



The Sanctuary: Manchester
helping you through the night

The Sanctuary Report

Executive Summary Report

*A summary of findings from an independent report on The Sanctuary (Manchester),
prepared by Dr Judith Gellatly from the University of Manchester.*

September 2014

About The Sanctuary

The Sanctuary (Manchester), is open all night, every night and offers a place of safety and support for people experiencing a crisis, anxiety, panic attacks, depression and / or suicidal thoughts. Manchester residents, or those registered with a GP in Manchester, can access the service by first calling The Sanctuary on 0161 637 0808. Following a conversation with trained Sanctuary staff, people are then either be offered telephone support or they will be invited to come to The Sanctuary venue for continued support.

The Sanctuary was set up and is operated by the mental health charity Self Help Services (no. 1122063) and it opened in September 2014.

This is a summary of findings from an independent report on The Sanctuary (Manchester), prepared by Dr Judith Gellatly from the University of Manchester. It covers data collected between 9th September 2013 and 31st July 2014. The full report will be available on the Self Help Services' website from Monday 15th September 2014.



For more information about The Sanctuary please contact Self Help Services on 0161 226 3871, email admin@selfhelpservices.org.uk or visit: www.sanctuarymanchester.org.uk

Who uses The Sanctuary?

From 10th Sept 2013 to 30th May 2014, **292** individuals were supported by The Sanctuary.

The Sanctuary attracted clients from age 18 to 71. Individuals aged less than 30 most frequently attended, with those in the older aged categories (60-69 and 70-79) less frequently attending. The majority of clients were under 40 years of age (53.4%).

The Sanctuary has attracted clients from a variety of locations. The vast majority of the clients indicated that they reside in locations within the Manchester Metropolitan Borough (192, **90.1%**). A small number of clients indicated that they reside a location outside Manchester in locations including Salford and Stockport.

75% of clients came to The Sanctuary with a common mental health problem, the target group originally envisaged that The Sanctuary would support.

The majority of clients who made contact with The Sanctuary were experiencing anxiety and depression. Most of the clients were experiencing both anxiety and depression (**35.9%**) with additional clients experiencing either depression or anxiety (**26%** and **6.9%** respectively). Less than 10% of clients reported they were experiencing severe and enduring mental health problems.

One of the aims of The Sanctuary is to help people who have had mental health conditions for a longer period find the right support to help them recover, and to offer new support for on-going problems. The majority of the clients had been experiencing mental health problems for up to 5 years (**61%**), with **15.5%** having had experienced them for over 20 years.

Why did people access The Sanctuary?

In addition to the current mental health problem being experienced, clients also provided information on the main reason(s) that they were referred/self-referred. A number of reasons were provided as the purpose for contacting The Sanctuary, with many clients providing more than one reason. Reasons were categorised to aid the reporting. Clients were given the option of nine categories with the opportunity to provide other reasons if they did not feel that the categories provided were applicable.

Referral reasons provided based on presented categories:

Referral Reason¹	No. of Clients	Percentage
Abuse issues	12	4.9%
Adjustment to Life Events	40	16.4%
Anger Management	2	0.8%
Bereavement/Loss	3	1.2%
Domestic Violence/Abuse	9	3.7%
Health Problems	14	5.7%
Refugee/Asylum/Visa issues	1	0.4%
Relationship and Family Problems	21	8.6%
Work Related Issues	6	2.5%
Other	136	55.7%

¹information available for 244 clients

The majority of clients did not identify with the categories presented (55.7%). Data related to the 'other' problems that clients were experiencing is presented below:

Referral Reason Category¹	Frequency	Percentage
Common MH problems/symptoms	76	33%
Suicide/self-harm	45	19.6%
SMI problems/symptoms	25	10.9%
Alcohol/drug problems	17	7.4%
Social issues	17	7.4%
Personal wellbeing	13	5.7%
Other medical conditions	10	4.3%
Neurological conditions	9	3.9%
Traumatic events	8	3.5%
Non-specified MH problems	4	1.7%
Wanted a place to stay	3	1.3%
Risk of harm to others	1	0.4%
Miscellaneous	2	0.9%

¹data available for 154 clients. NB some clients indicated more than one reason, explaining why the numbers for Disability category do not add up to 154.

Clients provided a variety of responses relating to mental and physical health, risk, personal wellbeing and social issues. The most frequently reported reason related to common mental health problems (e.g. anxiety, depression and phobias), suicide and self-harm was additionally reported relatively frequently. Although reported less often, serious mental health problems (bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorder) and associated symptoms were reported as the referral reason in just over a tenth of those who responded.

How did people use The Sanctuary?

On average, clients contacted the Sanctuary on **4** separate occasions for either phone support or to attend the venue.

Stays at The Sanctuary lasted an average of just under **3** hours, with support calls lasted an average of **26** minutes.

Busiest times for people contacting the service were between 8pm and 1am, after which time the contacts gradually lessened through until morning. There was no significant pattern to the use of the Sanctuary across the week, with a consistent level of contact each night. Interestingly, Saturdays were slightly less busy than other nights, contrary to initial expectations.

Where had clients heard about the Sanctuary?

Clients found out about The Sanctuary from a wide range of sources, the internet being the most frequent source of information, followed by Greater Manchester Police and NHS statutory Mental Health Crisis Teams.

Other sources of information included third sector organisations, family and friends, other health services and GPs.

What difference did The Sanctuary make?

It is clear that there is a need for The Sanctuary and services like this. Our findings show that The Sanctuary is not only saving money from the public purse and helping alleviate the pressure on already over-stretched public services, like A & E departments, but it's also saving lives.

30.5% of clients thought they would have presented at A & E had The Sanctuary not existed. A further **13%** would have called emergency services (or did do, and were brought to The Sanctuary by police or ambulance services). **6.7%** say that they would have self-harmed or attempted suicide.

Clients, using a self-reported distress scale, indicated that the distress they were feeling when they contacted The Sanctuary had dropped by **47%** after they had received face to face Sanctuary support. Distress levels across all support sessions (phone and venue) reduced by an average of **37%**.

A few clients were in need of more frequent and longer term support. They reported, on average, that their distress had dropped from **6.75/10** the first time they contacted The Sanctuary, to **1.25/10** after their period of support.

What did clients say about The Sanctuary?

As part of Manchester University's independent evaluation of The Sanctuary, 9 in-depth interviews were carried out with Sanctuary clients. The extracts below summarise the key issues and themes arising from these interviews:

- Clients described The Sanctuary as a 'unique' and needed service, one that differed considerably from NHS service experiences:

'There's a need for one in every town, that's how I feel...I mean they know what they're doing these guys, they know exactly what they're doing, and it's nice when you're confident because they've got every single angle covered that they should have covered ...I think it is a truly amazing place and I hope it really catches on and grows...'

- Others talked about the service as being 'very valuable', 'absolutely fantastic' an 'amazing place' and a 'lifeline' that they didn't 'know what they would have done without'.
- Two clients said that The Sanctuary was their only option and had it not been available they would have likely committed suicide, stating that without The Sanctuary 'I'd have killed myself' and 'I don't think I'd be here' .
- The Sanctuary provides an alternative to, and fills a gap in, current mental health services.

"I don't want to go to the hospital. When you're in that state I don't want to sit in that place...I'd had so much of hospitals and everything, I didn't want to go to the hospital."

- Other clients reflected on their preferences and needs when asked about their expectations, detailing that they were unsure what to expect but knew that they 'wanted to talk to people', 'needed someone to talk to', and 'needed someone to get me through' .
- One of the important things that The Sanctuary can offer is immediate face to face support. It was clear from the findings that while still effective, the telephone support was felt by some clients to be 'nowhere near as effective as seeing someone face-to-face'.

- One client who had only accessed support from The Sanctuary via telephone highlighted the collaborative nature of the support offered:

‘they [Sanctuary support staff] will probably just listen to you for however long you want to talk about it but they’re not like that; they’re really aimed at getting you back on your feet...they’re like trying to say like, well what are you going to do tomorrow, and they’re trying to get you motivated and write a list of what you’ve got to do...’

- Continuity of staff was also an important aspect:

‘...I know that if I called tomorrow, and got the same people, that they’d be able to pick up where we left off, and that’s really important...’

- The feel of The Sanctuary as a ‘home from home’ was very important. Clients used words such as ‘non-intrusive’, ‘relaxing’, ‘very calming’, ‘chilled’, ‘homely’ and ‘safe’ to describe The Sanctuary. Others described some of the ‘touches’ that made the environment so pleasant:

‘Like the woman who was on the phone, she came and lit candles all the way around the room...I just thought what a lovely touch that was. I thought, I’ll remember that.’

One client summed up their thoughts about the Sanctuary in one sentence:

“It was a space to talk, it was a space to act out, you know, a space to cry.”

“Ideally you’d have somewhere like this 24 hours that you could present at if you’re not feeling good...”