

**ALTON COUNSELLING SERVICE**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
and  
ACCOUNTS**

**2008-2009**

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **1. Trustees and their Advisers**

#### **Board of Trustees**

Diana Faithfull (Chair)  
Elizabeth Knight  
Liz Peace  
Sue Malone  
Judith Wilcox

#### **Director**

Roz Osborne to December 2008

#### **Counselling Co-ordinator**

Jane Johnson

#### **Clinical Adviser**

Rosemary Russell

#### **Treasurer**

Phil Elliott

#### **Administrator**

Jenny Manville

#### **Contact Details:**

Quaker Meeting House, Church Street, Alton GU34 2DA

Tel: 01420 89207

Email: [admin@altoncounselling.org.uk](mailto:admin@altoncounselling.org.uk)

#### **Independent Examiner**

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

#### **Bankers**

Lloyds TSB  
40 High St  
Alton  
GU34 1BQ

Charity Commission registered number: 279857

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **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.

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 Counselling Co-ordinator, the Treasurer and the Administrator. The Management Board meets monthly 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. Full professional indemnity and public liability insurances are in place and up to date.

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

There are up to 12 counsellors working on a voluntary basis. Each counsellor is part of one of three supervision groups meeting 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 Clinical Adviser or the Consultant Psychiatrist.

The Counselling Co-ordinator holds meetings three times a year with the counsellors and with the receptionists who support the Administrator.

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.

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **3. Objectives, Activities and Achievements**

The charity's governing document is a trust deed dated 6 February 1980.

The charity's objects as stated in the trust deed are:

- a) To relieve persons suffering from Mental and emotional disabilities in such ways as the Trust, after receiving the advice of their medical advisers, think fit;
- b) To conduct study and research into methods of treatment of such persons through religion and psychiatry and to publish the useful results of such study and research;
- c) To educate and train persons in counselling so that they may assist medically qualified consultants in the treatment of persons suffering from mental disorders.

Over the past year ACS has devoted time to initiatives to strengthen the organisation, identified in the 2006-9 business plan developed and agreed by trustees.

Our objectives for the period of this business plan have been to continue to provide high quality affordable counselling for the people of the Alton area and to:

1. Achieve income based on 12 counsellors seeing 30 clients each week for 38 weeks a year with an average client donation of £20 a week by 2009
2. Improve the recruitment and retention of counsellors
3. Enhance the services offered to clients through a review of responsibilities, appropriate upgrading of equipment and training of staff
4. Develop and implement a marketing and fundraising strategy to improve access and increase income

Achieving these objectives will form the focus of our work.

ACS has benefited from a well established trustee board and an experienced management team made up of the Director, Counselling Co-ordinator, Treasurer and Administrator. There is also excellent clinical support from the consultant psychiatrist, clinical adviser and team of well qualified supervisors to support the work of our dedicated counsellors.

A new Director, Roz Osborne, began work with ACS in January 2008 but was unable to continue in her post and resigned in January 2009. By the end of the year a new Director, Charles Bailey, had been appointed to begin work on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

We were pleased to welcome Judith Wilcox as a Trustee in June 2008.

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# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

ACS is a Network Member of the Westminster Pastoral Foundation, a national network of 25 counselling centres. Network Centres are committed to working to the agreed, high standard of Counselling Service Guidelines and to undergoing a formal Appraisal by WPF every five years. Counsellors have received professional training to the required WPF standard (or equivalent).

ACS is an organisational member and accredited centre of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. This means it works within the BACP Framework for Ethical Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy, is subject to its complaints procedure and meets its required benchmarks for high quality services. ACS was awarded organisational membership of BACP for a further year on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Service accreditation is due for renewal by 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

ACS carries out a range of activities in furtherance of its charitable objects. These are shown below.

**a) To relieve persons suffering from Mental and emotional disabilities in such ways as the Trust, after receiving the advice of their medical advisers, think fit;**

The majority of the work of the charity is devoted to this object.

During this year we provided 994 hours of counselling. The average fee for a counselling session was £24.69 within a range of £10 to £35. Our aim is to have 12 counsellors who see a total of 33 clients per week. Throughout the year we have had 10 counsellors available seeing an average of 23 clients per week, within a range of 21 to 26 per week.

This year a total of 12 counsellors have worked with us. We have taken on two new counsellors and two have left the Service. During the year 54 new clients were seen for an initial assessment, and of these 31 started regular weekly counselling. They were referred from various sources: 68% from GPs, 6% from mental health professionals, 10% from counsellors or other agencies, 6% from friends and 10% from our website.

Throughout the year the level of client numbers has been higher than the unusually low numbers last year. The average waiting time to begin weekly sessions was 7.5 weeks. While some clients have been seen almost straightaway, others with limited availability or who need an evening session may have had to wait longer. During the year 50 clients were in ongoing counselling. The duration of open-ended counselling varies according to the client's need but we do not usually see anyone for more than 3 years.

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

All counsellors receive weekly supervision within the Service, which is provided by 3 supervisors conducting group meetings with 3 or 4 counsellors. This is in accordance with WPF and BACP requirements, providing professional support and monitoring the work of counsellors. In addition the Service has a clinical advisory committee. The members of this Committee are the Counselling Co-ordinator, Clinical Adviser, supervisors and the Service's Consultant Psychiatrist. The remit of the Committee is to advise and provide support on counselling practice, procedures and standards. The committee meets quarterly.

Counsellors continue to see adults whose presenting problems include depression, anxiety and panic attacks, inability to cope, relationship problems and bereavement. Many of these clients have a high level of need arising from early trauma, complicated bereavements, childhood sexual abuse and disruptions or inadequacies in their early relationships with parents or carers. Being able to provide a safe secure setting in which to build up a therapeutic relationship over time is an important part of the work.

Our ability to offer affordable counselling over an extended period (normally up to three years) distinguishes the Service from other providers such as the Health Service.

**b) To conduct study and research into methods of treatment of such persons through religion and psychiatry and to publish the useful results of such study and research;**

At present ACS does not have the resources to conduct its own research.

**c) To educate and train persons in counselling so that they may assist medically qualified consultants in the treatment of persons suffering from mental disorders.**

ACS offers day workshops from time to time that are designed to provide continuing professional development for counsellors in the Service and those working in the surrounding area. This year there has been one workshop "Who can Help?" designed to develop working relations between the Service and the local community mental health team.

The centre subsidises training in assessment work, and this year two counsellors undertook subsidised training at the British Association of Psychotherapists.

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

ACS offers placements and suitable supervision for trainees in on-going training but it does not run counsellor training courses. The nearby WPF centre in Basingstoke offers psychodynamic counselling training at Certificate and Diploma levels and, together with several local university and college based courses; we believe that the need for this type of training is well met in the area.

#### **4. Financial Review**

Client donations continue to be the principal source of ACS funding. In the current financial year these amounted to £27,113 with a further £3,041 coming from external fund-raising. Of the external funding, £2,026 was a restricted grant from Awards for All received at the close of the financial year. This money is a dedicated contribution towards the CORE project to be implemented during the next financial year. Details of the planned CORE expenditure are described in Section 5.

During the year the trustees have reviewed their financial reserves policy and concluded that the current policy of retaining 6 months running costs as a reserve would enable ACS to manage any foreseeable crisis, or to enable it to wind up in good order.

The charity makes no specific investments

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **5. Conclusions and Plans for the Future**

Alton Counselling Service ends its 35<sup>th</sup> Year of providing quality affordable counselling to the population of Alton and surrounding areas in a healthy condition, ready to face the challenges that current tight economic conditions may bring to the service. At the close of the year, the reserves policy of the trustees has been met. Average client contributions remain healthy in spite of the recession and are above the average achieved by adjacent services in Hampshire, though our average began to slip over the last four months of the year. Counsellors' efforts to maintain client donations are much appreciated.

There are a number of one-off costs that will have to be met in the coming year to keep our premises and systems at required current standards. New meeting room chairs are necessary to comply with fire regulations. Office systems and equipment need to be maintained to "best-practice" standards. Training costs for the CORE programme which are not covered by the Awards for All programme, have to be met.

The most exciting item of planned expenditure will be for a second computer, software licenses and peripheral equipment for the CORE project, the cost of which is already covered by the Awards for All grant; an order has been placed for this equipment and software to a total cost of £1,314. With CORE training complete by the end of the autumn, it is expected that ACS will "go live" before the end of the current year. CORE will help us to deepen the quality of our service by measuring client satisfaction, more closely monitoring clinical work, peer practice analysis and providing statistical information for future funding applications.

By October, a new business plan will have been completed, covering the period to October 2012. This will review the outcome of the current plan and set out the basic longer term development targets for the service over the next three years.

During the coming year, we also have to complete preparation for renewal of our BACP accreditation. Due to anticipated changes in the structure of health provision, we have been warned that the renewal process is becoming increasingly rigorous.

It remains to thank our donors. While we are a charity, confidentiality issues make it extremely difficult to solicit donations in the normal manner; it is also almost impossible for us to benefit from Gift Aid. Thus the donations received from Froyle PC, Worldham PC, Bentworth PC, Medstead PC, Four Marks PC, Alton Luncheon Club, Awards for All and Alton Beer Festival are not only greatly appreciated, they are also vital to our continuing operations.

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **6. 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**

16 June 2009

# **Alton Counselling Service**

## **For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

### **STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Executive Committee**

##### **Board of Trustees**

Diana Faithfull (Chair)  
Elizabeth Knight  
Liz Peace  
Sue Malone  
Judith Wilcox

##### **Management Team**

Roz Osborne – Director (to December 2008)  
Jane Johnson - Counselling Co-ordinator  
Phil Elliott - Treasurer  
Jenny Manville – Administrator

##### **Clinical Adviser**

Rosemary Russell

#### **Clinical Supervisors**

Joy Abel  
Gay Stanning  
Demetra Onoufriou

#### **Consultant Psychiatrist**

Dr Paul Warren

#### **Counsellors**

Corinne Alford  
Nicola Boardman  
Nicola Cotterill  
Karina Farnlucher (to November 2008)  
Rita Harvey (from March 2009)  
Julie Hugman (to March 2009)  
Renata Kazickaite (from September 2008)  
Sissel Marti  
Deborah Scott  
Julie Scott  
Bob Smith  
Gill Seccombe

#### **Receptionists**

Neil Kearns  
Sally Thomas  
Diane Worthington

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**

**Alton Counselling Service**  
**For the financial year ended 31 March 2009**

**ALTON COUNSELLING SERVICE**

**Accounts for the financial year ended**  
**31 March 2009**

Charity Commission registered number: 279857

**Alton Counselling Service**  
**Report of the Board of Trustees for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009**

**Receipts and Payments Accounts**

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Total Funds		Notes
	Last Year £	This Year £	Last Year £	This Year £	Last Year £	This Year £	
<b><u>Receipts</u></b>							
Counselling and Training	18,815	<b>27,293</b>	-	-	18,815		
Grants and Donations	805	<b>1,015</b>	-	<b>2,026</b>	805	<b>3,041</b>	(1)
Bank Interest	373	<b>368</b>	-	-	373	<b>368</b>	
Sundry	1	<b>7</b>	-	-	1	<b>7</b>	
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>19,994</b>	<b>28,683</b>	-	<b>2,026</b>	<b>19,994</b>	<b>30,709</b>	
<b><u>Payments</u></b>							
Counselling & Training	(8,850)	<b>(10,099)</b>	-	-	(8,850)	<b>(10,099)</b>	
Administration	(5,425)	<b>(6,356)</b>	-	-	(5,425)	<b>(6,356)</b>	
Premises Costs	(2,614)	<b>(3,215)</b>	-	-	(2,614)	<b>(3,215)</b>	
Insurance & Affiliation Fees	(863)	<b>(955)</b>	-	-	(863)	<b>(955)</b>	
Awards for All Project	-	-	(3,153)	-	(3,153)	-	
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>(17,752)</b>	<b>(20,625)</b>	<b>(3,153)</b>	-	<b>(20,905)</b>	<b>(20,625)</b>	
Net of Receipts/(Payments)	2,242	<b>8,058</b>	(3,153)	<b>2,026</b>	(911)	<b>10,084</b>	
Cash Funds last year end	9,540	<b>11,782</b>	3,153	-	12,693	<b>11,782</b>	
<b>Cash Funds this year end</b>	<b>11,782</b>	<b>19,840</b>	-	<b>2,026</b>	<b>11,782</b>	<b>21,866</b>	

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities at Year End**

	Unrestricted Funds £
<b><u>Cash Funds</u></b>	
Petty cash	30
Current account: Lloyds bank	4,431
Savings account: Newbury Building Society	17,405
<b>Total Cash Funds</b>	<b>21,866</b>

Signed on behalf of all the trustees

Diana Faithfull, Chair of Trustees

16 June 2009

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**

**Alton Counselling Service**  
**Report of the Board of Trustees for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009**

**Notes to the accounts**

1. Grants and donations

During the year, donations were received from the following:

	<u>£</u>
Four Marks PC	50
Bentworth PC	50
Worldham PC	50
Alton Beer Festival	500
Froyle PC	180
Medstead PC	150
Alton Luncheon Club	35
Awards for All	<u>2,026</u>
	<u>3,041</u>

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**

**Alton Counselling Service**  
**Report of the Board of Trustees for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009**

**Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts**

Report to the trustees of Alton Counselling Service on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009 as set out on pages 13 to 14

**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 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act)) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the Act as amended;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act as amended; 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 the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention :

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
  - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
  - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 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

16 June 2009

**Charity Commission registered number: 279857**