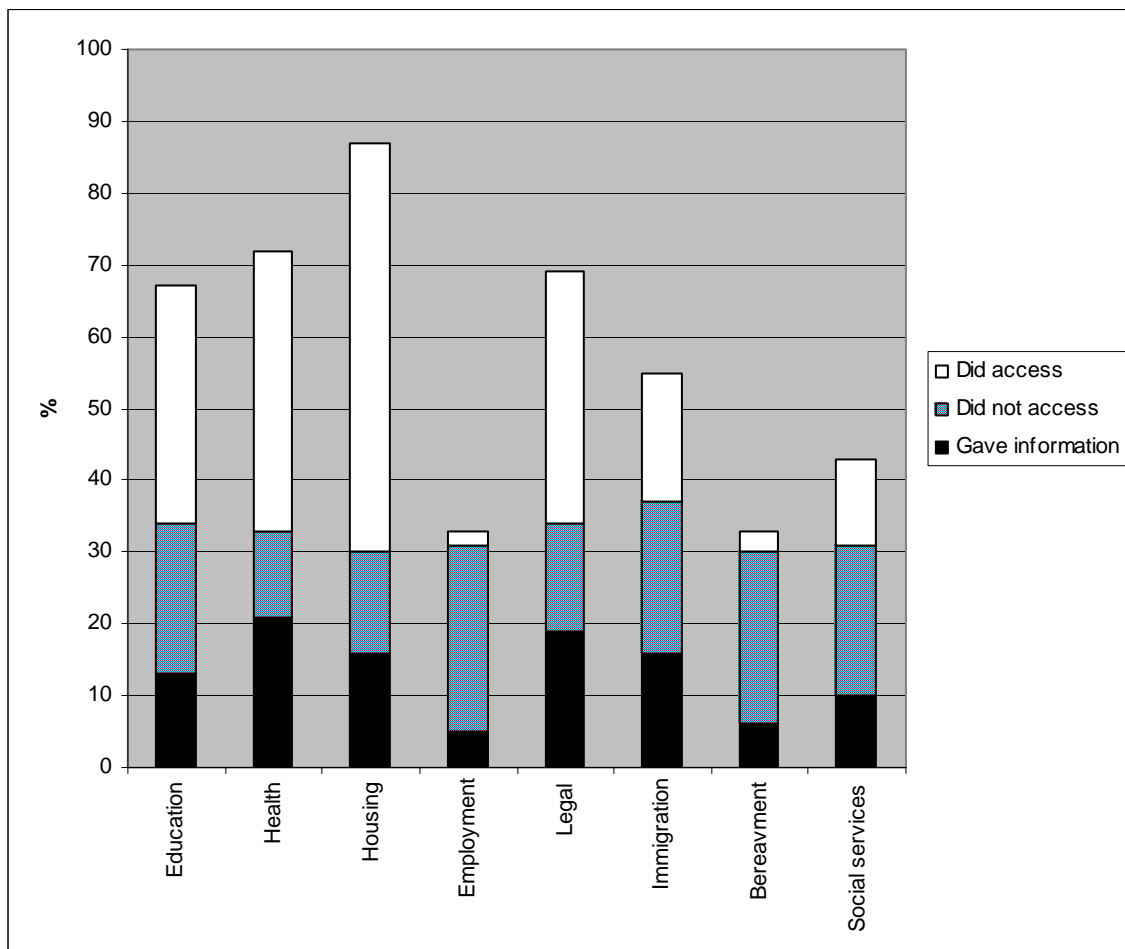
"Was detained for a year"

"Education has been difficult to access"

5.7 SIGNPOSTING TO OTHER SERVICES

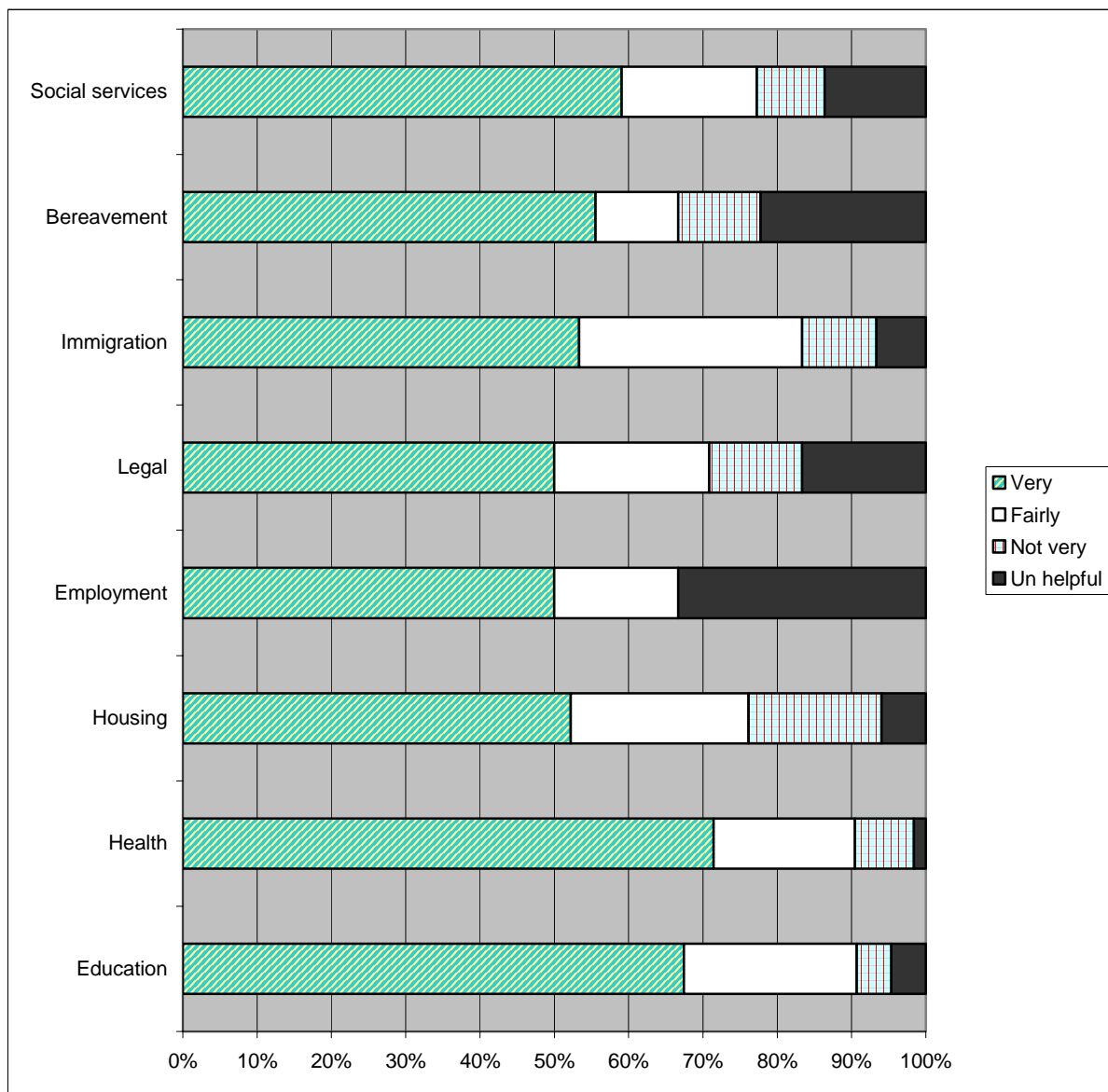
Respondents were asked about other services Refugee Action had given them information about. These services were education, health, housing, employment, legal, immigration, bereavement and Social Services. Most clients accessed housing, health, education and the legal services: see Fig 5 below. The chart shows that approximately 10-20% of clients did not access services.

Fig 5: Information provided and the number of service users accessing it



Respondents were asked to rate how helpful they considered these other services were (see Fig 6). Overall, respondents felt that the services they received were very helpful, particularly health and education. Clients found employment, bereavement, legal and housing services the least helpful.

Fig 6: Clients' views on how helpful particular services were



5.8 LOCAL COMMUNITY

Clients were asked if they felt their community in the UK was friendly and welcoming, and if they felt a part of it.

Overall, 67% of respondents felt their community was very (26%) or quite (41%) friendly and welcoming. However, 21% of clients felt their local community was unfriendly and unwelcoming (see Table 34 below).

Clients from Liverpool were most likely to state that their community was very friendly and welcoming (65%). With 9% of people finding it quite friendly, a total of 73% respondents were positive about the city (see Table 34 below).

Leicester also scored highly with 93% of clients rating the city as quite friendly (86%) or very friendly (7%). In Bristol 70% of clients rated the city's friendliness highly (29% found it very welcoming and 41% found it quite welcoming). London was also deemed a friendly city with 72% of clients finding it very welcoming (43%) or quite welcoming (29%). And in Nottingham 85% of clients said the city was very friendly (31%) or quite friendly (54%).

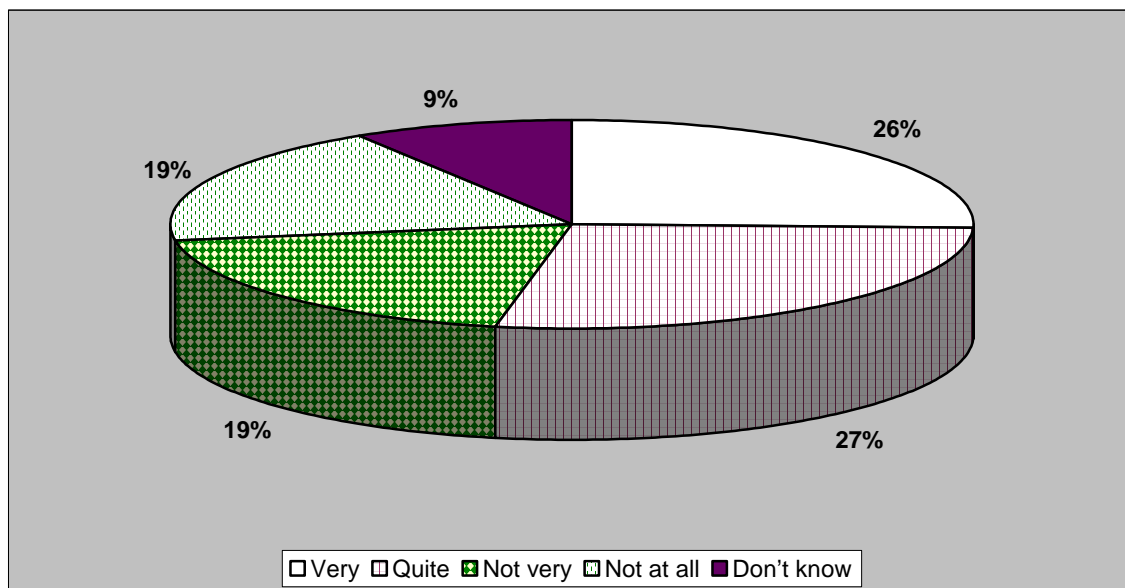
Portsmouth was deemed the least friendly city, with 50% of clients finding it not very welcoming (36%), or not at all friendly (14%). This was followed by Plymouth with 30% of the clients finding it not very friendly (18%) or not at all welcoming (12%).

Table 34: How welcome respondents feel, by region

	Very friendly and welcoming	Quite friendly and welcoming	Not very friendly and welcoming	Not at all friendly and welcoming	Don't know
Base	30	47	19	5	12
	26.10%	40.90%	16.50%	4.30%	10.40%
Plymouth	4	6	3	2	2
	23.50%	35.30%	17.60%	11.80%	11.80%
Bristol	5	7	3		1
	29.40%	41.20%	17.60%		5.90%
London	3	2			2
	42.90%	28.60%			28.60%
Portsmouth	2	5	5	2	
	14.30%	35.70%	35.70%	14.30%	
Nottingham	4	7	2		
	30.80%	53.80%	15.40%		
Leicester	1	12		1	
	7.10%	85.70%		7.10%	
Leeds	1	2	1		1
	20.00%	40.00%	20.00%		20.00%
Manchester	3	5	4		4
	17.60%	29.40%	23.50%		23.50%
Liverpool	7	1	1		2
	63.60%	9.10%	9.10%		18.20%

Respondents were asked how much they felt part of the local community. Overall, 53% felt they were part of the community, while 38% didn't feel part of the community.

Fig 7: Views on whether respondents felt part of the local community (all)



Respondents from Liverpool were significantly more likely to feel very much part of the local community, with 64% stating this, and just 18% not feeling part of the community (see Table 35 below).

Leicester also scored highly with 78% of clients feeling quite part of the community (57%) or very (21%).

Clients in Nottingham and Bristol also felt very much part of the community (31% and 29% respectively) with a significant number also feeling quite a part of the community (23% for both). And 46% of respondents in Manchester felt either very or quite a part of their community.

Plymouth and Portsmouth respondents were more likely to state that they did not feel part of the community (64% and 50% respectively). However 50% of Portsmouth clients said they did feel very or quite part of their local area, and 35% of Plymouth clients felt similarly.

Table 35: Clients and community by region

	Base	How much you feel part of your local community					
		No reply	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	Don't know
<i>Base</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>2</i> <i>1.7%</i>	<i>29</i> <i>25.2%</i>	<i>31</i> <i>27.0%</i>	<i>22</i> <i>19.1%</i>	<i>21</i> <i>18.3%</i>	<i>10</i> <i>8.7%</i>
Plymouth	17		3 17.6%	3 17.6%	5 29.4%	6 35.3%	
Bristol	17		5 29.4%	4 23.5%	5 29.4%	2 11.8%	1 5.9%
London	7		1 14.3%	1 14.3%	1 14.3%	1 14.3%	3 42.9%
Portsmouth	14		2 14.3%	5 35.7%	3 21.4%	4 28.6%	
Nottingham	13		4 30.8%	3 23.1%	3 23.1%	2 15.4%	1 7.7%
Leicester	14		3 21.4%	8 57.1%	1 7.1%	2 14.3%	
Leeds	5			3 60.0%			2 40.0%
Manchester	17	2 11.8%	4 23.5%	4 23.5%	3 17.6%	3 17.6%	1 5.9%
Liverpool	11		7 63.6%		1 9.1%	1 9.1%	2 18.2%

5.9 FINAL COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to provide any further comments which they felt were important regarding their experiences since being in the UK and their experiences of Refugee Action.

London

"I wish there was an opportunity to get assistance in accessing a training course while waiting to be returned to my country. I wish Refugee Action would link with the local educational institution and help us access some vocational courses. This would be very useful for people in my position as I feel really useless with nothing to do while I wait to return."

"I wish Refugee Action could do more to help people to obtain full refugee status. I wish Refugee Action could provide this type of advice for people in my position."

Leicester

"They have helped me get my home and vouchers back. I'm sure they could do something better but I can't think of anything specifically and I think they are trying their best."

"I'd like more information on how to contact family members. It would also be good if Refugee Action could offer legal advice because they are good listeners as well."

"Just improve the service that exists".

"People here [Refugee Action] are very patient. They try as hard as they can."

"Refugee Action needs to open more (closed Wednesdays and Fridays). A half-day opening is not good."

"Refugee Action needs more staff to help people."

"Refugee Action needs to give more support for different education services that we need to pay for. We need support to do more things."

Manchester

"Refugee Action should change the way Palestinians are treated, they should do more for them because they are a special case. Refugee Action should help them more. They should chase the Home Office about my case because it has been a very long time. Refugee Action should watch M&Q so they treat their residents properly. They should try to change the voucher system as there is nowhere to change them."

"I'd like everyone to be treated equally and not to be discriminated against. The only problem is that I came here twice and was too late to be seen, but that's nobody's fault."

"Many people do not have lawyers; they do not have access to solicitors. The solicitors are too few and they cannot be trusted."

"Solicitors are very bad because they tell you too late before your hearing that they cannot act for you, thus leaving five days to get a new solicitor. Would be better if Refugee Action had a solicitor at the office. Many people lose their case because of their solicitor leaving them, or not mailing their appeals on time."

Liverpool

"Refugee Action should be more independent. Though it might be possible that it's an independent organisation on paper, to me it's not. It's an organisation that is there to fight discrimination against asylum seekers and refugees and therefore it should be very vocal. It should be speaking very strongly against discrimination; there is still a lot that Refugee Action needs to work on. I believe that Refugee Action works within the government policy. To me, working independently means working independently from the government. However, Refugee Action still enforces what is said by the government."

"What help can we give young people whose support is stopped? Asylum refusals? Some financial help, for example a grant to buy clothes, bikes, computers?"

"I believe that refugee caseworkers are doing their best."

Plymouth

"I would like to have more information regarding groups where I would meet people from the local community and make friends."

"Local people are not friendly. NASS is too slow, I am disappointed with NASS."

"I have found Refugee Action to be very helpful. The caseworkers are very friendly and treat me with respect."

Bristol

"Sometimes, people have to wait for quite a while and for some, it could be hard to wait without a drink or a snack. A better system is needed for when people have to wait a long time just to sort out a small problem."

"I think the way Refugee Action is working is very good, and I hope Refugee Action can carry on working in the same way."

"I would like Refugee Action to have been able to help me more in finding out my immigration status."

"I would prefer if Refugee Action gave people numbers during or before the drop-in so that the people can go before 11am and don't have to queue outside for an hour, sometimes while it's raining."

"I feel that there should be more co-ordination with the legal advice providers and solicitors to be able to represent the clients and take over their cases."

Portsmouth

"I face many problems. I am a professional. I like to be independent, but no one respects this. The immigration system is very unfair. Poor decisions are made. It's not safe to return to Iraq at present."

"I had great hopes of getting refugee status in the UK but unfortunately..."

"It would be more helpful if Refugee Action is NASS contracted to provide clients with Emergency Accommodation. Refugee Action could have an advice service on finding education and employment."

"More awareness of people's circumstances in the detention centres."

"Better interpreting services (always to provide interpreters and not use friends). To follow up on the case to see the result at the end, also more clarity in advice given."

Nottingham

"As I receive vouchers only under Section 4 support, I exchanged a £10 voucher to a man in the street to get £5 cash to get my bus ticket for a Refugee Action appointment."

5.10 OTHER COMMENTS

Finally, the following are some comments made throughout the questionnaire:

- To have more information on meeting people from the local community
- Unfriendly local people, slow NASS response
- Better help for people who have been refused
- Refugee Action needs more permanent staff with more experience
- Refugee Action should start legal advice services
- More drop-in sessions, less appointment services
- Would be good to have phone/e-mail access
- Caseworkers are very helpful
- Would be good to have access to jobs
- Job opportunities for clients
- Drop-in services should be improved to avoid long queues
- Improvement on drop-in services
- More help in deciding immigration status
- Refugee Action should provide waiting areas instead of people waiting in the streets outside the offices
- Refugee Action should work independently not within government policies
- More co-ordination of legal advice providers for effective client representation
- Access to vocational courses while awaiting return
- Quicker services, caseworkers should follow up cases more effectively
- More advice on education and employment
- Palestinians should be classed special cases. Refugee Action should help them more
- A permanent Refugee Action office in Southampton (not drop-in)
- Independent interpreter for every session

APPENDICES

ASYLUM ADVICE & CHOICES CLIENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2005

Thank you for agreeing to answer some questions about our service. Your comments are valued and will help us improve our service to you and other asylum seekers and refugees.

This information is confidential and will only be used by Refugee Action to evaluate our service and make recommendations to other service providers.

To be completed by the interviewer	
RA office where interview is taking place	
Interviewer's name	
Date and time of interview	
Language in which the interview was undertaken	
Please tick the services the client has used	Choices <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum Advice <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND

Part One: Personal Details

Is the client:

Male Female

How old are you?

under 18 18-25 26-35 36-54 55 or over

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Black African Arabic Kurdish Somali Iranian

Other (Please specify..)_____

What is your country of origin?

Somalia DR Congo Iraq Iran Afghanistan Angola
Algeria

Zimbabwe

Other (Please specify..)_____

What is your first language?

<input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Kurdish <input type="checkbox"/> Somali <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi <input type="checkbox"/> Swahili
--

Other (Please specify..)_____

Do you speak any other languages? Please say which ones

English French

Other (Please specify..)_____

PART TWO: HEALTH NEEDS AND CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

How many people live with you as part of your household?

Note to Interviewer: if the client is not living alone, please insert number against number of children under 18, number of other relatives, and number of friends

I live alone	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
I have a Partner/spouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Number of Children (under 18 years)	
Number of other relatives	
Number of friends	

Do you care for any other people?

(a) children <i>(enter relevant number of children in each box):</i>
--

Under 5 6-12 13-15 16-18

(b) people over 65?

Yes No

(c) people with mental health problems

Yes No

(d) people with physical health problems

Yes No

Are you or your partner expecting a baby?

Yes No

Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time, or that is likely to affect you over a period of time?

Yes (go to 1.11) No (go to 1.13)

1.11.If yes, please try to tell us what this is (tick all that apply) (Interviewer - please use SHOWCARD A and ask respondent to give you the letter/s which best describes their illness)	
A. Bone related (Problem with arms, legs, hands, feet, back or neck (including arthritis or rheumatism)	
B. Eyes (Difficulty in seeing)	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Ears (Difficulty in hearing)	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Skin (Skin conditions, allergies)	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Chest (Chest, breathing problem, asthma, bronchitis)	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Heart (Heart, blood pressure or blood circulation problems)	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Stomach (Stomach, liver, kidney or digestive problems)	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Depression (Depression, bad nerves)	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Mental (Mental illness or suffer from phobia, panics or other nervous disorders)	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Learning Difficulties (Learning difficulties)	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. Sexual health related (HIV/AIDS etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. Epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/>
N. Other (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.12 Are you currently receiving NHS treatment for this/these?

Yes No

1.13 Do you have access to a GP/doctor?

Yes No

PART THREE: EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Please state which is the highest qualification which you hold and where it was gained

Interviewer please prompt/read out	Qualified in UK	Qualified overseas
Higher degree (Masters, PhD)		
First degree(BA/BSC etc..)		
Trade or vocational qualifications		
A level/Baccalaureate		
GCSE/school leaver certificate		
No qualifications		
Other (Please specify)		
1.15 Do you have a Professional qualification?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.16 If your answer to question 1.15 was "Yes", and you have any of the following Professional qualifications please state which		
Interview please prompt/read out	Qualified in UK	Qualified overseas
Science Professionals		
Engineering Professionals		
Information And Communication Technology Professionals		
Health Professionals		
Teaching Professionals		
Research Professionals		
Legal Professionals		
Business And Statistical Professionals		
Architects, Town Planners, Surveyors		
Public Service Professionals		
Librarians And Related Professionals		
Accountancy		

Journalism		
Other		

PART FOUR: IMMIGRATION STATUS

1.17 When did you arrive in the UK? (Year and month)

Year _____ Month _____

--

1.18 Do you know your current asylum/refugee status?

- Asylum seeker
- Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR)
- Refugee/Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)
- Refugee 5 years right to remain
- UK citizen/ex-refugee
- Humanitarian Protection
- Discretionary Leave
- Refused asylum
- Awaiting removal
- Voluntary return
- Asylum appeal
- Judicial Review
- Human Rights Act application
- Don't know
- Other, please specify:

If you have leave to remain:

What date was it granted (month & year) _____

When does it expire (month & year) _____

Don't know

SECTION 2 - ABOUT YOUR ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT

2.1 If you have accommodation, what type is it? (answers continued next page)

- Emergency accommodation
- NASS accommodation
- Friends or family
- Local Authority
- Private rented
- Section 4

Other - please specify _____

2.2 How would you rate your accommodation?

Very good

Good

Satisfactory

Poor

Very poor

If poor or very poor, please explain

(e.g. structural problems, overcrowding, lack of facilities) continue on next page if necessary

2.3a Since claiming asylum in the UK, have you had a time when you had to live with no money?

Yes No

If yes please explain the circumstances

2.3b Since claiming asylum in the UK, have you had a time when you had nowhere to live?

Yes No

If yes, please explain the circumstances:

Note to interviewer: this question is OPTIONAL. Please ensure the clients know they DO NOT have to answer this

2.3c If you have experienced a time when you had no money to live on and/or nowhere to live, could you say a little bit about how this affected you personally? (continue over page if necessary)

SECTION 3. ACCESS TO REFUGEE ACTION

3.1 How did you hear about Refugee Action?

Client Feedback on Refugee Action's One Stop, Choices and Reception Advice Services

- Police
- Social Services
- Accommodation providers
- Support or refugee community group
- Lawyers, solicitors
- Immigration
- NASS
- Friends
- Other - please say what _____

3.2a Have you used Refugee Action's advice service before?

- Yes No

If yes, have you been here before:

- Please enter number of times

3.2b Did you have an appointment or did you just call in or phone the office?

- Appointment Call in Other, please specify

If you called in, how long did you have to wait?

- Under 30 min 30 min - 1 hour 1-2 hours

If more than 2 hours, please say how long: _____

If you had an appointment, were you seen:

- On time Late?

If late, please say how late: _____

Were you late for your appointment? Yes No

3.2c If you have contacted Refugee Action previously, have you come in today because of:

- New problem Same problem Follow-up appointment

Other (please specify) _____

Note to interviewer: questions 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 are **ONLY** for clients who have visited the office

3.3 How did you travel to Refugee Action? Tick all that apply

Walked Bike Bus Train Taxi Car

3.4 How long did it take you to get to Refugee Action?

Less than 30 min

30 min - 1 hour

If more, please say how long:

3.5 Which town do you live in?

4. ABOUT THE SERVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED AT REFUGEE ACTION

Refugee Action aims to provide you with a quality and confidential advice service. We hope you feel you have been listened to and that your problem has been understood. We hope your options or choices have been clearly explained and that you know what will happen next.

Refugee Action tries to provide you with a service where you feel safe telling us information about yourself and what's happened to you.

4.1 Did you feel you could trust Refugee Action with your problem? (answers continued over page)

1 Could trust Refugee Action a lot

2 Could trust Refugee Action

3 Not sure

4 Could not really trust Refugee Action

5 Could not trust Refugee Action at all

Note to Interviewer: Please ask client to say why they felt they could or could not trust Refugee Action

4.2 When speaking to the caseworker, did you use an interpreter?

Yes No

If yes, were you happy with the interpreter?

Yes No

Were you aware that if you were not happy with the interpreter you have the right to tell us so at the time?

- Yes No

4.3 Did you feel that Refugee Action's caseworkers were sympathetic and understanding?

- 1 Very sympathetic and understanding
2 Quite sympathetic and understanding
3 Not very sympathetic and understanding
4 Not at all sympathetic and understanding
5 Don't know

Note to Interviewer: Please ask the client why they felt the caseworker was either sympathetic or not sympathetic

Client's comments:

4.4 Did you feel respected during your advice session with Refugee Action?
(answers continued over page)

- 1 Highly respected
2 Fairly respected
3 Not always respected
4 Not respected at all
5 Don't know

Note to Interviewer: Please ask the client why they felt respected or not respected

Client's comments:

4.5 Are you confident that advice you have had from Refugee Action is in your best interests?

- 1 Completely confident
2 Fairly confident
3 Not very confident
4 Not at all confident

5 Don't know

Note to Interviewer: Please ask the client why they felt the advice was in their interests, or not

Client's comments:

4.6 Is the advice you have had from Refugee Action clear and understandable?

- 1 Very clear and understandable
- 2 Fairly clear and understandable
- 3 Not very clear or understandable
- 4 Not at all clear or understandable
- 5 Don't know

4.7 When seeking advice, how important are the following factors for you? <i>Note to Interviewer: tick one box in each row</i>					
	Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
Clear and understandable advice					
Good interpreters					
Confidentiality					
Finding out about groups from your community					
Friendly and helpful staff					
Finding out about UK systems and services					
Finding out about other local services					
Quick service					
Other, please say what:					

4.8 Are you aware that Refugee Action can offer you independent advice if you wish to consider returning to your home country?

- Yes No

4.9 Have you had any advice from Refugee Action on returning to your home country?

- Yes No

Questions 4.10a, 4.10b, 4.11, 4.12, and 4.13 are only for Clients who have used the Choices (voluntary return) service.

Other Clients, please go to Question 5

4.10a Have you applied for voluntary return to your home country?

- Yes No

4.10b If yes, do you feel that you have made this decision of your own free will?

Yes No

Please explain:

4.11 Which of the following would help you in planning for your return?

Note to Interviewer: This question is for both clients who have signed up to voluntary return, and also for those who have not

	Very helpful	Quite helpful	Not very helpful	Not at all helpful	Not sure if helpful
Information about the situation in your home country					
Hearing about the experiences of other returnees					
Having someone to talk to in confidence about your feelings about return					
Having help to access a training course in the UK					
Having help to undertake paid work in the UK					
Having help to access a training course in your country of origin					
Having help to access a paid job in country of origin					
Other - please specify					

4.12 What have you found most helpful about Choices advice on voluntary return?

4.13 What have you found least helpful about Choices advice on voluntary return?

ALL CLIENTS TO ANSWER FROM HERE ONWARDS, TO END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

5. OTHER SERVICES

5.1 We would like to know about problems you may have had since arriving in the UK, and how much have you been worried about them

Note to interviewer: please circle one answer from each line. Please note each question has two parts, i.e. have you had a problem? And how worried have you been about this?

Since arriving in the UK,					
Have you had problems contacting friends or family at home?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems making new friends in the local community?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems keeping links with your own cultural group?	yes	no	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you suffered harassment or abuse because you are a refugee or asylum seeker?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Are you frightened you might be harassed or abused because you are a refugee or asylum seeker?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with money or vouchers to live on?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with housing?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with your health?	Yes	No	Not applicable		

Client Feedback on Refugee Action's One Stop, Choices and Reception Advice Services

and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with finding education for yourself or your children?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with finding satisfactory childcare?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems with your Asylum/immigration status?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems getting benefits once you've got an asylum decision?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems finding a legal adviser to help with your asylum claim?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
Have you had problems in your dealings with the Immigration Service?	Yes	No	Not applicable		
and how worried have you been about this?	Extremely worried	Quite worried	Sometimes worried	Not worried at all	Not applicable
a) Have you had any other problems since arriving in the UK? Would you like to say anything about these problems					

5.2 Has Refugee Action given you information on the following types of services, and did you actually access these services as a result?

Gave information	Did not	Actually accessed services
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Client Feedback on Refugee Action's One Stop, Choices and Reception Advice Services

		access	
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bereavement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3 Can you tell us how helpful these services were?

Note to Interviewer: this is other agencies to whom Refugee Action has referred client, or told client about

Service	Very helpful	Fairly helpful	Not very helpful	Un-helpful	Don't know
Education					
Health					
Housing					
Employment					
Legal					
Immigration					
Bereavement					
Social services					
Other (Please specify)					

5.4 In general how welcoming and friendly have you found local people in the UK?

- 1 Very friendly and welcoming
- 2 Quite friendly and welcoming
- 3 Not very friendly and welcoming
- 4 Not at all friendly and welcoming
- 5 Don't know

5.5 How much do you feel part of your local community?

- 1 Very
- 2 Quite
- 3 Not very
- 4 Not at all
- 5 Don't know

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about our service that we haven't covered, or any suggestions as to how we might improve? (continue over page if necessary)

We would particularly like to know if there is something you would have found really helpful that you were not able to access or find?

Thank you very much for your help.

Our vision

We want a society in which refugees are welcome, respected and safe, and in which they can achieve their full potential. We work towards the sustainable integration of refugee communities and individuals. We focus on giving voice to refugees in their communities and on local and regional issues that affect them. It is important to us not only what we do but also how we do it. We believe that refugees should be empowered to do things for themselves, and that every individual, regardless of their background or status, should have an equal role and opportunity in society.

Our values

- All our work must be guided by the aspirations and needs of refugees, and their empowerment.
- We believe that successful settlement is best achieved via organised refugee communities in creative partnerships with the wider society.
- We must facilitate partnerships with refugee and with wider groups in carrying out our work, and we will do this in a creative and non-competitive way.
- We must seek to advance refugee rights through innovation and leadership, and through delivering high quality service and evaluation.
- Our role must be to provide additional services which refugee communities or other voluntary or statutory services cannot provide as well as, or better than, ourselves.
- We must enjoy the diversity of our staff and stakeholders, and promote a culture in which everyone can express their potential.

Refugee Action

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