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Chairperson's report

Peter Brown

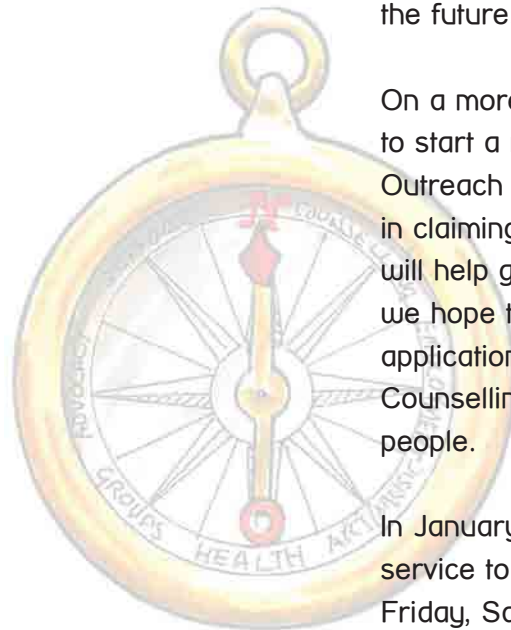
Yet again, this year has been extremely busy one for us, with the number of people accessing our services continuing to rise - with particularly high increases of around 40% in requests for Information and advice; Counselling, and Advocacy. As we have had no increases in resources, this has obviously put pressure on the staff and volunteers who have delivered the various services, so I want to take this opportunity to thank them all for their continued enthusiasm and commitment in these difficult times.

Unfortunately, as has been the case for many charities for the last few years, we are still struggling to bring in the funding needed to give us long-term security for some of our services - with the Information/advice, Advocacy and Horticulture services particularly underfunded. During the past year we have worked hard with service Commissioners to try and find ways of delivering the Advocacy service; and have been successful in bringing in some short-term funding to help keep it going following the ending of our Comic Relief Grant in 2015.

Sadly, because of the lack of specific funding for the Intensive Advocacy service - together with the high demand for advocacy relating to benefits, debt, housing issues, and accessing health services - we have had to withdraw the service in order to use the hours to cover this more general advocacy work. We will, however, try and re-instate the service if appropriate funding becomes available in the future.

On a more positive note, in April next year we hope to start a new contract to work with the Assertive Outreach team to provide advocacy - particularly in claiming benefits and housing issues - which will help give a level of security to the service; and we hope to strengthen this further as part of an application to Lottery to fund both Advocacy and Counselling for the growing demand from young people.

In January this year we extended our Drop-in service to provide Out of Hours Crisis drop-ins on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings through



pilot funding from Solihull CCG; which means that we are now able to be open from 12pm to 10pm at weekends. This service is aimed at people who are either going through a period of distress; or are supporting their on-going emotional well-being and help prevent a mental health crisis.

The service has been very well used, and valued by the service users; and although it is only currently funded through to March 2018, we are hopeful that it will be extended for at least a further year through to March 2019. Solihull CCG will then decide whether they are able to provide the funding necessary to deliver it longer-term.

And now some further good news! This time last year, I was reporting the threat to our Horticulture and sports project, as the land we use was included in a proposed new development site for Knowle. However, following negotiations with the Principal of the Arden Academy Martin Murphy, who was leading the bid; and the amazing support from both our neighbours in Knowle and wider Solihull, we had the very good news earlier this year that the land was no-longer being included in proposed development site.

To celebrate keeping our horticulture project site out of a proposed development in Knowle we held a picnic for everyone who helped us



Alongside this, have been the connections that we have been making with local businesses, clubs and organisations – both directly and through our plant and pop-up shop sales - to not only gain support for the need for the service; but also bring in funding and equipment for the project.

This has led to us receiving many donations of equipment and plants - including a gift of 25 apple trees from the Knowle and Dorridge Rotary club and a further 1,000 trees and hedging plants to thicken the current hedges and build a woodland area, through the Arden Free Tree scheme.

In addition, this year we have brought in over £22,000 in donations to the organisation – the highest amount we have ever received; with most specifying they be used to fund the horticulture project. These have been collected through a wide variety of local organisations and individuals, who have held coffee mornings and other events in support of Mind; and we have been adopted as the fundraising charity for several other organisations for 2017/18.

We have also received further good news from the Elizabeth Creek Trust who have agreed to continue

We are raising funds for the horticulture project with our shop and cafe this Christmas...



their annual grant of £10,000 for a further 3 years when the current funding ends in September 2018; which helps the project have a level of stability, and allows us the opportunity of finding the other necessary income through our own sales and additional fundraising.

This year has also seen a growth in organisations and businesses – ranging from small groups such as the Stroke Association and Langley school to large businesses like Costain and Arup wanting us to come and talk to them about mental health, and the services we provide. This reflects the national raising of awareness within the general public regarding the importance of good mental health; as well as the responsibility of employers to protect the emotional well-being of their staff.

Finally, would like to thank the other Mind trustees for all their time and support during the last 12 months; as well as all the various organisations and individuals who have contributed to us either financially, or through their support and skills over the past year. These range from organisations such as Solihull CAB who have allowed us to use one of their rooms so that we can provide counselling sessions in North Solihull, and Sustain who have



...and in the summer



supported us with funding advice; through to the support we have received from locals for the horticulture project, and others who have given their time as volunteers, provided practical help, or have carried out fundraising activities on our behalf.



Information

Nick Woodman

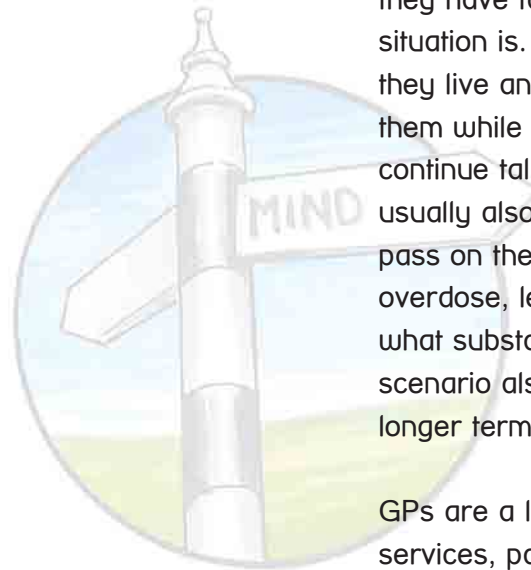
Requests for information have increased again on last year's figures with the same range and variety of advice and guidance sought. A total of 6,119 contacts were made directly to us, and increase of 14% over last year. More significantly, of these contacts, 1,591 (26%) were from the age group 17-25: an increase of over 350% from last year. This is likely to be due to greater awareness of mental health issues with younger people, particularly men, who have been targeted by campaigns run by Time to Change and due to increased coverage in the media.

Depression, anxiety and stress are the most common reasons for contacting us (79%), but people with a diagnosis of personality disorder now form a small but significant percentage of contacts. To help us with the latter, all staff here received training in personality disorders from the mental health trust. Other issues dealt with include Schizophrenia/Bi-polar and other psychosis (22%), isolation/loneliness (31%), suicidal thoughts/actions (14%), current/historical sexual abuse (7%), current/

historical Domestic violence (17%), alcohol/drug/gambling addiction (12%).

We also have each year a small number of phone contacts from people who have taken life threatening overdoses. We try to talk to the person concerned to gain their trust (on all but one occasion this year we haven't had contact with the person before) so we are able to establish what they have taken and can then judge how serious the situation is. We will ask them to let us know where they live and then remain talking and reassuring them while a colleague calls an ambulance and will continue talking to them until it arrives. We would usually also speak with the ambulance crew to pass on the information we have on the amount of overdose, length of time since it was taken, and what substance was involved. In most cases this scenario also leads to us providing support in the longer term for the person concerned

GPs are a large source of signposting to our services, particularly counselling and there is



a steady flow of people coming to us via the Information Hubs. Our reach to people with our website and Facebook has increased significantly over last year. Website visitors have increased by a third to 1200 each month and we now have 1200 Facebook friends. Both these figures may in part be due to the campaign to oppose the redevelopment of our horticulture project site as part of the Arden Triangle/Arden School proposals as we used our online presence to update our supporters.

The website also provided over 500 enquiries from the information request form which is further proving its importance in giving an easy way (along with email) to contact us for those who may find using a phone to be difficult.

The majority of contacts are still by telephone and are still increasing, confirming the need to retain the additional support of our sessional information worker. Personal callers (without a prearranged appointment) to our office have also increased, along with those coming in with an appointment as it is often easier for both us and the services user to provide/receive advice and information face to face.

The collage displays three different promotional materials for Solihull Mind:

- Poster (Left):** Titled "Out of hours Crisis Support", it specifies the service is available on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 6pm to 10pm. It includes a map showing the location at the intersection of Ice Ring and Otton Tavern, and provides contact information: Solihull Mind, 16 Faulkner Road, Solihull, B92 8SY. Contact details include the phone number 0121 742 4941 and email contact@solihullmind.org.uk.
- Website Screenshot (Top Right):** Shows the "User run mental health services in Solihull borough" page. It features a navigation menu (Home, Services, Contact, Help) and a section for "Out of hours crisis support" with a "New out of hours support service" announcement. It also includes a "Please support us..." button and a Facebook link.
- Leaflet (Right):** Features the Solihull Mind logo and the text "Out of hours Crisis Support". It includes a circular graphic of a clock tower and the text "Mental health services in Solihull borough".

A yellow box at the bottom right of the collage contains the text: "How publicity for our new out of hours service looks (l to r) as a poster, on the website, as a leaflet".

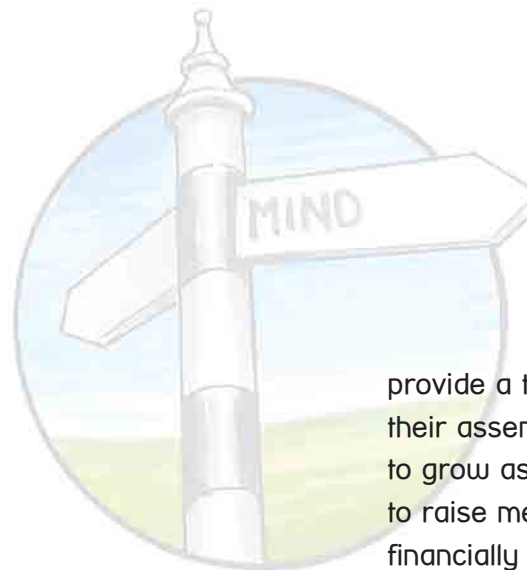
With a major redesign of our service leaflets being completed last year there has not been any major changes to our printed information with the exception of a completely new leaflet for the new out of hours service.

Our newly revised information boards have been in demand again this year often as part of talks that we have provided to other organisations. There has been an increase in the number of these presentations this year including attending staff meetings at Lyndon Resource Centre and the Local Area Coordinators at the Council House, visits to local community groups such as the Seeds of Hope group in Kingshurst and the Stroke Association and participating in Health Week at Knowle Library.

We have also been “adopted” by organisations as the charity they want to raise funds for. Probably by coincidence, three of these organisations have been within the construction/civil engineering field including two large international companies – Costain and Arup – although the construction industry has been running its own campaign to increase awareness of mental health. We have also continued our links to local schools as Langley School is going to fundraise for us and we will



Our much travelled exhibition boards



provide a talk on mental health issues to one of their assemblies. Hopefully, this trend will continue to grow as it both provides us with an opportunity to raise mental health awareness and to benefit us financially in these difficult times for fundraising.



OASIS

Jo Tremelling

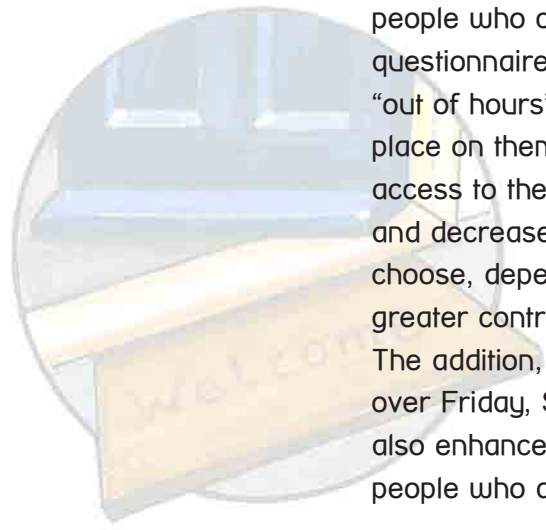
Over the past year 151 people have accessed the OASIS service – some (17%) for only one or two sessions because they needed only short-term information, advice or support; but the majority (83%) on a more regular basis. Of these 151 people 79 (52%) were women and 72 (48%) men; with 21 (14%) from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community.

People came from all areas of the Borough, but the majority, 96 (64%), from Central/South Solihull, with 37(25%) from North of the Borough, 13(9%) rural areas and 5 (3%) were homeless or address unknown. The age range of people using the service was: 17-25 - 11(7%); 26-34 – 24(16%); 35-44 – 32(21%); 45-54 – 54(36%); 55-64 – 27(18%) and 65+ - 3(2%).

Our service monitoring questionnaire demonstrated that around 62% of people using the Drop-in are also currently using other mental health services; 61% use Lyndon or Newington, 8% the Social work team, and 31% other NHS services. Additionally,

people using the Drop-in also access our other services (around 3 additional services per person). The most used is Advocacy (71%) followed by Art and Music groups (52%); then the Women Only Drop-in and Counselling (38%), Computer training and the Horticulture project (33%), Sport (29%), Employment support (24%), Domestic Abuse support group (19%) One-off courses (14%), Housing (10%) and Outminds (5%).

The weekend Drop-in is used by 95% of people who completed the service monitoring questionnaire; demonstrating the continuing need for “out of hours” services, and the value that people place on them. Self-referral allows immediate access to the service, allowing people to increase and decrease their access to support when they choose, depending on their need; giving people greater control over managing their own well-being. The addition, this year, of the pilot Crisis service over Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings, has also enhanced the daytime service as it has allowed people who are having a difficult time gain additional



support; and for others, who struggle to use the day time service due to their sleep patterns, it has given them access to much more support.

The most frequently expressed reason for initially accessing the service was for friendship/meeting others and reducing isolation (58%); with 9% using it as a “safe space”; and a further 15% wanting direct help with their mental health issues and confidence building. Most service users (90%) felt that the Drop-in had a positive impact in helping them with the issues for which they initially contacted the service; and around half (48%) say the reason they currently use the service has changed. Most people (90%) continue to use the service for company/making friends; and a further 90% for Support/understanding; 48% for access to information; 62% Advice and Guidance; 71% to give structure to the week. However, the largest – and very positive – increase is in the number of people who now feel they could support others; which increased from 28% in 2016 to 67% this year.

More than two thirds (71%) feel there are enough activities within the drop-in; 95% (total of answers 7-10 in a scale of 1 to 10) felt it provided an environment that is safe and supportive, and 100%

The Christmas lunch in the conservatory is always very popular



felt there are no access problems with the building. Overall 85% of people feel there is an atmosphere of mutual respect; 95% that people have a real say in what goes on in the service; and 100% felt staff are approachable if they want to make a complaint. Finally, 90% of respondents agreed that because Mind is a User run organisation this has a positive impact on how services are delivered.



!930's style at our summer party

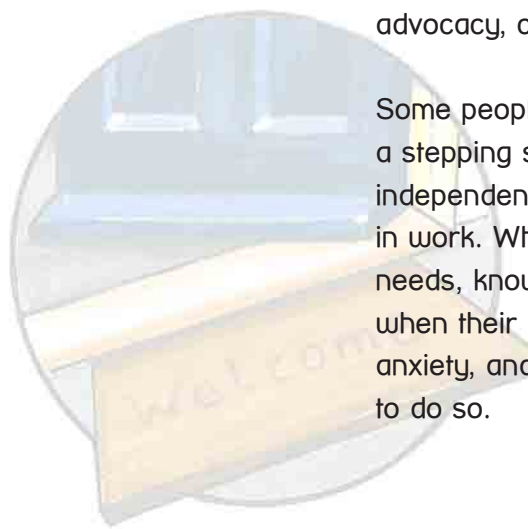
In addition to the general Drop-in service, on Fridays we have a Womens only drop-in for those who prefer a single sex group; and on Thursdays we run an art group in the morning, and music in the afternoon. Although, sadly, the person who ran our literature/reading group recently decided to take a long-term break, after an incredible 10 years; we have now got a very flourishing poetry group that takes place on Monday afternoons.

The OASIS service provides information to people not only about our other services; but also other local mental and physical health services, the Solihull MBC MyLife website, CAB, and the new Information Hubs in the Solihull and Chelmsley Wood libraries for any wider needs.

On Wednesday lunchtimes the weekly user group – run by and for service users - meets to allow anyone who uses any of our services the opportunity to discuss current local and national issues (eg service changes, access to benefits, housing issues etc) well as things that may be happening within Mind. These meetings are the opportunity for those using the services to express their views, and give comments and suggestions back to the Director and Board of Trustees.

Our self-referral policy allows speedier access to OASIS in times of need; enabling people to quickly gain relevant advice, support and - where appropriate - referral on to other services such as advocacy, counselling, employment etc.

Some people use OASIS for only a short period; as a stepping stone to help the individual retain their independence or, for example, to help maintain them in work. While others, who have more long-term needs, know that they can dip in and out, as and when their health needs require it, without the extra anxiety, and delay, of having to wait to be referred to do so.





OutMinds

Wayne Anderton

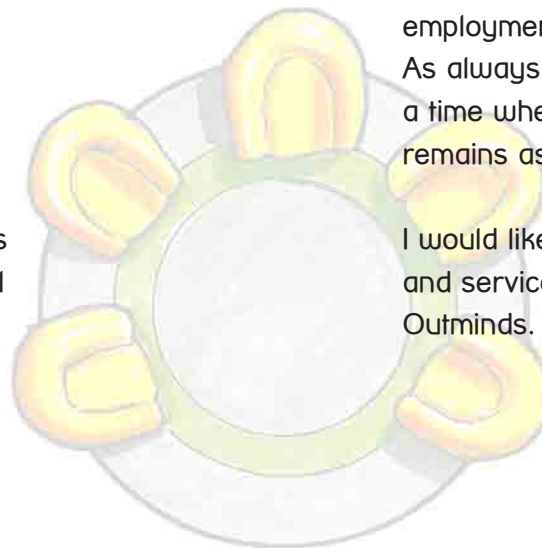
OutMinds is open to anyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or Questioning their sexuality. We now have between four and seven people using OutMinds most weeks. Unfortunately, some people still feel that they can't tell those people closest to them about their sexuality because of the fear of rejection from the people they hold close to their heart. OutMinds is so much more than the two hours on a Monday evening as I offer some support at other times of the week during my work within the drop in at weekends and Monday afternoons.

As well as regular contact with LGBT organisations in Birmingham, I still attend umbrella clinics at Hawthorne House (sexual health clinic at Heartlands hospital) as well as their clinics at Bosworth medical centre and at Boots in Mell Square in the centre of Solihull, with people who wish to have sexual health check-ups. I also give follow up support, as waiting for the test results can be a stressful and frightening time.

At our weekly group meetings, we provide a safe, friendly supportive place for people to meet in and chat over things that affect the LGBTQ community; as well as sexual health, relationships, and mental health issues such as low self esteem, reduced confidence, and depression.

The group also provides information on local mental health services, and an access route to other Mind services including social, sports and arts activities, employment support, counselling, and advocacy. As always, we continue to look for funding but at a time when funding is being cut, this unfortunately remains as difficult as ever to achieve.

I would like to thank all staff, volunteers, trustees and service users for their continued support with OutMinds.





Out of hours crisis support

Laura Barton

The Out of hours Crisis support service has been running since the beginning of January this year on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings between 6-10pm; this adds to the weekend daytime OASIS service which Mind have provided for many years, and now allows access to out of hours weekend support between 12pm right through to 10pm.

The service is aimed at anyone who needs emotional support to prevent deterioration in their mental health, enabling them to avoid unnecessary admission to hospital or needing intensive input from the RAID crisis intervention service or Home treatment teams. It is also there to help people manage their longer-term mental health, through access to information and advice, routine support and, importantly, having contact with others to develop friendships and support networks both within and outside of the service and prevent social isolation. In addition to the support and advice we can offer through the Crisis service, we also signpost on to other services - both within Mind and other organisations in the local area - to ensure

people have access to more specialist support if needed.

As with the daytime drop-in, the Crisis service can be accessed through self-referral and is very informal so that people can use it as and when they need to with no formal referral necessary. Information about the service has been sent out not only to local mental health services – including the RAID and Home Treatment teams; but also to the A&E department and local police service to allow them to refer people directly to us if they are in distress but are judged not to need admission to hospital.



BB

I use the service when I feel myself dipping and it helps to stop things deteriorating even more

The service is provided by a staff group of 3 workers - plus very occasional cover by one of our daytime drop-in workers; and we work in pairs, with at least person having counselling qualifications.

Over the last 11 months we have worked 57 different individuals; 30 women and 27 men. Of these 19% came from North Solihull, 58% from South Solihull, and 12% from Rural areas such as Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath; there was also one person who was homeless and 1 from out of the area. The largest age group using the service were between 45-54 years at 36%; followed by 26-34 at 20%; 55-64 at 18%, 17-25 at 17%, 35-44 at 7%; and both 65+ and Date unknown at 1%. Around 22 (39%) people have 'complex needs'; including Personality Disorder, or major/enduring mental health issues plus additional issues such as drug/alcohol addictions, physical health issues or a learning disability.

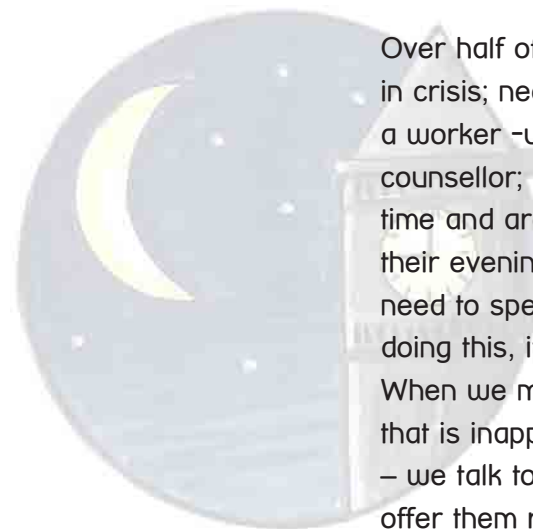
The most identified reason people gave for using the service was feeling isolated, lonely and wanting to meet other people at 73%; with 58% of people attending for the first time needing a level of



[the service] has stopped me needing to go to A&E again

immediate emotional support. A further 52% needed information and advice on mental health issues; and 45% wanted accesses to other Mind services – particularly counselling and advocacy. The average number of people we had per session was 11 – although on a couple of occasions we had over 20.

Over half of the people using the service come in crisis; needing immediate one to one time with a worker -usually the support and time with a counsellor; while others find the weekends a lonely time and are glad of somewhere safe to spend their evenings. Some have current issues that they need to speak to a drop-in worker about; and by doing this, it can stop them becoming bigger issues. When we meet someone for the first time – or if that is inappropriate early into their service usage – we talk to them about their wider issues, and offer them routes to support and guidance. We also



deliver some practical advocacy by ordering food parcels, helped people to get a GP appointments or prescriptions, and a wide variety of other information on everything from finding a dentist to accessing local leisure activities.

The majority of people using the Crisis service have dipped in and out of it when they feel it will help; however, since we started in January, we have had 14 people who have continued to attend the service for most weeks. For this group, in addition to occasional one-to-one support sessions when their mood dips or anxiety becomes severe; they have used the service as a supportive and safe place, where they can engage with other service users, build their social network, and improve their previous quality of life.

Some quotes from service users:

“I was so happy to hear that Mind had started running an out of hours drop-in. My anxiety was so high as some new people had moved into the flats where I live. This meant that I was isolating myself and not going out at all. I couldn't bear to sit in on my own any longer and was glad of a secure place to come and get support and be around people.

The out of hours crisis service uses our drop-in/OASIS space at Faulkner Road



When I got home after the first time of being out, I manage to do some cleaning, something I hadn't done for weeks as I was feeling so low”

“Mind is a wonderful organisation and they always support me whenever I need it. If I have a crisis, it is usually at the weekend and I don't have anyone to support me on the evenings. It is so reassuring to know that it is there, and it stops me ringing the out of hours teams. I also find evenings a very lonely time and if I spend too much time alone my mental health suffers, and I become very low. This is of great benefit to me”

“I’m so glad that Mind are running an out of hours drop-in. I didn’t get to sleep till 7am this morning, I’ve been asleep all day and only just woken up. I didn’t want to spend all night alone so came to mind to see people that I knew, otherwise I wouldn’t see or speak to anyone all day or night”

“I had a bad experience at the hospital when I was in crisis just before this service started. I was so glad to have somewhere to come and it has stopped me needing to go to A&E again. I used the service a lot in the first few months when my mental health was really suffering. With the support of the workers, I am now able to get back to doing the things I enjoy. I use the service when I feel myself dipping and it helps to stop things deteriorating even more”

The Crisis service was initially funded for a three-month trial period between January and March 2017; and then a further year through to March 2018 to enable more information to be collected. However it is hoped that given the positive feedback we have received from people using the service throughout the last 11 months; it is hoped that it will then be funded for at least a further year to March 2019



It is so reassuring to know that the service is there, and it stops me ringing the out of hours teams.





Creative activities

Nick Woodman
Andy Jennings

Art/craft

The art group continues to be popular and several new people have been attending regularly. Along with our other activity groups, the art group is ideal for providing an easy way of increasing social contact for people who have difficulty socialising as the activity itself provides a ready-made topic for conversation. A further benefit is that the concentration of carrying out the activity helps block out negative thoughts and feelings.

Spooky decorations created for Halloween



There has also been the usual mix of crafts and projects including old favourites such as clay modelling, drawing and collages; and new ones including batik which was requested by several art group members at the beginning of the year in our customary New Year ideas session.

The parties and events held throughout the year provided the usual outlet for the group's abilities – this year the theme was the 1930s so we now know a lot more about Art Deco than we did before! After providing props for the Halloween event (including bats in a belfry!) our next task will be the Christmas decorations which will keep us busy to the end of the year.

Music

We've had another good year in the music group. Lots of new people have come along and learnt drums, bass and guitar even though we had to take a break over summer due to my illness. If anyone is looking to learn a few chords on the guitar we have a half hour slot before the music group starts at

1.30pm. A few people have taken advantage of this already. We've written a few new songs and raps and we'll be having a go at recording them in the New Year.

Thank you to those who've donated instruments this year. We now have a large selection of electric and bass guitars both left and right handed.

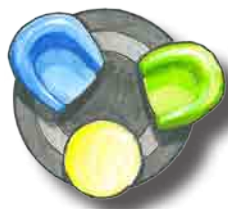
If you're interested in coming along we meet on Thursdays in the conservatory at 2pm. If you just want to try a song you like we can get the music and have a go.

The Mind band playing
at last year's AGM



Art Deco glamour at
the summer party





Counselling

Simon Painter

The demand for the Counselling services continues grow, and in the past year we have seen the number of requests for counselling increase yet again. In 2014/15 we received 171 new applications, in 2015/16 this increase to 234, and in this year, 2016/17, it has risen again to 289 - which demonstrates a 69% increase in need over the past three years.

As a consequence of this increase, and despite us bringing in even more volunteer and student Counsellors this year, the sheer volume of requests has meant our waiting list has, for the first time, reached nearly 200; with an average waiting time of seven to eight months.

The increase we are experiencing would appear to reflect the demand for counselling everywhere. My external supervisor, who is also in private practice, told me that she, "has never been so busy."

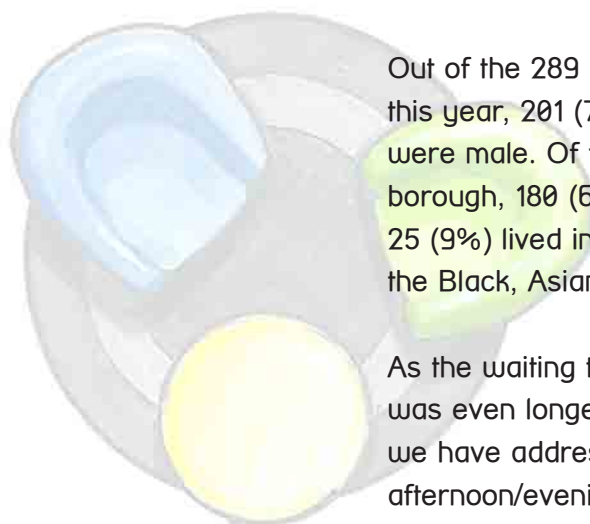
People are also presenting more complex issues in their sessions and it does feel that people's

lives are becoming increasingly more chaotic and challenging. There has also been a sharp increase in people with long term physical health issues struggling to manage the impact their health has on their mental health.

Sadly, we have been seeing an increasing number of people left feeling "abused" and on "trial" after undergoing PIP assessments which have left some people feeling severely anxious and in some instances; suicidal.

Out of the 289 people who applied for counselling this year, 201 (70%) were female and 88 (30%) were male. Of those, 84 (29%) lived north of the borough, 180 (62%) lived south of the borough and 25 (9%) lived in rural areas; and 31(11%) came from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

As the waiting time for out of hours appointments was even longer than for the daytime appointments; we have addressed this by providing 8 late afternoon/evening sessions for people who find



it difficult to make daytime appointments. I am currently providing additional sessions in the evenings and the latest appointment we now offer is at 8.00 pm.

Counselling sessions are provided both weekly and fortnightly by our student/volunteers; who between them provide us with 27 sessions per week. I provide over 21 sessions per week, the majority of these being fortnightly appointments.

We have increasingly seeing people who are requesting, "crisis" appointments. Being able to see people quickly when they are in distress is an invaluable part of the service we offer and in many instances, can help prevent a crisis developing further, reduce the number of people assessing A & E, and, in the most serious circumstances, prevent suicide attempts.

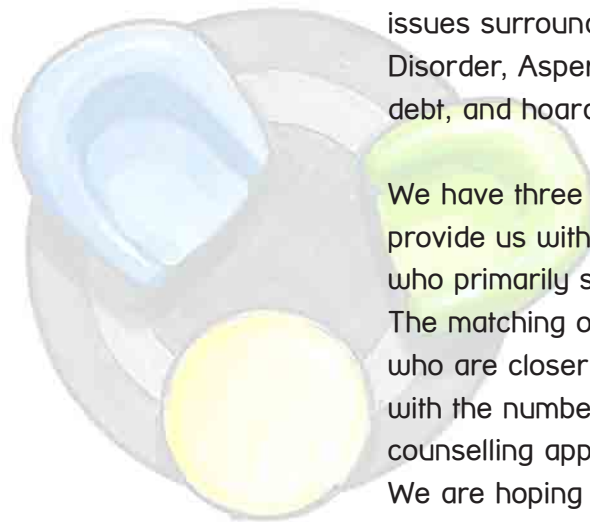
Being able to provide therapeutic interventions as soon as possible is of enormous benefit for people experiencing symptoms such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or an event related depression. Unfortunately, due to the level of demand for the service, currently we are only able to offer crisis sessions when I have a cancelled appointment.



My counselling experience was incredibly helpful and came at a time when I really needed help

Issues presented within counselling are very varied: anxiety, is the most presented symptom, as are issues of self-esteem and self-worth, panic attacks, depression, suicidal thoughts and feelings, anger, self-harm, relationships, historic childhood abuse, bullying, bereavement, and domestic violence. In this year we have had an increase in people presenting issues surrounding disability, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Asperger's, phobias, OCD, agoraphobia, debt, and hoarding.

We have three young student counsellors, who provide us with eight sessions every week, who primarily see our younger service users. The matching of counsellor and service user, who are closer in age, has proved successful with the number of young people attending their counselling appointments being very encouraging. We are hoping to extend this part of the service



by introducing a part-time Counselling post aimed specifically at younger people through a Lottery. bid

As part of their requirement for their courses, the student counsellors need to complete 100 hours of counselling sessions. Due to holidays, illness and “life getting in the way” this can be difficult to achieve in the duration of the academic part of the course and often the student counsellors complete their sessions after their course has finished. Many of our students decide to stay on with us after their training and become volunteers, with three of the people who did this now having been with us for over ten years.

One of the four
spaces available for
counselling



I routinely interview student counsellors throughout the year who are looking for a placement as part of their requirements for their course. The calibre and commitment of the student counsellors is very high, and fortunately we are currently able to recruit with relative ease. We continue to develop positive relationships with local universities, colleges and training establishments who do not require sessions to be recorded for training purposes.

We have three new counselling students ready to start their counselling with us in the New Year when some of our current students come to the end of their placements. The new students bring with them diversity and differing life experiences which help enrich their counselling practice and enables us to match a person with the most appropriate counsellor.

We have continued to provide regular fortnightly counselling sessions at the North Solihull CAB base at Chelmsley Wood. This helps people to access counselling who have difficulty in getting to us at Faulkner Road, either because of mobility difficulties or for psychological issues such as agoraphobia.

After a person has completed their counselling

sessions, to monitor quality, and to ensure that people are satisfied with the service they received, we routinely send them a service monitoring questionnaire. In 2016/17 the feedback indicates that although people would, understandably, much prefer their initial counselling as soon as possible, they are very satisfied with the service they receive as the average satisfaction rate is 9.8.

The following is a sample of the comments that were made:

“My counselling experience was incredibly helpful and came at a time when I really needed help”

“The counselling helped as they were there to listen to you and work together. I now have a range of coping methods that I can apply to the future.”

“I was extremely low and desperate when I started counselling. It was really helped to see a light at the end of the tunnel once again!”

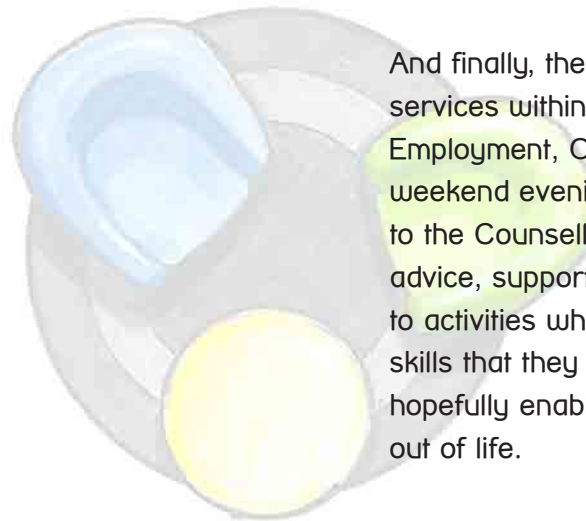
“Counselling was the only place I could talk without being judged. It was my lifeline and it allowed me time to reflect.”

“Thank you so much for helping me and listening to me the past few months. Really can't say enough how much happier I am after everything, and I think it'd down to being able to talk about what happened. You really made a difference.”

“Thank you for your help and support, kindness, and wisdom. It has been invaluable. Most of all thank you for listening.”

We also receive many unsolicited, “Thank you” cards from people in appreciation of the help they receive. We have been known to get the occasional box of chocolates that we share with our colleagues of course!

And finally, the ability to guide people to other services within Mind - such as Advocacy, Employment, OASIS and since January this year the weekend evening Crisis service - is of great value to the Counselling Service, as they offer practical advice, support, and can act as a key to the door to activities where people can begin to practice skills that they have learnt in counselling that will hopefully enable them to stay well and get the best out of life.





Advocacy

Graham Page

In the past year, we have witnessed another huge rise in the number of people using the service. In total 488 people have used the advocacy service - 379 of whom had not used it before - which represents a 57% increase on last year's figure; which itself was a 42% increase on the previous year.

By far the largest area of increase has been in the area of accessing benefits; and in particular supporting people through reviews and tribunals; with 417 (85%) of those using the service needing this sort of help. This increase has put an enormous pressure on the service; however, we have felt the need to prioritise this area of work as the impact of not accessing the necessary benefits for people, can be devastating. Over the period 2016/17 the Advocacy service maintained its high success rate (94%) at Tribunal hearings; and helped bring in nearly £2.5 million in benefits for people with mental health problems.

In addition to helping people to maximise their

benefits, over the past few years there has been a growing need for debt advice and support; so, this year I have carried out the necessary training and we have registered with AdviceUK and the FCA to allow us to provide debt advice.

In order to achieve the best outcome for people using the service, strong links have been made with other organisations. These include: Statutory Mental Health services, other Health and Social care services -eg older people/disability/ children's services, SMBC Housing (especially the homelessness team), Probation, Safeguarding; and other community/voluntary sector services such as the Information Hubs, Connect, CAB, SAIS, Independent Advocacy, DIAL, AgeUk and SATA.

People using the advocacy service have also been supported with their wider mental health needs by having access to other Mind services. Including Employment support, Counselling, arts/music/ sports/conservation and horticulture activities; together with direct access to emotional support and



information through the OASIS and new weekend evening Crisis service.

The feedback we get from those using the Advocacy service is that it has helped people to make real changes in their lives, gain better emotional health, find financial stability, enjoy more healthier lifestyles, enabled people to have improved family stability and engage more positively in community life.

Service delivery figures break down as follows:

| | 17-18 | 19-25 | 26-59 | 60-74 | Total |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Male | 12 | 64 | 111 | 14 | 201 |
| Female | 14 | 65 | 177 | 31 | 287 |
| Total | 26 | 129 | 288 | 45 | 488 |

Geographically this breaks down in postcode areas:

| | |
|-----|-----------|
| B90 | 49 (10%) |
| B91 | 63 (13%) |
| B92 | 54 (11%) |
| B93 | 73 (15%) |
| B36 | 93 (19%) |
| B37 | 132 (27%) |
| CV7 | 24 (5%) |

Black and minority ethnic communities 78 (16%)
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender 39 (8%)

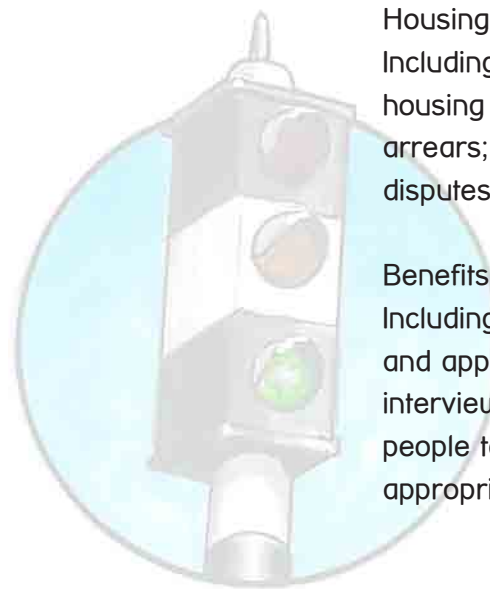
Areas of work

Accessing Mental Health Services: 93 people (19%)
Including: GP appointments on mental health matters, appointments with psychiatrists, ward rounds, accessing medical records.

Accessing physical health services: 39 people (8%)
Including: G.P, dentist, opticians and hospital outpatient appointments.

Housing Issues: 142 people (29%)
Including: Support for homelessness and general housing applications; rent arrears; council tax arrears; bedroom tax; repairs and neighbour disputes.

Benefits and Finance: 417 people (85%)
Including: PIP and ESA applications, assessments and appeals; Housing benefits and medical interviews; debt advice – including supporting people to access the CAB debt service where appropriate.



Legal Matters: 44 people (9%)

Including: Police interviews with victims or alleged perpetrators; supporting people to work with solicitors and attending court hearings; Safeguarding, vulnerable adult and child protection matters; engaging with probation services.

Other Issues: 29 people (6%)

Including: Relationship conflict, harassment, domestic disputes, victims of anti-social behaviour, food parcels, complaints and rights/discrimination issues.

One-off issues, where advocates are involved to resolve a specific concern over a relatively short period of time, formed only a portion of the work. Very often people come with multiple and complex issues which can require considerable time, and need a variety of practical and support solutions, to progress or resolve. At other times the goal initially set may change after discussion with the advocate who may offer information on other options not known about or considered by the person involved. As in the past, for most people advocacy achieves concrete direct outcomes such as getting a house move, accessing benefits, resolving financial issues etc. However, a significant amount of advocacy

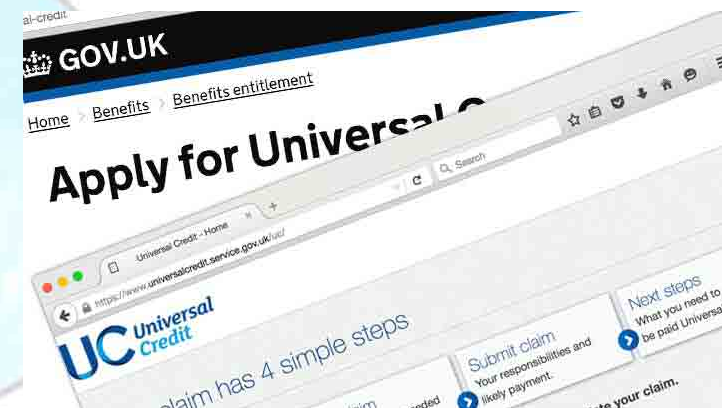
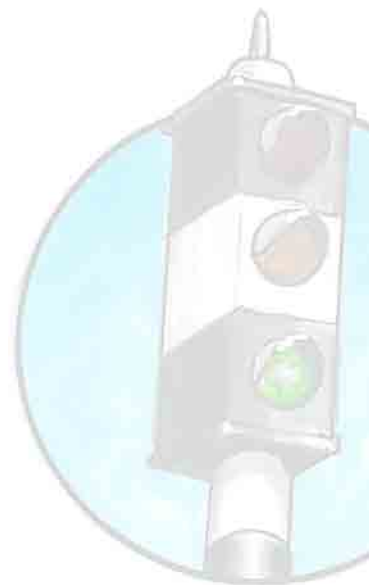
time continues to be involved with support of service users to enable them to attend stressful appointments etc in order that they are able to take in information and express their needs/views; rather than to achieve any specific outcomes.

Outcome feedback

Service monitoring shows the following levels of achievement:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Accessing mental health services | 86% |
| Housing issues resolved | 61% |
| Benefit/financial issues | 75% |
| Legal issues resolved | 84% |
| Other issues | 87% |

We are now seeing the first applications of Universal Credit



As well as the tangible practical outcomes we achieved for people the positive impact advocacy had on people the service also included:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Feeling better informed about options | 96% |
| Feeling more self confident | 73% |
| Feeling less anxious | 72% |
| Feeling more assertive | 78% |
| Developing more self advocacy skills | 66% |

We also looked at what people had gone on to achieve that they had previously held back from before advocacy issues were resolved:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Accessing other support services | 82% |
| Engaging with statutory services | 65% |
| More involved with family/friends | 42% |
| Taken up work (paid, voluntary) or study | 14% |
| Increased social involvement | 72% |

Service monitoring indicated a 95% satisfaction rating.

Case studies – no real names used.

Case study 1

Rita has lived for many years with severe depression. She contacted the service on the

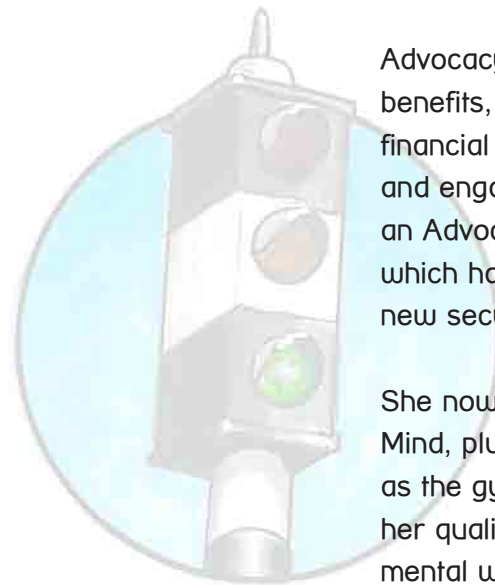


...claiming pip and other benefits not only alleviated the immediate financial worries; but also enabled her to get out and engage with other services.

recommendation of another person who had used the service.

Advocacy helped her with claiming pip and other benefits, which not only alleviated the immediate financial worries; but also enabled her to get out and engage with other services. With the help of an Advocate, she was able to put plans into action which have resulted in major life changes and a new secure housing tenancy.

She now uses both the art and poetry groups at Mind, plus a range of community services such as the gym and other leisure facilities, enhancing her quality of life and improving her physical and mental well being. Additionally, there were physical



health problem which needed to be investigated, but which her GP was wrongly attributing to her mental health. The advocate went with Rita to see her GP and the matter was then looked into thoroughly. The problem has now been identified and treated; also contributing to now excellent physical and mental health. She rarely visits her GP now.

Case Study 2

Joanna is a qualified nurse with 3 young children. All are achieving brilliantly at school.

Joanna had been unable to work for several years due to a completely debilitating and severe depression and anxiety; and had become and a virtual recluse in her house. She had got into financial difficulty and had been denied benefits as she had not attended a Capita medical due to taking her son to a medical appointment.

Her privately rented house was in a terrible state of repairs and an increasing health hazard. The landlord neglected to do any repairs on the property.

With the help of the Advocacy service, Amy's benefits were reinstated at a tribunal and her finances put on a steady footing. The advocate also



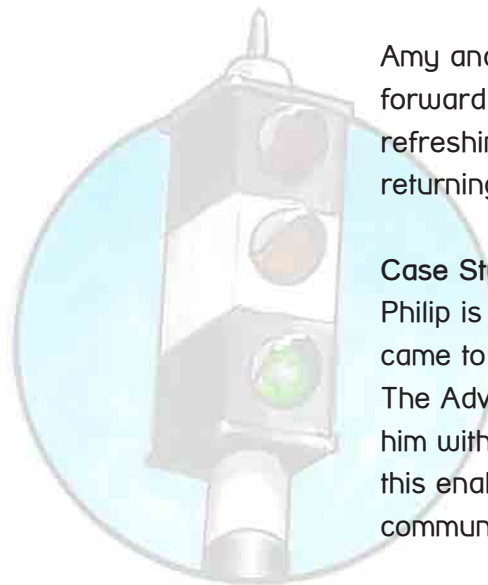
...claiming PIP and other benefits and enabled him to get out and engage with the community more

negotiated with the local authority to get the family re-housed.

Amy and her children are now very much looking forward to the future and Amy is currently refreshing her professional skills and will soon be returning to work.

Case Study 3

Philip is a man who lives with schizophrenia who came to Solihull Mind to take part in the art group. The Advocacy service was then able to help him with claiming PIP and other benefits and this enabled him to get out and engage with the community more.



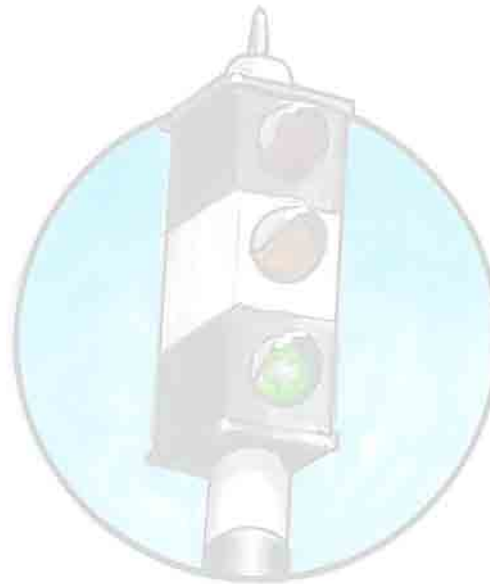
Initially this was for services at Solihull Mind – such as OASIS and the Weekend evening Crisis service; but over time he has gained in confidence and he now also uses a range of community services such as the swimming pool and other leisure facilities. This has enhanced his quality of life greatly as well as improving his physical and mental well being. Philip now feels much more happy in himself, and positive about the future; and his appointments with his Psychiatrist have now been reduced from monthly to 6 monthly.

As has been the case over the last 2 years, funding for the Advocacy Service is constantly under review by the Mind Board of Trustees. This is because, following the ending of the Comic Relief grant in 2015, the income they have been able to bring in to fund the service, is lower than is needed to cover the costs and therefore, it has had to be subsidised from Mind reserves.

Kay and I are aware how hard the Director, Trustees and others have been working to try and ensure the continued availability of the service; and feel hopeful that in 2018 these resources will be found, and the Advocacy service can both continue and grow.



**...enhanced his quality of life greatly
as well as improving his physical and
mental well being**





Intensive advocacy

Kay Foley

Intensive Advocacy

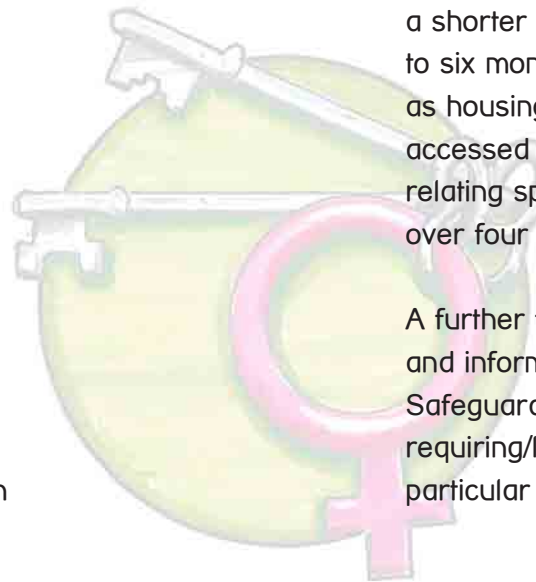
During the past year, sadly, we have had to make some major changes to the service. Since our Comic Relief grant ended in April 2015, Solihull Mind have funded the service through their reserves while they looked for replacement funding. Unfortunately, this has not yet been found; so, in June this year it was decided that we could no longer take new referrals into the Intensive Advocacy service as my post is currently only funded through to March 2018; and for people with complex issue (eg safeguarding, housing, financial, legal proceedings etc) this would be too short a period to complete the necessary work.

Although Mind will continue to look for funding, and I will continue to work with those already in the service at least through to March 2018; since the summer, I have been taking on more general advocacy work. Both Graham and I work with a wide range of advocacy needs; however, as I have gained a lot of experience in housing issues through my domestic abuse/family work, I now tend to work

with people in this area, and Graham specialises in benefits and debt. As a consequence of these changes, the number of people that have used the Intensive Advocacy service this year shows a decrease on last year.

A total of 21 women have used the service this year; eight women have used the service long term, on a regular ongoing basis for over a period of six months; five women have accessed the service for a shorter period of intensive sessions such as three to six months, to address more practical issues such as housing or civil court issue; three women have accessed the service for short term intervention relating specifically to DV or Safeguarding issues over four to six sessions.

A further five women have contacted me for advice and information regarding domestic violence or Safeguarding or other family matters, but not requiring/leading to ongoing advocacy at that particular time



Overall, the Intensive Advocacy service, and the weekly group work, has continued to focus on support around emotional abuse and the long term affects this has on women and their children, and intensive support to these parents and others experiencing mental health issues who have children on safeguarding plans.

I have supported a total of 16 children who are subject to safeguarding plans/contact orders whose parent have directly used the Specialist Advocacy service. Ensuring best outcomes for children is central to safeguarding plans and interventions regarding children and young people – the intensive advocacy service has enabled the parents of these 16 children to engage more positively and constructively within Safeguarding procedures/ plans, ensuring the needs of the children are met. Sadly, with the ending of the adult service, this support to children with also end.

Group work

The weekly support group we have been running for the past 11 years for women who have experienced/are experiencing issues such as relationship problems, domestic violence, and sexual abuse has continued throughout the year. The

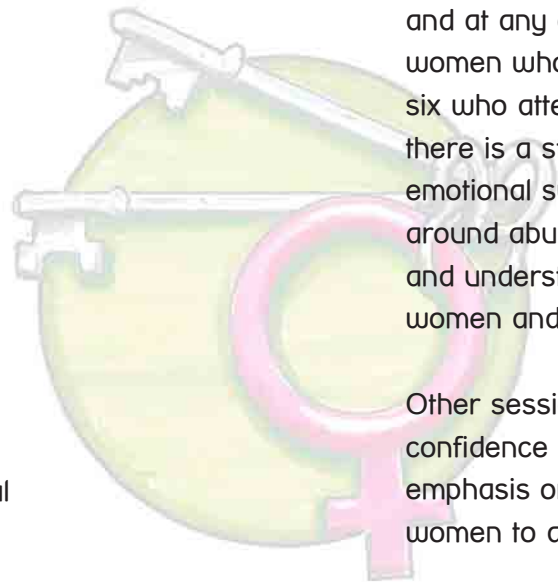


Ensuring best outcomes for children is central to safeguarding plans and interventions regarding children and young people

service is delivered by myself and an experienced volunteer, and happily has not yet been affected by changes to the Intensive Advocacy service.

The group is currently used by around 13 women; and at any one time there are about five to seven women who attend regularly and a further five or six who attend on a more ad hoc basis. Each week there is a structured session as well as mutual emotional support. This may be in relation to issues around abusive relationships to improve awareness and understanding of the long-term effects on women and their children.

Other sessions are structured to improve confidence and self-esteem. There is a lot of emphasis on building healthy relationships, helping women to develop strategies to manage difficult



issues and improve the quality of relationships and family life.

As well as the structured topic, the women place a high value on the mutual support; and say that sharing their experiences and discussing issues helps them to feel less isolated and to manage their mental health and family life. With this in mind, we organise the session to allow for group discussion and have a relaxed break giving time for this type of support to flourish; with several women now making contact with each other outside of the group.



...sharing their experiences and discussing issues helps them to feel less isolated and to manage their mental health and family life

Our conservatory provides a pleasant environment for our support groups





Housing

Jo Tremelling

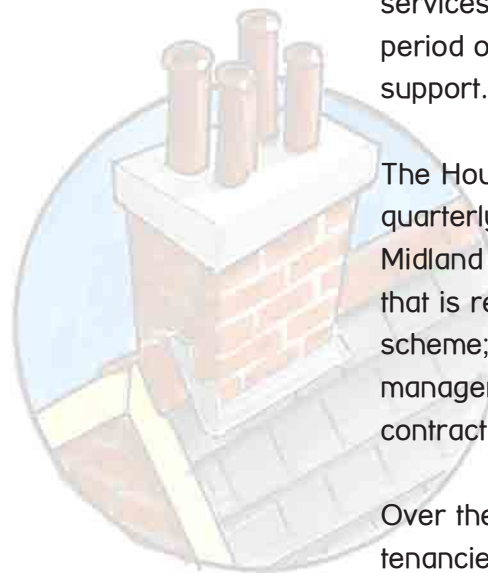
Our Supported Housing service – which consists of 8 single flats plus an additional communal lounge, laundry and garden – was established in 1989 to help people who had been through the mental health rehabilitation service based in North Solihull, to be re-housed in the South so they could maintain contact with their family and social network. At that time, we were the first specialist long term housing service in the borough which offered individual tenancies and access to independent living. Solihull Mind does not own the building, but over the years we have worked as both Support providers and Managing Agents a for variety of Housing Associations; and currently this is with Midland Heart.

As this is a long-term service, we do not hold a waiting list for the scheme as vacancies are rare. However, when a flat becomes available, we advertise the vacancy in both our own, and other local mental health services; and tenancies – which are with the building owner Midland Heart – are allocated through our Tenancy Select Panel.

When a tenant moves in, part of the tenancy process is to help each individual to develop a support plan (reviewed six monthly) looking at practical, emotional and other needs, and identifying any areas of support that they feel would be helpful. These needs can, of course, change over time as the tenant becomes more confident, for example, and wishes to try new activities or services in the community; or if they go through a period of ill health and temporarily need additional support.

The Housing officer continues to have regular quarterly meetings with her link worker within Midland Heart order to pool and share information that is relevant for the smooth running of the scheme; and the Mind Director engages with their management team on issues relating to our delivery contract and setting rents and fees.

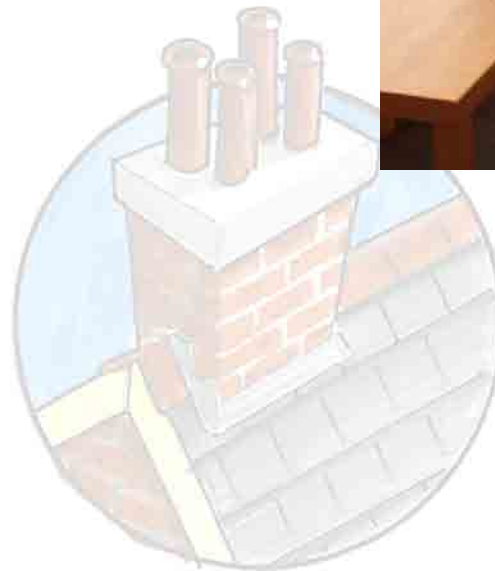
Over the past year, we have had no changes in tenancies, and all tenants are happily settled. We



have recently re-decorated and refurbished the communal lounge, and we will be re-decorating and re-carpeting the rest of the communal areas over the winter. In the spring, we will finish the changes to the garden area with a new wooden shed and seating area.

Finally, over the past few months, we have also been working with the Mental Health Commissioning Team to find reductions we are being required make in the service support costs; due to the increasing tightness of Solihull Council budgets. This has meant that we, along with all the other providers, from April 2018 will have to deliver the service while saving around 20% of costs - for us that is approximately £5,000. In order that these don't impact on the direct services to tenants, we will have to take them from the office and management costs required to support the service; which will then have to be covered from other income sources.

Our tenants have access to a communal lounge (right) and laundry room





Employment

Moira Oldroyd
Tairah Ali

108 new people received a face to face service in this twelve-month period, a further 21 preferred to gain advice and guidance through telephone or email contact and 48 existing service users received ongoing support.

64% were women

36% men

19% came from ethnic minority groups

20% had additional health problems/disabilities,

7% were carers

48% of service users live in central Solihull

18% in the north of the borough

25% in Shirley and Solihull Lodge

8% in the surrounding semi-rural areas

one person was homeless in Solihull

Most people accessed the service at Faulkner Road which has the advantage of enabling people to become familiar with our other services but for those people who struggle to travel to unfamiliar buildings we provided an outreach service into

people's homes or other appropriate venues.

Signpostings and recommendations to the service came from:

Healthy Minds, 43%;

GPs, 25%;

family and friends, 5%

other Mind services, 13%

secondary mental health services, 1%

Department of Work and Pensions, 4%

our website, 2%

employers, 1%

libraries, 1%.

5% were returning service users

The age range of new service users are:

18-25 years: 6%

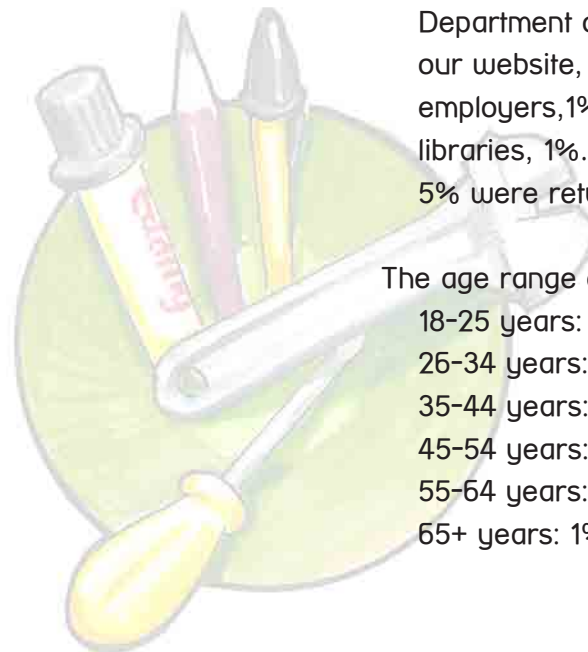
26-34 years: 14%

35-44 years: 23%

45-54 years: 36%

55-64 years: 20%

65+ years: 1%



Job Retention

Two thirds of new service users were employed and struggling to balance their mental health, the demands of the working environment and/or their personal/domestic situations. These might be work overload, threats of redundancy, bullying, bereavement, caring responsibilities, physical health problems etc. 54% of this group were off sick whilst the remainder were attending work but having difficulties managing their mental health and maintaining performance expectations.

64% felt able to take action themselves with support, advice and guidance, while 36% required direct interventions by the service such as advocacy, mediation, negotiation, grievances, disciplinary defences etc. This resulted in 54 meetings with employers/unions, five with Occupational Health Advisors and 16 other face to face advocacy interventions with e.g. Job Centre, GPs, psychiatrists, benefits assessors, tribunals etc.

35 jobs were retained with job holders able to return to their original roles if they had been off sick and adjustments made; 10 people were redeployed within their organisation; 10 people found new jobs with a different employer; one person increased

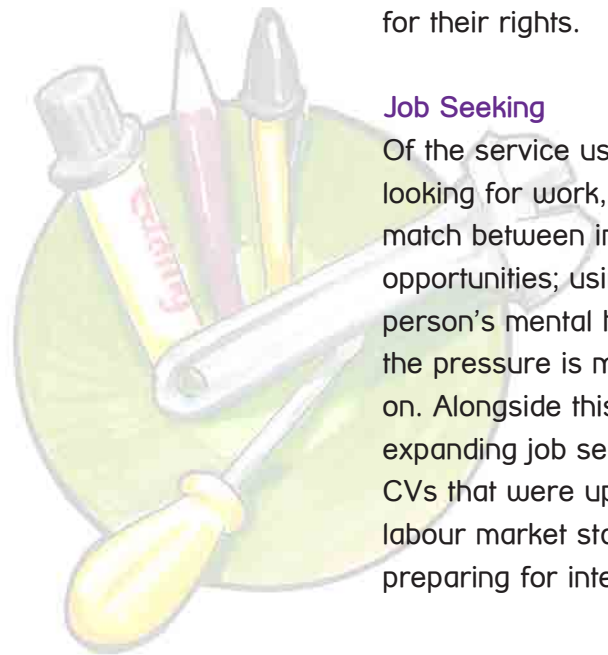


this has changed my life

their hours and income; two people retired on the grounds of ill health; four people left with negotiated settlements (financial package with reference); nine people resigned on their own terms; five people successfully defended disciplinary/dismissal action; five person had their complaint upheld; five people took up further training; one person took up volunteering; one person had their Master's degree reinstated; and seven people had their say/stood up for their rights.

Job Seeking

Of the service users who were unemployed and looking for work, we helped by exploring the match between individual skills and labour market opportunities; using a holistic approach that puts the person's mental health as the main priority so that the pressure is minimised and confidence is built on. Alongside this the practical help offered includes expanding job searching methods, developing CVs that were up to date and meeting the current labour market standards, assisting with applications, preparing for interviews and providing support and



encouragement as well as accessing/protecting state benefits during the process.

12 people found paid work, seven found voluntary work, nine took up new purposeful activities, 22 created CVs, four attended face to face interviews after many years of being out of work, two have gone on to college courses.

The Department of Work and Pensions have created a prestigious new role of Community Mental Health Partner at Higher Executive level and with the requirement of personal experience of mental health problems. We encouraged one of our service users to apply and guided her through the application process. She was offered the job and in her words "this has changed my life".

Service Monitoring and Feedback

We asked service users to complete a short monitoring questionnaire:

- 100% felt listened to and taken seriously
- 100% felt better informed and
- 100% had a greater understanding of their options
- 88% felt more positive about the future



I don't feel able to negotiate to my benefit. It is good to have help to face that responsibility

89% felt more able to express their needs
76% felt better about themselves

Many chose to write their own accounts of how the service had helped them personally, for example:

"Listened patiently and offered help and support in my communications with work"

"Given me appropriate direction"

"Good advice to explain options I didn't know I had"

"I don't feel able to negotiate to my benefit. It is good to have help to face that responsibility."

"Understanding the way things work",

"Someone on my side",

"Knowing my rights".

"Career advice and communications with prospective employers"

Our 6-12 month follow-up monitoring yielded a 32% return and rated the service at 90% satisfaction level.



Collaboration and Development

We continue to work in partnership or collaboration with other organisations as appropriate, such as trades unions and professional representative bodies, Healthy Minds, Jobcentres and Disability Employment Advisors, Princes Trust, West Midlands Autism Society, The NEET team, Sustain, Re-Com, CNHTs, Libraries, Solihull Housing Association, Solihull MBC, other local charities etc.

This year we have delivered mental health awareness raising to Arup and have engaged in mental health awareness raising activity with Solihull JobCentre Plus, Tile Hill JobCentre Plus and Solihull Muslims Association.

In order to maintain knowledge of current employment legislation and human resources practises we access information and training from ACAS, Peninsula, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, Child Poverty Action Group, CAB, DWP and Attend. We have also undertaken training in Personality Disorders.



The horticulture project is part of our employment service, providing opportunities to gain the skills needed for work





Horticulture & conservation

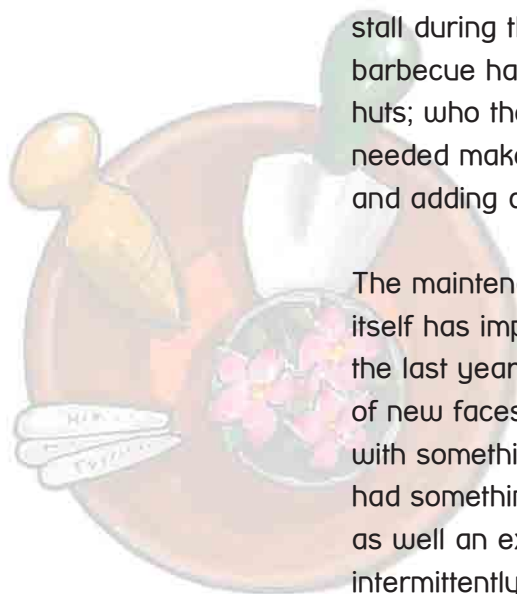
Jon Steven

This spring saw the re-instatement of the project's May plant sales, which had not been held for the past couple of years when the future of the horticulture site was under threat. It was the first time I've done anything like this on that kind of scale – and I am happy to say we managed to raise an amazing £5,000 for the service. On a human level, however, I think these sales were even more successful; with people working together as a team – from growing the plants right through to the sales days and showing interested people around the project; making the event so prosperous and enjoyable.

I've had the months since the plant sale to ponder the things we got right and the things that need tweaking for the next sale. One thing we all noticed was how much of a family atmosphere there was and by the second week, we'd set up things such as a dedicated "pot your own" stall where the children could get their hands dirty and come away with a beautifully planted pot that will hopefully inspire them to do more in their own gardens.

We carried on this family theme, by this year including an outdoor play area for kids at the Summer pop-up shop fundraising sales in July – complete with a tepee full of toys, giant chalk board for young artists and space hoppers and skipping ropes for those with extra energy! People at the site also built a great multi-purpose booth which we hope to use in various ways in the future; but the first of these was as a French crepe and ice cream stall during the summer sales. A permanent brick barbecue has also been built down by the beach huts; who themselves have been given a much needed make over, restoring their stripy paintwork and adding a new seaside garden at the front.

The maintenance, quality and diversity of the site itself has improved dramatically over the course of the last year, and this is largely thanks to a flood of new faces who are all eager to get involved with something positive. When I last counted, we had something close to 15 regular service users as well an extra 16 or so people who will pop in intermittently as and when they feel they need



support. We also really missed the Thursday and Friday horticulture sessions and Friday afternoon football provided by Andy – who also works in the OASIS/Drop-in service – when he wasn't around for several months following a serious illness; happily, he is back now.

During this period, I also realised how much we missed the help in managing the heavy jobs at the site we received through Andy from the Probation service; such as the work they put in last year clearing the old vegetable patch and installing all the new raised beds, pond and seating areas and the more regular ground maintenance they cover like cutting back the hedges, digging over and weeding planting areas etc. So, it was great that we were also able to get this help back as well, when Andy returned to work in August.

Although for a period when Andy was first in hospital, unfortunately the weekly football had to be cancelled. However, this started up again in the late spring through Dave Skerrett; and he continues to provide this along-side Andy – who sadly isn't himself actually allowed to play any more following his illness. This has further increased the number of people who are regularly using the site.

There were also various events held at the site this year. One of these was a successful art exhibition by the Lacrimarum collective of artists – one of whom also uses the horticulture service; which displayed 10 pieces of outdoor artwork spread around the horticulture site; plus a further 5 paintings in the Summerhouse. Over the fortnight, the exhibition titled Secret Minds, was on display, it was visited by around 40 members of the public plus service users, staff and trustees from Mind; as well as successful viewing night for family and friends.



Plants grown for sale waiting for the next round of potting on



This wave of new people has brought a fresh creative energy to the garden and the projects that people are working on are on a whole different level. We currently have a “Wood Henge” installation in one area of the site; and one particular favourite of mine is the hobbit door that has been built in preparation for the creation of our

One of the artworks displayed as part of the Secret Minds art project



very own hobbit hole that will sit in one of our two remaining unused golf bunkers.

These exciting creations would have been made much harder without the new workshop area that a small group of service users created entirely from scratch in a matter of days from reclaimed timber; so for anyone with a creative streak, or who enjoys DIY, there is no better time than now to come along and get involved.

Over the course of the year we have also managed to build up fresh, exciting relationships with many people, groups, businesses and organisations. This includes the Princes Trust who have used the site on a semi-regular basis for two years to host a number of activities ranging from outdoor cooking to weaving willow, and they have already mentioned a number of dates they're interested in for the oncoming year. Another was a local group called KITES who work with young people between 18-25 with learning disabilities, and is part of the KIDS charity. During the summer a group of 10 young people and 3 staff members spent an afternoon at the project. This was the lovely feedback we received:

“The group thoroughly enjoyed their day at the grounds. The confines of the site made them feel safe and they were able to wander around the site freely without KITES staff supervision, this gave them a sense of independence. The MIND staff and service users at the grounds on the day were extremely welcoming and took time out to come and say hi and chat to the group. The group would really like to return to the grounds. Thank you to everyone at Mind that made the day possible.”

We have also had a huge amount of support from the local residents of Knowle/Dorridge who seem only too eager to help out where they can; and they played a crucial role in the protection of our site earlier in the year when they signed our petitions and lobbied local councillors/SMBC and MPs about their opposition to the use of our site as part of the proposed local housing re-development. When we had the very good news in the summer that, through discussions with Martin Murphy from Arden Academy, it had been agreed by the developers not to include the land used by the project as part of the proposed development; we not only expressed our appreciation to everyone through our own Facebook page and the online petition site (which gathered over 2,000 signatures and many positive



Wildlife ponds have been created as part of the wildlife conservation work at the project site in Knowle

comments) but also held a successful “Thank you” picnic for locals at the project in August.

We continue our positive relationship with the Elizabeth Creak Trust – who extended their three year grant to us, due to end in August next year, for a further three years, which is fantastic; plus the Knowle Lions, various local Rotary Clubs, small businesses, and many other groups and individuals

who have supported us both financially – from one-off grants and fundraising through coffee mornings, sales of plants and many other creative ways, to the donation of equipment and plants.

We are particularly excited to have received 3,000 crocus bulbs which we have potted up and are selling through our Christmas sales; and we will also be receiving 25 (representing one for each of their members) apple trees next spring donated to us by the Knowle and Dorridge Rotary club; which we will plant amongst of current more established trees in order to expand our orchard area and hopefully bring in income for us in the future. These are in addition to the young trees and hedging plants we have been allocated through the Arden Free Tree Scheme scheme which we will be using all around the site to provide more woodland areas and thicken up our border hedges – especially on the side of the field where we have a border with the proposed new Arden development site to help maintain site privacy and security.

Over the year we have had all kinds of additional support and advice from local people – from knowledgeable gardeners offering their time as volunteers, to donations of equipment from local



thoroughly enjoyed time at the site...felt safe...and gave a sense of independence

business and community groups - and numerous other ways too; so, a big thankyou goes out to all of these people and the others I haven't got space to mention here.

Overall, other than the usual concerns experienced by most charities about trying to bring in enough funds to run their services; I couldn't be happier with how things are going at the site. The space is beautiful and constantly improving; fresh, positive ideas are floated on a daily basis and there's a wealth of skill, knowledge and passion that is just really nice to be around. Even if gardening, design, construction or sports aren't your things; I guarantee we'll find something here that inspires you.



Financial review

Mike Swallow

Solihull Mind aims to provide stability to the organisation by accessing a variety of funding sources and avoiding dependency on any single main source of income. In practice this means aiming to secure local SMBC/CCG funding for contracted services such as OASIS (Drop-in), Counselling, Employment Support, and Advocacy - including the appropriate management and running costs; as well as making bids to the larger funding organizations such as Lottery, Comic Relief, Lloyds and other smaller charitable organizations, local fundraising groups and business/individual donations.

In 2016/17 we received funding from Solihull CCG/SMBC for Contracted services and pilot projects, The Elizabeth Creek Trust, and other small grants totaling £386,309; Comic Relief funding of £5,361; Supporting People/Housing Benefit income of £50,006; individual/group donations of £22,747; and a further £4,831 from bank interest, re-claimed VAT and other miscellaneous sources. Our total income received in this financial year was therefore £479,254; which is an increase of over £47,750 on 2015/16 total of £431,500.

Expenditure across all services in 2016/17 totaled £400,457; giving us an overall increase in cash reserves at the end of the year of £78,797. Our net current assets at 31/3/2107 therefore stood at £358,742; made up of £122,964 in fixed assets, and £235,778 in the bank or as cash in hand.

Although the increase in reserves this financial year compared to 2015/16 appears extremely positive; this is largely due to higher levels than usual of one off donations, funding for pilot projects – including some advanced income received in 2016/17 but predicted to be used in 2017/18 - plus non-recurring grants. This, coupled with the ending of our Comic Relief funding for Advocacy, and an emerging review of third sector service funding/delivery contracts by SMBC in 2017 – which could impact on the current Employment service; means the need to look for replacement funding is even more important if all current services are to be safeguarded.

The impact of the reduction in our secure/longer term funding has meant that during the 2016/17 financial year – and extended further into 2017/18 - 3 staff members have had to be put on notice of redundancy for March 2018. Although staff and Trustees have worked hard throughout this period to secure funding; unless additional income for Advocacy and Information/advice work is found, these services remain under threat.

Trustees continue to closely monitor the financial position throughout the year, through bi-monthly reviews of the annual budget, and looking at funding opportunities for the 'at risk' service delivery areas.

All fundraising activities are in line with our Ethical Fundraising policy.

Reserves Policy

The trustees annually review the nature of the income and expenditure streams, the need to match variable income with fixed commitments, and the nature of the reserves in order to decide on the level of reserves required for the charity to be managed efficiently and to enable future services to remain uninterrupted. Issues to consider when deciding the appropriate level of reserves and their use include:

Opportunity to accrue reserves - Reserves can be accrued over time where organisations have service contracts which allow them to keep any underspend if they are able to deliver the required level of service for lower costs than agreed, which can occur where some funded costs are provided by volunteers or by trustees at zero cost.

Further reserves can be achieved through routine fundraising, one off grants and donations, and careful expenditure maximising bank interest.

Occasionally, reserves can work against an organisation as some funders/trusts do not like to give grants to organisations with high reserves; and this may restrict our access to funding new projects which we can't fund ourselves.

Use of reserves

Reserves are used to:

Protect the long-term delivery and continuity of services – especially

those funded through short term sources such as Lottery, Comic Relief, TSB etc. which regularly require short periods of continuity funding when the project/services end or move funding source.

Provide seed money for research and development of pilot projects in advance of securing longer term funding.

Ensuring the upkeep of the property and any major repairs/alterations required should we need to expand the building or make changes due to the requirements of employment, disability or health and safety legislation.

Ensure there are enough funds to cover any redundancy costs that may occur due to service/funding withdrawal.

Level/form of reserves

Trustees need to decide the level of reserves required and in what form (shares, deposit account etc.) they will keep them in order to maximise income while retaining accessibility to funds. It has previously been the aim of Mind to hold 6 months running costs (around £200,000) and that funds will be retained within our bank deposit account so as to ensure a period of stability during a time of funding difficulties. At the end of the 2016/17 Financial year, our cash reserves appeared to be above this level at £235,778; however, as indicated, this figure includes some one-off income and other funds allocated against future costs. The more sustainable the level of reserves amounts to around £185,000; reflecting

just less than 6 months running costs. For this reason, as outlined in the financial review above, the Trustees are regularly monitoring the budget position and level of service delivery whilst alternative funding sources are sought. Decisions on the use of reserves will be made by the Mind Executive Committee (Board of Trustees).

Future service delivery

The Annual Delivery plan for 2016/17 sets out both strategic aims/organizational objectives; the service aims, targets funding sources and monitoring details for each service area; and highlight the main issues and actions relevant to each area. The delivery of the Annual plan is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Mind Director; and is monitored through the bi-monthly Trustee meetings. An overall review/risk assessment of the organization takes place annually, and includes service delivery, finances, organizational diversity, Quality, Health and Safety, and other relevant issues.

Auditors.

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that Prime be re-appointed as auditors to the charity for the ensuing year.

General Account: 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017

| | | | Expenditure | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Income | | | Staff costs: | | |
| SMBC – OASIS/Counselling/Employment | 180,322-43 | 176,850-00 | Salaries | 209,094-20 | 205,110-67 (8) |
| SMBC – Care Act Advocacy | 22,420-00 | 5,650-00 (1) | Pensions | 19,183-20 | 17,168-99 (8) |
| SMBC – Personal budgets (Hort/sport) | 21,250-00 | 9,550-00 (2) | IR | 78,613-52 | 63,284-25 (8) |
| Solihull CCG – core service contribution | 52,000-00 | 52,000-00 | Sessional workers | nil | 6,785-00 (9) |
| Solihull CCG – young people advocacy pilot | nil | 75,000-00 (3) | Staff expenses | 5,577-35 | 5,005-76 |
| Solihull CCG – A&E Information/advocacy pilot | nil | 20,000-00 | Volunteer/sessional expenses | 6,165-48 | 4,102-69 |
| Solihull CCG – Crisis service pilot | nil | 13,025-00 | Training | 873-70 | 865-99 |
| Birmingham CCG – 111 service pilot | 4,081-00 | 10,000-00 | Advertising | nil | nil |
| Housing – salary/management costs | 11,383-92 | 40,000-00 (4) | | 319,374-09 | 302,323-35 |
| Comic Relief – Advocacy | 30,251-25 | 10,083-75 (5) | Building costs: | | |
| Public Health – yoga/healthy eating/ | | | Business tax | 778-94 | 785-26 |
| Quit smoking | 1,732-00 | nil | Water rates | 1,569-42 | 1,513-30 |
| Elizabeth Creak Trust – Horticulture | 10,000-00 | 10,000-00 | Fuel | 3,453-95 | 2,173-21 |
| Training fees | 270-00 | nil | Maintenance/repairs | 3,686-24 | 3,570-69 (10) |
| WWT – Horticulture | 6,203-40 | nil | Capital equipment | 3,521-88 | 6,481-87 (11) |
| Donations/fundraising | 7,628-51 | 23,322-77 (6) | Insurance | 5,489-92 | 5,620-59 |
| Bank interest | 526-71 | 703-85 | | 18,500-35 | 20,144-92 |
| VAT – income | 980-49 | 1,001-52 | Office costs: | | |
| Miscellaneous: | | | Telephone | 2,072-44 | 1,874-62 |
| - Mind grant – art project | nil | 935-66 | Photocopier | 5,517-65 | 8,049-08 (12) |
| - SMBC – Group facilitation fees | 150-00 | nil | Stationery/Postage | 2,386-98 | 2,847-38 |
| - Credit card refund | 179-35 | 148-21 | Fees: | | |
| - Repayment of photo copier lease by new provider | nil | 6,031-76 (7) | - Internet | 426-51 | 408-80 |
| - Refund from Housing account for items bought on CC | 3,158-99 | nil | - Auditor | 3,250-00 | 3,350-00 |
| - Other | nil | 565-77 | - Mind membership | 647-64 | 686-50 |
| | 349,379-06 | 414,868-29 | - Payroll manager | 60-00 | 60-00 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| - Go Cardless | 238-80 | nil |
| - OCN Training | 500-00 | nil |
| - ICO Fee | 35-00 | 35-00 |
| - Credit card fee | 32-00 | 32-00 |
| - People's pension set up fee | nil | 500-00 |
| - Microsoft fee | nil | 156-93 |
| | 15,167-02 | 18,000-31 |
| Other | | |
| Horticulture scheme | 6,238-82 | 13,053-45 (13) |
| Arts/music/sport | 1,952-35 | 1,068-17 (14) |
| Food/events | 2,698-61 | 5,747-82 (15) |
| Vehicle costs | 1,303-44 | 478-77 |
| VAT | 3,868-83 | 5,098-03 |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| - Redundancy pay J. Bennett | 10,890-66 | nil |
| - Housing (payments made by CC) | 1,283-51 | 3,158-99 |
| - Book keeping | nil | 502-50 |
| - Companies House registration | nil | 80-00 |
| - Other | 1,865-17 | 1,303-57 |
| | 30,101-39 | 30,491-30 |
| Total expenditure | 383,142-85 | 370,959-88 |

Notes:

(1) The total income due in this year was £23,316 however unpaid invoices had to be re-issued and therefore £17,666 was due in 2016/17 but paid over in 2017/18.

(2) This income is claimed via individuals using the horticulture and sports activities; and will therefore fluctuate depending on the number of people eligible for the grant.

(3) This funding is for a 3 year pilot period – ie £25,000 per year for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

(4) This is the amount transferred from Housing account 11462451 to cover salary, management and other office costs paid out through the General account 11462427.

(5) The final Comic Relief payment and they always hold around 10% of the project costs until the final project reports are approved; which meant we received this in 2016/17 but it was for costs incurred in the period 2015/16.

(6) This sum is much higher than is usual as in this financial year, we have worked particularly hard in bringing in donations and small grants from local organisations, national small trusts and individuals.

(7) This represents a one- off payment from our new photocopier

providers to cover the costs of us ending our previous contract.

(8) All of the staffing related costs are down slightly because of the ending of the Organic Horticulture post; which has been replaced at present with a sessional self-employed gardener, delivering less hours than we previously funded.

(9) These costs relate to the first 3 months of the pilot of our Mental Health Crisis service which is currently staffed by self-employed sessional workers.

(10) Due to our concerns regarding long term funding, we have tried to reduce costs where possible; however expenditure on M&R and capital items increased in the current 2017/18 financial year.

(11) Capital equipment costs were higher than we had hoped in 2016/17 due to the purchase of a replacement minibus and necessary computer equipment.

(12) This figure includes the £6031-76 paid out to end our previous contract; the running costs alone were therefore only £2,017-32 which is substantially lower than in 2015/16 due to a new contact and our attempts to limit unnecessary use of the copier.

(13) This figure is higher than in 2015/16 as it represents a full year of service delivery costs – in 2015/16 the project had so little funding that we had to keep costs to a minimum and had to make the post holder redundant in October; and the service was downsized and kept running between then and March 2016 covering only routine maintenance. In

2016/17 the full service delivery was re-instated and also there were additional costs for one-off expenditure to replace items and restore infrastructure that needed to be updated. In order to prepare for the service to bring in further income through additional fundraising activities over the next few years; items such as gazebo's/tables and chairs/crockery for events etc, were purchased in this year

(14) These service areas have no specific funding source; so the level of spending year on year can change, as it is often related to any one-off small grant money we have been able to bring in during that year.

(15) These costs are quite difficult to predict year on year as it depends on the type of events and numbers of people. Costs include those for the AGM and any other one-off meetings we may hold (eg room hire/catering etc), plus a variety of one-off social events (a minimum of 4 per year) and activities for our OASIS service. This includes purchasing props for themed events; catering costs and also, the costs of equipment used by the art group to produce further items as part of their programme of activities.

Housing Account: 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017

| Income | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Housing Benefit | 47,694-84 | 39,948-15 (1) |
| Supporting People funding | 23,245-71 | 20,058-25 (2) |
| Bank interest | 234-79 | 326-49 |
| Tokens | 171-00 | 90-00 |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| -Transfers from General- Gas bill | 200-16 | nil |
| | 71,546-50 | 60,422-89 |

Funds wrongly received for General account 11462435:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|
| SMBC | 33,987-50 | nil |
| Public Health | 3,158-99 | nil |
| Total | 108,692-99 | 60,422-89 |

Expenditure

| | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Salary/management charges (transfers to General) | 11,383-92 | 40,000-00 (3) |
| Midland Heart fees | 7,501-04 | 10,386-16 (4) |
| Maintenance/repairs | 5,588-25 | 2,875-51 (5) |
| Cleaning/gardening | 2,125-00 | 1,112-00 (6) |
| Fuel charges/water rates | 2,105-45 | 1,253-45 (7) |
| Insurance | 580-82 | 630-00 |
| Expenses/training | 311-02 | 141-55 |
| Capital equipment | nil | nil |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| - VAT | 825-83 | 365-08 |
| - Other | 335-80 | 145-50 |
| | 30,757-13 | 56,909-25 |

Internal transfers

| | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Permanent transfer of funds to General acc.11462435 | 40,000-00 | nil |
| Transfer of wrongly paid in grant to acc.11462435 | 33,987-50 | nil |
| Payment for items purchased thro' General Acc. | Nil | 3,158-99 |
| Total including transfers | 104,744-53 | 60,068-24 |

Notes:

(1) This is down on the 2015/16 figure as that included nearly £10,000 in delayed payments from 2014/15.

(2) This income down on the 2015/16 figure because there has been a reduction in the level of SP funding.

(3) This higher than in 2015/16 because in that year there was a one-off permanent transfer of £40,000 from Housing to General to help support other services so the usual transfer amount towards salary and management costs was reduced.

(4) This figure is higher than in 2015/16 because of a substantial increase in the fees charged to use by the landlords, Midland Heart Housing Association, in order to pay for the longer term up keep of the building.

(5) This expenditure is down on 2015/16 because there were no planned cyclical repairs due in this period; and additionally, it is often difficult to accurately predict as there can be variations year to year on how much is needed to be spent on general repairs.

(6) This figure is down because there were no major issues requiring additional resources in this financial year; and we have also reduced the number of times we have the windows cleaned in order to try and reduce running costs.

(7) These costs are down on 2015/16 due both to the installation of a more efficient boiler/heating system; and also, a tenant who was using the communal electricity supply to run his appliances left the scheme.

Executive Committee Members/Trustees 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017

1st April – 24th November 2016:

Elected at AGM 26th November 2015

Chairperson: Peter Brown
(elected for 3 years)

Vice-Chair: Matthew Tapp (until 20th April 2016)
Dave Skerrett – acting Vice-Chair from 20th April 2016

Treasurer: Mike Swallow
(elected for 3 years)

Committee Members:

Vince Skiba
Dave Skerrett
Dee Salmons
Julie Hickey
Pat Follows
Carol Hibberd

24th November 2016 – March 31st 2017:

Elected at AGM 24th November 2016

Chairperson: Peter Brown
This post was elected in 2015 for 3 years.

Vice Chair – Dave Skerrett

Treasurer – Mike Swallow
This post was elected in 2015 for 3 years.

Committee members:

Vincent Skiba
Dee Salmons
Pat Follows
Carol Hibberd
Margaret Rea

Staff members 2015/16

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Noreen Mather | Director |
| Keziah Abrahams | Sessional worker, out of hours service |
| Tairah Ali | Employment advisor |
| Wayne Anderton | Sessional worker, drop-in & Outminds |
| Laura Barton | Sessional worker, out of hours service |
| Kay Foley | Advocate/domestic violence group support worker |
| Andy Jennings | Drop-in/sports/leisure support worker |
| Moiria Oldroyd | Employment development officer |
| Graham Page | Advocate/drop-in worker |
| Simon Painter | Counsellor/group worker |
| Kate Pisulak | Sessional worker, out of hours service |
| Jon Steven | Organic horticulture co-ordinator |
| Joanne Tremelling | Drop-in/housing support worker/arts/healthy living support worker |
| Nick Woodman | Information/IT/arts/support worker |



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