



ALTON COUNSELLING SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT and ACCOUNTS

2013-2014

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

1. Trustees and their Advisers

Board of Trustees

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

Community Adviser

Pam Bradford

Independent Examiner

R.H.A. Chase, FCA

Clinical Adviser

Rosemary Russell (to December 2013)

Consultant Psychiatrist

Dr Paul Warren

Management Board

Director	Charles Bailey
Head of Counselling	Susan Forster
Treasurer	Phil Cutts
Service Manager	Nickie Foskett
Accounts Manager	Victoria Lees

Bankers

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

Contact Details:

Quaker Meeting House,
Church Street,
Alton
GU34 2DA

Tel: 01420 89207

Web: www.altoncounselling.org.uk

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Alton Counselling Service (ACS) 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.

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 work with the Management Board in setting 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 Treasurer and the Service Manager. 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 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 receive 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

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

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 counselors.

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.

4. Review of Clinical Practice

After three plus years of steady growth and development, the past twelve months have brought serious challenges, as well as some continuing progress.

In May 2013, a very full day programme was organized for the visit of the BPC Registrar and her assistant. This gave our visitors the chance to meet most of the people involved with ACS and to take part in a number of our meetings. We are very proud that our application to BPC was successful and look forward to the first meeting of the Psychodynamic Register in July.

In September 2013, our Annual Conference, Being and Non-being, was a very enjoyable event and gave CPD points to all delegates. Although attendance was below what had been hoped for, this annual event will continue as a regular part of our calendar involving well known and regarded names as guest speakers.

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

Our major challenge occurred in December 2013, when IAPT (free at point of delivery short term therapy available via the NHS) finally became available in North East Hampshire. This has caused a decline in referrals from GP surgeries, affecting not only client numbers but also trainees on placement who are having to wait a very long time for suitable clients that can be allocated to them. Although we still receive many applications for placements, we are not at present in a position to take anyone on for lack of suitable clients.

This year, after many years as Clinical Advisor, Rosemary Russell resigned. Many thanks are due to her for all her help and support over the years. We are grateful to Miranda Alcock of the Society of Analytical Psychology, who has agreed to take this on. Also leaving us shortly are Moya Chase, Supervisor, and two Counsellors, Jackie Downey and Dillian Maas. Their unique combination of skill, professionalism, commitment and wisdom will be sorely missed.

Finally, Susan Forster's own relocation to North London has inevitably made her job more difficult to fulfill. Travel problems have impacted her time in the office and the opportunity for regular informal meetings with colleagues, both of which have been destabilising for the Service.

5. Financial Review

Financial Report.

The end of year accounts shows a surplus of £892 as against a budget forecast of a deficit of £460, showing a positive variance of £1352. This position has been achieved through the combination of a worrying decline in client payments (£5800 down on budget), exceptional fundraising efforts (£2900 up on budget), Donation and Grants (£1178) up on budget and reduced Operating Costs (£3267 under budget).

HMRC/PAYE.

Throughout the year we have been using the HMRC supplied RTI software to manage our payroll and NIC payments. This has been largely trouble-free and has ensured that we meet our obligations to HMRC in a timely manner.

Xero Financial Package.

In May last year, we introduced the Xero Accounting system with considerable assistance from Bob Chase, our Independent Financial Examiner. This web-based system allows us to maintain accurate, up-to-date financial records and also has powerful report-generating capability allowing us to manage our finances more effectively. As the year has progressed we have expanded our use of the system to replace manual record keeping and are now in the position where we can reconcile client receipts accurately from session delivery through to bank deposit.

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

Reserve Account.

Reserve funds are held in a Charity Deposit Account with Virgin Money, currently paying 2.0% interest.

Credit Card System

The Cardsave virtual terminal credit card system has been in use throughout the year and continues to meet our credit card processing needs. In November, we achieved compliance to the Payment Card Industries Digital Security Standards as required by Cardsave.

Investments

The charity makes no specific investments

6. Director's Report

A year of great change

While the year started brightly with a healthy financial position carried forward, the introduction of IATP and the consequent fall away of referrals by GPs meant that the year closed with it being clear that the Service will face an extremely demanding time ahead.

The pattern of activity reflected this change in fortunes. While formulating the new Business Plan in the early part of the year, its objectives centred on investment in the clinical aspects of the Service through additional post graduate training, sponsored reading groups, and continuation of meeting half the cost of other approved training. By the end of the year, the drop in client numbers and the continued outflow of fixed operating costs meant spending on clinical aspects would have to be deferred and the focus switched to marketing for a revival in the level of new enquiry, and measures to increase the efficiency of the clinical operation.

We know from peer organisations that the introduction of IAPT has caused fundamental changes, all broadly similar regardless of when IAPT was launched in a particular area. The most noticeable is the sudden drop in client enquiries during the honeymoon period which follows the launch of IATP in an area, after which it takes between 12 and 18 months for client activity to recover. This recovery has to be achieved through committed marketing plans, and generally results in a full revival albeit with only 50% of clients being referred by GPs.

In February, the Trustees appointed a Working Group to develop and implement a marketing plan with a budget of £1650, of which £1,000 was supported by an East Hampshire District Councillor Grant.

Business Plan to December 2017

A new Business Plan was approved by the Trustees covering the next four years and following successful conclusion of the preceding plan to December 2013. In addition to

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

the clinical and marketing objectives referred to already, the plan seeks to achieve increased efficiency of service delivery, self appraisal with an external moderator using our Clinical Evaluation Record (CER) statistics, and creation of a bursary scheme to support affordable counselling for all.

Fundraising

For 2013-14, we secured two places for the Virgin London Marathon thanks to Westminster Pastoral Foundation, but we cannot expect any further places from this source or direct from the organisers, Virgin, who do not expect new charity places to be available until 2018 at the earliest. The John Pilkington Travel Lecture in January 2014 was a popular success and helped launch ACS's 40th Anniversary year. There was good support from local parish councils, especially those where ACS attended meetings: Alton Town Council can only support us in alternate years.

Networks

The Hampshire Counselling Partnership, (ex-WPF accredited agencies in Basingstoke, Portsmouth and Lymington) met three times in the year, allowing each to share experiences.

Pending development a network of psychodynamic agencies under the BPC aegis, we attended two National Counselling Network meetings and have taken active part in all exchanges; the exchanges have covered management policy, clinical support and operating systems and are regarded as a valuable investment of time.

Other matters

Our BAPC interim review was completed without difficulty.

In September 2013, BT took over from Waitrose and Class as communications supplier in the interests of cost saving and better reaction to technical difficulties. BT's billing has been haywire and caused futile expenditure of time and energy to remedy two unwarranted suspensions of service, though the service itself has been good.

The Quakers indicated that they would seek a rent increase by the end of the year, the first for three years. The increase was very fair and agreed without difficulty.

The old policy of payment to experienced counsellors was scrapped as being unworkable, and replaced with a simple flat payment per session.

The Trustees agreed single signing authority on the bank mandate for two members of the Management Group to allow the bank to issue them with debit cards.

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

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:.....

Date:.....

Elizabeth Knight, Chair of Trustees

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

Clinical Organization

Head of Counselling

Susan Forster

Counselling Coordinator

Ann Vodden

Clinical Supervisors

Moya Chase

Thea de Moel

Stanley Roman

Ann Vodden

Clinical Adviser

Rosemary Russell (to December 2013)

Consultant Psychiatrist

Dr Paul Warren

Counsellors

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

Nikki Cotterill	Lynn Gibson
Jeremy Hughes	Alison Lee
Paul Cawkill	Dillian Maas
Tim Wenmouth	Annabel James
Debbie Allen	Jackie Downey
Marion Downey	Paul Brand
Kim Williams	Linda Morison

Volunteers

The following have volunteered their time to ACS

Neil Kearns – Reception
Diane Worthington – Reception
Anne Johnston - Reception

Alton Counselling Service
For the financial year ended 31 March 2014



**ALTON COUNSELLING
SERVICE**

**Accounts for the
financial year ended**

31 March 2014

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

Receipts and Payments Accounts

	Total Funds		Notes (1)
	Last Year £	This Year £	
<u>Receipts</u>			
Counselling and Training	39,487	37,109	
Grants and Donations	4,184	2,978	(2)
Bank Interest	112	479	
Fund-raising events	0	5,421	(3)
Conference	1,087	1,195	
Bad debt	0	(200)	
Total Receipts	£44,870	£46,982	
<u>Payments</u>			
Counselling and Training	(23,385)	(23,495)	
Administration	(11,998)	(14,937)	
Premises Costs	(5,183)	(5,335)	
Insurance and Affiliation Fees	(1,288)	(508)	
Fund-raising events	(800)	(698)	
Conference		(1,117)	
Total Payments	£(42,654)	£(46,090)	
Net of Receipts/(Payments)	2,216	892	
Cash Funds last year end	25,750	27,966	
Cash Funds this year end	£27,966	£28,858	

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at Year End

	Unrestricted Funds £
<u>Cash Funds</u>	
Petty cash	30
Current account: HSBC bank	1,650
Savings account: Newbury Building Society	27,178
Total Cash Funds	£28,858

Signed on behalf of all the trustees:

Elizabeth Knight, Chair of Trustees

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

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>
EHDC - Grant for Computer Systems upgrade	642
D.Vodden	70
Alton Town Council	1,000
Specsavers	100
Binsted Parish Council	116
Worldham Parish Council	50
EHDC - Donation in contribution to Marketing Programme	1,000

TOTAL	£2978
-------	--------------

3. Fund-raising events

During the year, receipts from Fund-raising events were as follows:

	<u>£</u>
Sponsorship from London Marathon	2809
John Pilkington Evening Event	2612

TOTAL	£5421
-------	--------------

Alton Counselling Service

For the financial year ended 31 March 2014

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

I report on the accounts of Alton Counselling Service for the year ended 31 March 2014, which are set out on pages 11 to 12.

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.

R.H.A. Chase, FCA
Garden Cottage
The Street
Upper Farringdon
Alton, Hampshire
GU34 3DT