

Feedback from outhouse Consultation Meeting of October 15, 2003

WHAT DOES OUTHOUSE DO WELL?

Outhouse is a Friendly Place

Outhouse provides Café Services

Outhouse provides a Safe Alternative

Outhouse provides a good source of information

Outhouse exists

Outhouse provides comfort and meeting facilities

Outhouse exists for the Community

Outhouse provides a wide range of classes such as Sign, etc.

It is gratifying to hear such a variety of comments. Thanks to everyone who volunteers or uses the facilities of outhouse - your contribution is very important.

WHAT COULD OUTHOUSE DO BETTER?

Stairs and Toilet access for the mobility impaired

We are acutely aware of the problems posed by the current layout for mobility impaired people. Improved access for mobility impaired people is a key part of our plan for the building.

A regular timetable should be presented outlining what is on

We are currently looking for someone to perform a major overhaul of our website. The proposed new design will make the current activities in outhouse easy to find. We have also set up a publicity committee to look at PR and will pass this comment onto them.

Flashing fire alarms and other safety features are required for those suffering from hearing or sight impairment

Flashing fire alarms are already fitted. Other features to help people with hearing or sight impairment are included in the plan for the building.

The Outhouse building can be cold at times

We are well aware of the difficulty keeping the building warm during the winter. We have recently added 3 more electric heaters. Installation of a full central heating system is included in our plans for the building. Depending on funding, we may install this in advance of other building work.

Outhouse is sometimes not different enough

The atmosphere can make it difficult to mix at times

We plan to introducing some merchandising in the café over the next few months. We would welcome suggestions on how to improve these two items.

Lack of sign interpreter availability

This is a general problem everywhere, not just for outhouse.

WHAT CAN OUTHOUSE DO TO IMPROVE?

Access to the Outhouse facilities for physically impaired people (wheel chair access)

Improved access for mobility impaired people is a key part of our plan for the building.

A monthly information bulletin should be issued giving information on upcoming events, etc

We will look into this over the coming months.

Introduction of a membership card for regular users

When the café opened we had a loyalty card system, we will look at introducing this again. We'll look at further initiatives in the future.

More volunteers required to help with facilities and building maintenance

Volunteers are always welcome. We will be in touch with everyone who left their name and details on the night. If anyone else is interested in volunteering they can contact the centre staff or apply online through our website at www.outhouse/ie/volapplic.html

A full list of user groups should be available

There is a list on the website and our publicity leaflet but this isn't widely distributed. We will arrange to distribute this in LGBT and LGBT-friendly venues.

Fire Alarms and other safety features for people with hearing, sight or physical impairments

As noted above, flashing fire alarms are already fitted. Other features to help people with hearing or sight impairment will be included in the plan for the building.

The use of Fair Trade products should be introduced to Outhouse

Special Dietary requirements should be factored into the Café (Diabetic users)

The entire café operation including suppliers is currently under examination and these requests will be included in the review.

A full Market Survey should be carried out of the Pubs/Clubs of what services should be provided by Outhouse

Outhouse should be fun

A properly-run market survey would be quite expensive. An entertainment committee has been set up by centre users and volunteers and has already arranged one party with more planned,

LGBT items should be available for purchase on the premises

We are looking at merchandising opportunities as part of the café review.

A late nite drop in facility should be available

We understand the need for this, however with current staff levels this is not an option. If funding increases we will look at it again.

An email database should be set up

We used to maintain such a list but stopped due to privacy/security concerns. With appropriate processes this should not be problem and we are examining a closed moderated list. We asked everyone attending to leave their email address and will inform everyone of the list when it's set up.

Volunteer opportunities should be flagged, list of jobs that need to be carried out should be posted

A very good point, we will undertake this as soon as possible. It should be noted that volunteers need to be trained so we can only take on a limited number at a time.

A regular Outhouse Space (articles, etc) should appear in GCN

It was noted at the meeting that space in GCN is now booked up months in advance and that space is not offered to outside groups. Outhouse has requested space for an article about this meeting. Our publicity committee is examining wider issues of publicity in GCN and other media outlets

HOW CAN PEOPLE HELP / SUPPORT OUTHOUSE?

By using the Building

By supporting meeting held in the building

By getting involved in Fundraisers

By volunteering to help in the Building

By seeking financial support from those who are willing to give it

These are very valid and gratifying comments. By implementing the suggestions above we will be able to increase the number of people involved on outhouse at all levels.

CLOSING SUGGESTIONS

Work towards longer opening hours, particularly in the morning

The morning tends to be very quiet and we are not sure if there is a demand to open earlier especially in view of limited staff resources. However we are looking at café opening hours as part of the review of the café.

Do a Public Relations exercise on the facilities, many people are not aware of Outhouse and what it does (flyers for pubs and clubs, etc.)

This is very true, we will try to arrange distribution of flyers over the next few weeks.

Provide a monthly magazine style format on the Web
We will include this suggestion as part of the revamp of the website

Tap into the Bolton Street & Student Populations

The DIT LGB Soc have already met in the centre but there is a large potential market in the college for the café and other centre facilities. We will look at publicity directed at the student market over the coming months.

Provide internet access in the Café

This is already planned. We have a broadband connection so the running costs will not be very high, we just require 2 extra PCs.

Have an entertainment board

Notices - volunteers to specifically keep the Boards up to date and tidy

There is already a plan to overhaul the noticeboards over the next month or so.

All groups using the facilities should pay for the use.

The draft Space Policy, circulated at the meeting, will ensure that every group is treated equally in terms of room allocation and payment. Comments on the draft have been incorporated into the final version which is available at www.outhouse.ie/space_policy.pdf

A welcome sign and message at the entrance to the Building

A very good point, the entrance is currently messy and not very welcoming. We will try to arrange this over the next few months as part of the noticeboard changes.