



Portsmouth Mediation Service
ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16



Trustees' Report year ending March 2016

The trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 1985 and the statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in March 2005.

Structure Governance and Management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

Bill Moody (stepped down in June 2015)

Gerry McDougall (stepped down in June 2015)

Derek Williams

Rose Marie Potter (appointed June 2015)

Alex Boyland (appointed June 2015)

Edward Rees (appointed June 2015)

Trustees are recruited from interested individuals, volunteer mediators and representative of the various fund organisations.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute a sum not exceeding £10.00 for payment of the company's debts and liabilities in the event of a winding up.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

The charity is managed by the Trustees who may exercise all the powers of the charity. For the past year, the day to day operation of the charity has been carried out by the business consultant who reports to the Trustees. All policy and strategy is decided by the Trustees sitting as the Management Committee which meets - as often as required but at least six times a year.

The Portsmouth Mediation Service operates for the benefit of residents in Portsmouth and for the benefit of social housing residents in the wider Portsmouth area. A large proportion of its work is with the Portsmouth City Council.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Objectives and activities

The charity carried out neighbour mediation in Portsmouth and the surrounding Borough through its trained and employed assessment officers and volunteer mediators. It operated a mediation assessment service on behalf of Portsmouth City Council's Anti Social Behaviour Unit.

Achievements and Performance

In June 2015 a major internal restructure was started first of all with the appointment of a business consultant who has subsequently made recommendations on the way our work is carried out. This had led to a huge improvement in production, customer satisfaction, staff moral and enthusiasm.

A special mention to the staff, Steve (business consultant), Kathy, Laura, Tina, Abi and Loveday the Assessment Officers. These are the people who keep the service working and our thanks go to them for all their hard work during the year

Throughout the year, staff and volunteers have continued to provide the dedication and professionalism to deliver quality mediation and assessment service. The sincere thanks and appreciation of the trustees goes out to all concerned, including the volunteer mediators who give up their own time to make people's lives better, and the trustees for their service who make sure that resources are available.

A service delivery review was conducted in September, resulting in a streamlining of the service. This has enabled the organisation to deliver a high turnover of cases from 153 cases in 2014/15 to over 375 cases in 15/16.

The assessment officers each have an area to cover and meet each week at the area housing offices allocated to them and also meeting at local police stations, encouraging closer working relations between the statutory bodies and the charity.

The Trustees and the whole of the Service have a vision of a Restorative Portsmouth where all the City is focussed on making relations stronger than they were before they had broken down. This is whether the relationship is between Neighbours, Landlords & Tenants, Friends or Families, Employer & Employee, Offender & Victim or wherever there is a breakdown in relationship.

A new initiative was introduced called 'Teach Peace' working within a local primary school encouraging a restorative approach, with the children being trained as volunteers to work within their own peer group. This initiative is will be rolled out to other schools in the coming year.

Application was made to the RSQM to obtain recognition for the standard of work delivered by the organisation and the outcome will be made known later this year. A special thank you to Tina Downie for all of her effort and hard work supporting this application.

Special thanks go to our main users including Portsmouth City Council, who without their continued support and input we would not be able to flourish.

There remains the opportunity for more people to join the trustees on the management committee. Trustees would be delighted to meet anyone who may be interested in joining to let them know what is involved. We have usually set the meetings to take place once every six weeks so that the time commitment is a reasonable one.

Financial review

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six months' expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised, or expenditure reduced.

The Trustees are excited with the new direction the Charity is taking and are especially encouraged and delighted that all the Team are so enthusiastic in bringing new opportunities and ideas to the attention of the Trustees. We are in for a very exciting and positive future.

On behalf of the board of trustees.

Marie Potter
Trustee



Setting Course on a New Restorative Journey

Welcome to the 2015 / 2016 PMS Annual Review & Report, which highlights our work and mission with the people of Portsmouth and the surrounding area. Portsmouth Mediation Service is currently in its 20th year, we plan to celebrate this milestone in a few months time. In the meantime this report reflects on the activities and achievements of the service over this past 12 months or so.

Sometime during last year someone remarked to me that 'Mediation' was becoming an outdated word and that the future was 'Restorative'. As a team we have all embraced this new Restorative Pathway and together we have begun to embed a restorative culture within our service. In simple terms we are always looking to help repair relationships and facilitate reconciliation and restoration when conflict and disputes arise. We are seeking to live and work restoratively by fostering positive relationships with our colleagues, clients and partners. Further on in these pages you will find our Values & Vision, you will see that we are looking to play a central role in seeing this great city Portsmouth become know as a Restorative City.

About a year ago in mid 2015 we made a significant change to our process in dealing with Neighbourhood dispute referrals from Portsmouth Housing. We introduced a new streamlined way in the functions of Assessment and Mediation that coupled with a desire to forge a stronger partnership with Housing Officers has resulted in an unprecedented level of new work. In the previous year PMS received 153 referrals from the housing offices, this year we have undertaken over 375! - this is not because there is somehow more conflict it is because we have focussed with our housing colleagues on a closer more effective working relationship. I want to pay tribute to our excellent team who have worked tirelessly to meet this incredible new demand and who help bring about peace and reconciliation within some of the most challenging of communities.

Portsmouth Mediation Service is always looking for a 'joined up approach' in helping the people of Portsmouth, we believe that good relationship and partnership with other agencies and voluntary organisations is essential in meeting the various needs of our communities. This Annual report highlights some of the innovative work we are doing with our local schools, the Portsmouth Police, the University and Faith Communities. None of this would be possible without our highly motivated team of professional and voluntary mediators and restorative facilitators. Their dedication and commitment has been crucial to the success of these initiatives. I also want to acknowledge and thank our many supporters and partners who have helped and encouraged us on this new and exciting journey.

Steve Rolls
Business Consultant



The Teach Peace Programme

Developing a new generation of peace makers

Portsmouth Mediation Service (PMS) launched its first Teach Peace Training Programme in November 2015 for Portsmouth Schools. This exciting project aims to reduce conflict, bullying and low scale anti-social behaviour in local Primary Schools.



Teach Peace has been developed by PMS under the guidance and inspiration of Laura Rook and is facilitated by herself and other volunteers from Portsmouth Mediation Service. The programme takes a whole school approach and therefore seeks to teach and equip the children, staff and the parents.

PMS have completed the first full training course at Ark Ayrton School which is in Somerstown one of the most needy areas in Portsmouth. The programme consists of two introductory workshops which are run across the whole school. The first workshop looks at 'Positive Relationships' and the second looks at 'Conflict Resolution'. Following these sessions 8 children and 4 members of staff have received over 16 hours training to become school Mediators.

These children and staff are now responsible for dealing with low level conflict and disputes in the playground. They have smart red caps to identify them as mediators branded with a logo designed by one of the children. Ark Ayrton have requested a second mediation training programme be run from September 2016 so they can build on their success and grow their mediation team.



PMS have also made links with and have run parts of the Teach Peace programme in St Jude's school, Ark Dickens and Havant Academy and hope to run the full training programme in each over 2016-2017. Laura Rook says "This has been an exciting year, the programme has been a huge success. I feel we are at the stage where we have planted restorative seeds in each school but we'll only see these seeds grow as we build strong relationships and continue to support each school in its restorative journey". The programme will also see new subjects added to its introductory workshop's on 'forgiveness' and 'trust'. The next step is to find and train more volunteers to run this programme so we can eventually reach all the primary schools in Portsmouth.



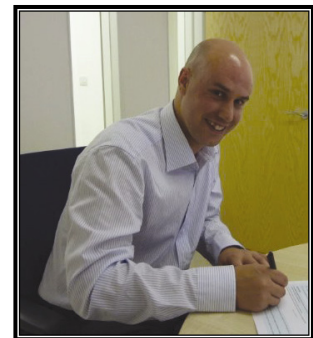
Supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire

Treasurer's Note

You will find inside this annual report a printed set of accounts for the year ending March 2015; this is for the period before I and the new trustees were appointed. You can see from page number 7 that there was an increase in income of 58,509 on the previous year. This was mainly in respect of a contract with First Wessex. Because this contract was not subsequently renewed Portsmouth Mediation Service began the new financial year with an urgent requirement to reduce their outgoings.

Our latest accounts for the year ending March 2016 are currently being prepared by our accountants, we plan to publish them in August of this year. We expect the cost cutting drive of 2015/2016 to show a big reduction on the previous year's expenditure, with substantial savings in Management and staff costs. I am very proud of our excellent team who have worked extremely hard in developing new sources of funding as well as making great gains to our efficiency and productivity, particularly in terms of our Assessment Service to Portsmouth City Housing.

Dr Alex Boyland
Treasurer



Supporting our local Police

“Our Joined up Approach to our work means an even closer partnership with our local community police teams”

Our project to support our local Police is based on relational partnership, we believe that good communication and regular feedback enables more effective and seamless referrals.

Whilst our Police do have some training in RJ, they tell us that it would often be more efficient for them to pass low level neighbourhood nuisance to our professional and impartial service. Indeed we are seen as being better placed, equipped and resourced to help facilitate level 1 conferencing and repair relationships. The key to the projects success is regular face to face meetings between the local Police team and our Assessment Officers.



Steve and Abi on a recent visit to Waterloo Police Station

Building Faith Communities through RJ

One of the key spheres in the city life of Portsmouth is the Faith Community. Within this group there is of course much diversity, but there is also lots of common territory where various groups can engage with each other and come together for the sake of the wider community.

At Portsmouth Mediation Service we have over recent months been contemplating a conference to help build and equip faith communities through restorative pathways and practice. Portsmouth Mediation Service are fortunate to have some very good contacts with Christian, Muslim and Jewish believers and sense that now is a good time and opportunity to promote Restorative Justice to these faith groups.

Our vision for this project is to initially host a conference for each of the main Faith Groups in Portsmouth. The purpose of this would be to:

- Promote greater awareness of resolving conflict through Restorative Pathways
- Identify opportunities to train and equip people of faith to become RJ facilitators
- Promote the opportunities for people of faith to volunteer their skills outside of their religious setting.
- Promote the opportunity for people of different faith and none to work together for a Restorative Portsmouth.

Following these RJ events for each of the main faith groups we aim in 2017 promote a single multi faith conference whereby people of different faith could work together on a Restorative Portsmouth agenda.

Target Audience

Christian, Muslim and Jewish Faith Communities.

In the first instance we would be looking to engage with our local leader contacts within each of these faith groups in order to reach all of their community.

Main Outcome

- Greater inter faith understanding and relationship
- New volunteers for Portsmouth's 'Big Society'
- Better skills for faith communities to manage internal conflict
- Another big step towards a Restorative Portsmouth.



Supported by the Office of the
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire

Vision

Portsmouth Mediation Service aims to operate as a centre of Excellence and Influence in seeing Portsmouth established as a Restorative City.

Mission

Through a journey of assessment, mediation and restorative practice, work with other envisioned people and organisations to help seek the peace and prosperity of Portsmouth.

Core Values

Community

Community and family are at the heart of all that we do. Communities are formed wherever people live, work or play and we will tirelessly seek to help resolve conflict and disputes which enable healthy relationships that benefit all.

Professional

We believe that our clients and partners deserve an excellent service, we will continually develop our skills and knowledge and foster a culture of feedback, evaluation and improvement.

Respect

In all of our dealings we will seek to show everyone the utmost respect. We believe every person should have equal voice, value and rights. We aim to empower people, respecting their boundaries, opinions and choice.

Compassion

Everyone needs compassion - we are motivated to be compassionate. We seek to be empathetic and kind with people, open minded and accepting in every situation.

Thank You Kathy

Kathy Hand retired earlier this year after many years of faithful service to Portsmouth Mediation, here she reflects on some of that time.

I have been with PMS for 11 years and have seen the service morph and grow into something quite different from when I started, although fundamentally the same. In 2005, the assessment service was relatively new and I believe we are one of the few mediation/restorative practice services in the country to do an assessment and report back to the referrer so that they have a clearer picture of what is going on for all concerned. Since the arrival of our new boss last year the process has become even more streamlined so that an assessment officer, if bringing a case to a restorative meeting, is one of the facilitators involved. This makes sense as the AO will have spent time with each 'party' building rapport.

I could tell you of many cases that have made me laugh, cry or want to bang those neighbours heads together but, as Marshall Rosenberg said (one of the founding fathers of mediation) 'if I can find out what each party wants from the other the problem can be resolved in a relatively short space of time.' When people are willing to engage and realise how their behaviour is affecting their neighbour/work colleague/peer, the process works and benefits all concerned. This brings a tremendous amount of job satisfaction. I remember one comment on a feedback questionnaire 'Kathy was a star' with a little star drawn in the corner. Of course there can be a lot of frustration as well, when people are unwilling to see another's point of view.

I shall miss working with PMS, although not the report writing and paperwork! Being part of a great team who all have vision has been second to none. Seeing Teach Peace become a reality in the past year has been amazing. I shall continue to volunteer as a co-mediator and support the 'strengthening of faith communities using restorative practices' project... so this isn't really 'goodbye'!

Thank you PMS for the best job I've had in my life.

Kathy Hand

Kathy raises a glass at her Retirement party



Some of the PMS team



Our team have a lot to celebrate!



Training University Students and Staff in mediation



We need to keep good records and write accurate reports



PMS team meeting with our partners from Portsmouth City Council

Do you have the skills to become a Mediator?



Why not come have a chat with us?

Our next Mediation Training will be
run over 6 days on the
16th, 17th, 18th & 30th September
and the 1st & 2nd October 2016

**For further information e-mail Sue Austin at
training@portsmouthmediationservice.org.uk**

Portsmouth Mediation Service

Seeking the Peace and Prosperity of a Restorative Portsmouth



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