

Volition members' Away Day 2008 Evaluation and feedback

Participants were asked to fill in an evaluation form at the end of the away day. 42 forms were returned (a very good response rate out of 60 participants and 14 facilitators).

The comments were overwhelmingly positive, with many people describing the day as "inspirational". People made positive comments about all aspects of the event: both speakers, all the workshops, the poetry finale, the venue (the Carriageworks), networking opportunities and general organisation of the day. After the event many people made further verbal comments on how good the day had been.

Many people (15 evaluation forms) singled out the main speaker, Rachel Perkins, as being particularly inspiring: "bloody fab and totally inspirational!" Sinead Cregan's presentation was also commended.

There were a very small number that were less positive, or made suggestions for improvement (these were mostly about catering and the venue).

Here is a selection of comments:

What I found most useful about the day

A great combination of interactive and inspirational experience. Some good powerful ways of thinking about recovery.

Hope for the future of mental health services.

A necessary dose of reigniting my passion for the work we do.

All really, really interesting.

A chance to reflect and focus on what is important.

Fabulous day! Lots of great discussion to get my mind whirring.

Useful, engaging, informative.

Dreams and hopes.

Listening to personal experiences.

I want to go away and read about it and spread the word.

What I found least useful about the day

37 (out of 42) people left this section blank, or said "nothing" was least useful. "All useful – seriously!"

We should resist the overly simplistic idea that the voluntary sector is all good and the statutory sector is all bad.

What I would like more of in the future

A number of people (12) said that they would like “more of the same”: more away days, more events like these and so on. “I would have liked to go to all the workshops!”

There were a number of suggestions for follow up workshops and updates on some of the issues, plus requests for handouts and notes. The speakers’ powerpoint presentations, poetry finale and notes of all workshops are available on the Volition website: www.volition.org.uk

Others appreciated the level of involvement of people who use services in the event, and would like to see more workshops that draw on service users’ experiences.

More opportunities to share information, network and identify gaps in services.

The personal perspective was the most moving and inspiring - more please.

Take all ideas re: recovery further and build on this.

Examples of things that work!

Maybe record the speeches and put on a podcast.

Workshops with decision makers, partner organisations.

Any other comments

Thought the Survivor Led Poetry scenario was great and would love a copy of the final poem.

Brilliant, very very brilliant.

It would be useful if people presenting issues [in workshops] looked at negative as well as positive aspects.

Volition could not have been more helpful.

I will return to work re-enthused and reinvigorated.

Great to see so many people coming together and keeping the recovery ideal alive.

Not a dull moment.

Inspiring and informative...a resounding success.