



ALTON COUNSELLING SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT and ACCOUNTS

2011-2012

Alton Counselling Service
For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

1. Trustees and their Advisers

Board of Trustees

Diana Faithfull (Chair)
Elizabeth Knight
Sue Malone
Anthea Denning
Sue Cutts

Clinical Adviser

Rosemary Russell

Consultant Psychiatrist

Dr Paul Warren

Independent Examiner

Nigel Bulpitt FCA

Management Board

Director	Charles Bailey
Head of Counselling	Susan Forster
Treasurer	Phil Elliott
Service Administrator	Nickie Foskett

Bankers

HSBC Bank,
Lansdowne House,
74 High Street,
Alton,
GU34 1EZ

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Quaker Meeting House,
Church Street,
Alton
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Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

2. Structure, Governance and Management

The Alton Counselling Service was established in 1974, charity number 279857 and its governing document is the trust deed dated 6 February 1980 as amended by a Deed of Variation dated 7 December 2010.

Alton Counselling Service (ACS) aims to provide high quality counselling, for an individually negotiated donation which ensures nobody is refused counselling for financial reasons. We provide a safe environment and an assurance of confidentiality which gives clients the opportunity to talk through and reflect upon difficulties which we can all experience from time to time in life. These include:

- feeling unhappy, lonely, anxious or depressed
- feeling in need of understanding or support
- finding it difficult to relate to others
- lacking self confidence
- facing a personal crisis such as bereavement or relationship break-up
- undergoing major changes in life such as redundancy or retirement

The trustees of ACS are normally elected for three years and may stand for re-election at the end of that period. The trustees are all unpaid volunteers and may claim reasonable out of pocket expenses. No trustees claimed any expenses during the period of the report.

The trustees are responsible for the governance of ACS. They set the strategic direction for the charity and its major areas of work and help resolve competing demands which may be placed on the organisation. The Board of Trustees normally holds four meetings a year. The day to day management of the charity is delegated to the Management Board which is made up of the Director, the Head of Counselling, the Counselling Co-ordinator, the Treasurer and the Service Administrator. The Management Board meets ten times a year or more often if required.

The trustees have put in place a reserves policy and financial systems to reduce as far as possible any financial risk. Clinically the service works to WPF and BACP guidelines with a view to minimising any risk in our work. In addition clinical advisers are in place as and when required. Professional indemnity and public liability insurances are maintained.

Counsellors work on a voluntary basis, though experienced counsellors may be entitled to a modest payment. Each counsellor is part of a supervision group comprising a supervisor and up to four counsellors. Each supervision group meets on a weekly basis to review client work. Any unresolved or difficult issues will be referred to the Counselling Co-ordinator who may seek the advice of the Director, the Head of Counselling, the Clinical Adviser or the Consultant Psychiatrist.

The Head of Counselling holds meetings three times a year with the counsellors and with the receptionists who support the Service Administrator.

Alton Counselling Service For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

All people working in the service on both the clinical and administrative sides have a meeting at least once a year with the person to whom they are responsible, where they have the opportunity to express their views on the activities of the service and its operations.

ACS could not function without the work of volunteers at all levels in the organisation. In particular the counsellors, who are all professionally trained, give their time freely. Others such as the director, the treasurer and receptionists also work without payment.

3. Objectives, Activities and Achievements

The charity's governing document is a trust deed dated 6 February 1980, as amended by a Deed of Variation dated 7 December 2010. The charity's objects as stated therein are:

- (a) To provide counselling to persons seeking help for emotional and psychological difficulties in accordance with current best practice; a clinical psychotherapeutic advisor and a consultant psychiatrist to provide advice to the Trust in the furtherance of its aims
- (b) To research the theory and practice of counselling and to publish the result of this research where appropriate
- (c) To offer training and development opportunities in counselling to qualified and trainee counsellors.

Over the past year ACS has devoted time to initiatives to strengthen the organisation, identified in the 2010–2013 Business Plan. The focus has been to make the service more accessible for clients, through reducing and making more predictable the time between first contact and commencement of weekly therapy sessions, and by widening our contact with the community by improving our website.

The objectives of the 2010-2013 Business Plan continue to be met and electronic banking and card payment systems have now been achieved and the card payment system is gradually being used. The average client fee target has been reached.

The search for suitable alternative premises is becoming more urgent but a more constant income is necessary before commitment to this is possible.

We are pleased that Sue Cutts, in addition to her role as a Trustee, has agreed to undertake some intake sessions to enable the process for clients to go ahead more quickly.

We hope to welcome Pam Bradford as a new Trustee in the very near future.

Another very successful Christmas party was held at the Director's house; despite rather severe wintry weather.

The Summer Conference was held following the AGM in June 2011 at Alton College. This proved an extremely interesting and beneficial occasion for the Service. It brought a good number of both professional and lay people and enabled us to raise the profile and set a precedent for future such events. The next Conference will be held on 15th September 2012.

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It has been an interesting year for the Service with one main consideration being the fact that WPF Therapy announced in November 2011 that it could no longer afford to maintain the National Network under whose auspices ACS has functioned since its inception. This change will be operative from September 2012. This has necessitated ACS and other affiliates to consider other ways of monitoring our psychodynamic counselling in the absence of an appraisal by WPF. ACS is in negotiation with BPC with regard to appraising the work at Alton in the future. A Hampshire group is also under consideration with Basingstoke, Lymington, Southampton and Alton in order to support each other and speak with one voice when required.

We are always seeking new funding but were glad to receive a donation from Alton Town Council this year and to benefit greatly from three runners in the London Marathon. Our main fundraising event for 2012/13 will be the Big Give Christmas Challenge in which we hope to take part.

There are constant challenges presented by running a small, but very professional, service both in terms of staff, volunteers, counsellors, supervisors and premises but the Trustees are extremely grateful for how the management team achieve this. We know that the hours spent are often well above those to which they are contracted. We could not manage without the unstinting help of our volunteers.

Our sincere thanks go to those who enable ACS to go forward with strength to another year.

4. Review of Clinical Practice

It is very interesting looking back at the Review of Clinical Practice 2010 -2011 to see how much growth and stabilisation we have achieved during the year in spite of the number of changes in the Clinical team.

Clients: We continue to have a steady stream of clients requesting counselling. While we can generally offer Intake appointments quite quickly, allocation to a counsellor can take rather longer. By and large the waiting list has been manageable but we lose some clients because the wait is too long. A number of factors determine how long clients wait to be seen for regular sessions: the availability of client and counsellor, as well as counselling rooms on the one hand; and the need to complete the several stages of assessment are on the other. I think that to speed up the process of assessment would result in lowering of standards. Please see the appendices for this year's statistics.

Supervisors: Thea de Moel and Stan Roman have filled the vacancies created by the departure of Demetra Onoufriou and Gay Stanning. In addition, as part of our growth plan, we established a fourth supervision group led by Ann Vodden. As well as clinical guidance the supervisors provide coherence, stability and a sense of 'belonging' which is vital where otherwise the experience of working at ACS might be fragmentary. Their contribution is very much appreciated.

Counsellors: There are currently 16 counsellors at ACS, of whom 8 are qualified and 8 are on placement. Congratulations are due to Jean Satterthwaite and Lynn Gibson who joined ACS as

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trainees and are now qualified. Sadly Carrie Black and Jean Satterthwaite will be leaving us in June and September respectively. This will leave us with 2 vacancies, for which we already have 4 applications for placements. Thanks are due to all our counsellors for their commitment to ACS and our clients.

Remuneration for experienced counsellors: We have experienced some problems with the set-up of the remuneration scheme, in part because it took time to find a formula for payment which is both affordable and equitable. Secondly, ensuring all client donations are banked in a timely fashion is not always easy. We continue to work on this.

Intake workers: We are fortunate that our Intake team of Jeremy Hughes and Paul Cawkill has now been joined by Sue Cutts, who is a Trustee and has had much experience in doing assessments for Relate. This means that we have much more flexibility in the times we can offer for Intakes and are able to meet the needs of those who request a female assessor.

Clinical Advisor and Psychiatric Consultant: Thank you to Rosemary Russell and Dr Paul Warren who have continued to give us their invaluable support throughout the year.

Clinical Standards: the dissolution of the Wpf Network is covered elsewhere in this report. With regard to its replacement, accreditation by BACP focuses primarily on procedures, policies and protocols. It does not adequately assess the standards of psychodynamic work and as such cannot replace Wpf; hence the possibility of becoming a Member Institution of the BPC is under discussion. The BPC's criteria for membership are quite stringent and this will have implications for the clinical team. Paradoxically, while in recent years it has been increasingly hard to find counsellors with purely psychodynamic backgrounds, the closure of NHS psychotherapy departments has resulted in students on psychodynamic courses looking further afield for placements. Fortunately Basingstoke Counselling is now running a psychodynamic course and we have already have 2 requests for placement from there.

Conferences: Last year's conference was our first for several years. The topic, speakers, venue and food were all very well received and we hope to build on its success this year. I am very grateful to Stan Roman who suggested this year's theme and who has put a lot of work into preparing an exhibition of paintings and short essays for the conference as well as giving a paper.

Office Management: The increase in the number of counsellors at ACS, along with the introduction of the counsellor remuneration scheme, has resulted in an increased administrative workload. In response, ACS has undergone an upgrade in office processes, allowing for more efficient and detailed analysis to take place. Additional volunteer administrative assistants and receptionists have been appointed and came together during a successful training workshop, which will be repeated later in the year.

Finally I want to thank Nickie Foskett, Service Administrator, and Moya Chase, Counselling Co-ordinator, both of whose commitment and dedication are central to the smooth, professional running of ACS.

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5. Financial Review

The financial result for the current year is a relatively healthy surplus of £5,291, a successful turnaround from last year's deficit of £5,686. This improvement was anticipated in last year's report, where we informed that through the assistance of a grant from the Hampshire and Isle of White Community Foundation, we were undertaking a review of our day-to-day workings to improve our operations 'the fruits of which will be more apparent in next year's results'.

This improvement is clearly seen in our principle source of funding, client donations. At £34,068, client donations show an increase of almost 75% on the previous year, a continuation of the trend which we had observed in the latter part of last year's operations.

Counselling expenditure has also increased significantly during the year to £17,382, over 46% greater than the prior year. This reflects the enlarged expenditure in terms of counsellor supervision required for the increase in client numbers and the decision taken by the Trustees to make some recompense to senior counsellors to encourage stability and reduce turnover.

Other areas of the Service affected by the increase in counselling activities have been the day to day administration and the need to flex our accommodation dependent on counselling requirements.

Our main fund-raising for this year, was alluded to in last year's accounts. Then we reported that we had reserved three volunteer entrances to this year's London Marathon, at a cost of £1,050. We are grateful to our three volunteers Brad Simpson, Tim Manville and Oliver Prain who between them raised a substantial £3,549, an overall benefit to the Service of £2,499. We also reported a promised grant of £500 from Alton Town Council which we duly received at the start of the financial year.

At the end of the year, the reserves of the Service amounted to £27,029.

The charity makes no specific investments

6. Director's Report

It is pleasing that client numbers have grown in line with expectations, and our reserves at 31 March 2012 are higher than they have ever been. We have been able to increase the paid hours to match the growth in activity, and also increased the payment for intake assessments to be in line with others. The depth of counselling available in the service has increased and we are able to take on more complex cases. The office is now manned every day of the working week, and we are seeking the services of a volunteer accounts manager to help out with managing receipts and payments.

We have moved our current account banking from Lloyds to HSBC, and are now making as much use as possible of electronic banking. A card reader has also been installed, and clients can now pay for intake assessments and subsequent contributions by credit and debit card. We would like

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payment by debit and credit card to replace cash and cheques as the main means of payment over the next two years.

ACS is now registered for Gift Aid with HMRC. This important development will help the service with new forms of fund raising, such as Marathon entries that involve donations direct from taxpayers.

In November, WPF announced its decision to terminate the accreditation of Network members. ACS wants to find a replacement that will allow the psychodynamic nature of the service's offering to continue to be subject to regular critical review; the favoured option being British Psychoanalytic Council. Also as a result of the changes to the WPF network, we are trying to revive regular meetings with the other ex-WPF accredited agencies in Hampshire (Basingstoke, Southampton and Compass in Lymington) to achieve synergy in clinical and management matters. It is hoped in this way to move on from the devolution of the WPF Network.

The average client contribution began to fall towards the end of the year, reflecting the correlation between complexity of cases and clients' ability to pay. Total client donations in the full year fell 10% short of the budget target. The budget for the coming year 2102-13 predicts a small in year deficit albeit with an average client contribution of £28, highlighting the need to seek ways to make the service run more efficiently over the next twelve months.

Until this greater efficiency can be realised, and budget deficits avoided, it will be difficult to take on the increased cost of moving to larger premises. However the need to find extra space cannot be ignored if we are to continue to grow.

Finally, we have to give special thanks to Phil Elliot, our Treasurer, who will retire after more years of service at ACS than he is ready to admit. Phil has managed the funds of ACS in a way that has allowed the accumulation of healthy reserves, avoiding the pitfalls of the banking crisis in 2008/9, and as he leaves we are in a stronger position than ever before. Phil has overseen the introduction of electronic banking and card payments, and has coped with the increase in size of ACS's activities in an admirable way. He has been a great help to me in understanding the workings of the service, and his contribution will be greatly missed by everyone associated with ACS. We are all extremely grateful to him.

7. Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are required to prepare an annual report and financial statements for each financial year. These statements should give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees have:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Taken responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed:

Diana Faithfull, Chair of Trustees

Date:

**Alton Counselling Service
For the financial year ended 31 March 2012**

Clinical Organization

Head of Counselling

Susan Forster

Counselling Coordinator

Moya Chase

Clinical Supervisors

Demetra Onafariou (until May 2011)

Gay Stanning (until June 2011)

Moya Chase

Thea de Moel (from September 2011)

Stanley Roman (from June 2011)

Ann Vodden (from June 2011)

Clinical Adviser

Rosemary Russell

Consultant Psychiatrist

Dr Paul Warren

Counsellors

The following counsellors have made themselves available to ACS during the year:

Corinne Alford

Rachael Cann

Christine Wells

Asma Mair

Nikki Cotterill

Carrie Black

Jean Satterthwaite

Jeremy Hughes

Paul Cawkill

Lynn Gibson

Alison Lee

Dillian Maas

Annabel James

Jackie Downe

Paul Brand

Linda Morison

Marion Downey

Kim Williams

Volunteers

The following have volunteered their time to ACS

Paul Annels - Administration

Neil Kearns - Reception

Diane Worthington - Reception

Jane Hartung - Reception

Alton Counselling Service
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**ALTON COUNSELLING
SERVICE**

**Accounts for the
financial year ended**

31 March 2012

Alton Counselling Service
For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

Receipts and Payments Accounts

	Total Funds		Notes (1)
	Last Year £	This Year £	
<u>Receipts</u>			
Counselling and Training	19,537	34,068	
Grants and Donations	1,645	1,444	(2)
Bank Interest	154	77	
London Marathon Sponsorship	-	3,549	
Sundry	-	830	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total Receipts	21,336	39,968	
<u>Payments</u>			
Counselling & Training	(11,859)	(17,382)	
Administration	(9,924)	(11,761)	
Premises Costs	(2,905)	(4,399)	
Insurance & Affiliation Fees	(1,284)	(1,135)	
London Marathon Entry	(1,050)	-	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total Payments	(27,022)	(34,677)	
Net of Receipts/(Payments)	(5,686)	5,291	
Cash Funds last year end	27,424	21,738	
Cash Funds this year end	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	21,738	27,029	

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at Year End

	Unrestricted Funds £
<u>Cash Funds</u>	
Petty cash	30
Current account: HSBC bank	3,921
Savings account: Newbury Building Society	23,078
	<hr/>
Total Cash Funds	27,029
	<hr/>

Signed on behalf of all the trustees

Diana Faithfull, Chair of Trustees : 14 June 2012

Alton Counselling Service
For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

Notes to the accounts

1. Restricted Funds

The Service currently has no restricted funds.

2. Grants and donations

During the year, donations were received from the following:

	<u>£</u>
Alton Town Council	500
Robert Weighton	340
Worldham PC	50
Star Inn Charity	254
Medstead PC	150
Alton Lions	150
	<hr/> 1444

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2012

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

I report on the accounts of Alton Counselling Service for the year ended 31 March 2012, which are set out on pages 2 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Nigel Bulpitt FCA
The Old School
Upper Froyle
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 4LB

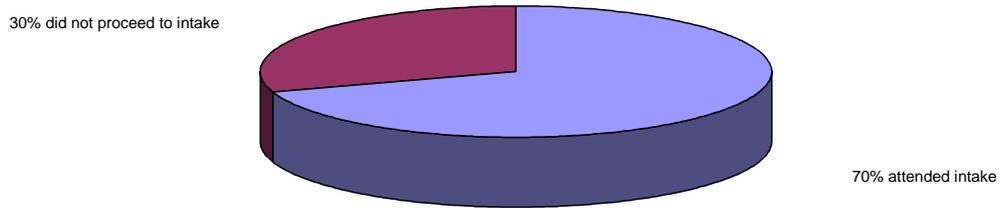
14 June 2012

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Appendix

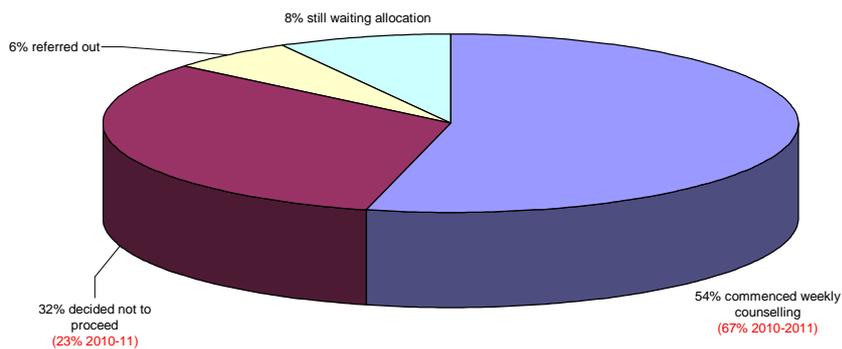
Statistical Analysis April 2011 – March 2012

Ratio of enquiries to intake April 2011-March 2012



ACS received a total of 107 client enquiries for counselling during 2011/2012, up 8% from 90 client enquiries during 2010/2011. Of those enquiries, 74 clients (70%) went on to attend intake assessments at the Service (up from 65% last year).

Intake Outcome Analysis (74 completed intakes April 2011 - March 2012)



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Client enquiries by Parish Council

