

STOCKPORT SAMARITANS

CONTENT

Chair's Report	2
Director's Report	3
Treasurer's Report	3
On Call Support	4
Caller Care	4
Selection & Recruitment	5
Vetting & Barring	5
Initial Training & 3 Rings	5
Ongoing Training	6
Volunteer Care	6
Branch Email	7
Branch Statistics	8
Our Mission, Vision & Values	8



Annual General Meeting 9 June 2010



www.samaritans.org/stockport/

Chair's Report – Sharon 3

On behalf of the whole branch we are again grateful to Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council for their continuing financial support. We received £5,000 from the main grant scheme for the financial year 2009/10, and it helps us that we were awarded funding for 3 years through to 2010/11. The funding round for 2011 onwards will begin in October, when we will be submitting our application for future funding.

Planning permission has been granted for redevelopment of the Churchgate House site, along with a number of other locations in the town centre, and we are in regular dialogue with Stockport MBC to investigate alternative options for accommodation, which we are likely to need from around March 2011 at the earliest.

Financially, this year has been a difficult one as the economic climate has inevitably led to a drop in the level of donations. However, we have continued to work hard to raise the income we require on top of our grant money, and are also conscious that we do not want to deplete our financial reserves, which may be needed to assist in a re-location.

The year-end accounts show a respectable amount in cash at the bank, at around £34,000. Special thanks to Pam 51 and Graeme 88 for organising another great quiz night, to Sonya 30 for co-ordinating our tin shakes, to Chris 93 for arranging a collection at his church, and Mac 16 at his, to Graeme 88 for raising money by selling computers, to Frances 68 for running Stress Down day at her office, and to Elizabeth 39 for money raised through her Bridge Club. And thank you to everyone who has participated in these events and supported the branch in other ways, including selling or buying diaries, Christmas cards and raffle tickets, participating in the 100 club, and donning rubber gloves to give the whole branch a really thorough clean. Thank you also to Dawn 74 for continuing the essential task of making sure we have sufficient tea and biscuits to sustain us through our shifts. All of these contributions allow us to keep the branch going, from paying the phone bills to assisting volunteers in attending training and conferences.

We invested money this year in paying for an on-line rota system, which was implemented with the minimum level of fuss or disruption, and thanks to Joan 82, Elizabeth 39, Mary 80 and of course Graeme 88 whose IT expertise and ability to procure equipment has been invaluable.

We have continued to raise our profile in the community, particularly with GPs and in the wider health sector. We have continued our presence on the Stepping Hill hospital maps, Andrew 27 supports the primary care trust's suicide prevention group and Mary 80 and Sarah 35 have worked hard on publicity and outreach.

We receive many enquiries on our website from prospective new Sams and you can publicise what we do by encouraging your friends and family to visit us at <http://www.samaritans.org/stockport>.

My personal thanks go to all the members of the committee for their help and support over the last year – to Mac 16, Mary 4, Pam 55, Sarah 35, Sonya 30 and particularly to Pat 57 for her work as Branch Treasurer. Mary 4 has served her 3 years on the committee, so will be stepping down – she has been an excellent committee member, and I want to thank her for her contribution this year and the prior ones. Thanks also to Dave 25, who makes sure our building and facilities are maintained and to Mary 80, who has supported the committee brilliantly and led the branch so well. We have all thoroughly enjoyed working with Mary 80, and will miss her as she takes a well deserved break, but we also look forward to working with Wendy 54 to ensure that the branch continues its great work, of which we should all be truly proud.



Director's Report – Mary 80

My third and final Directors report for the AGM. People warned me it would go quickly! It really has been a thoroughly enjoyable three years and I can't thank the volunteers enough for all their encouragement and support. A special mention needs to go to my trusty Deputy Directors and both Chairs over the three years who have all been outstanding, and made things so much easier. There have been 'challenging' times, but on the whole, thanks to the hard work and commitment of everyone who has played a part; it has been a wonderfully rewarding experience.



We have had a real push with outreach this year and made some very positive contacts for the future with the PCT, various local colleges, and several successful events in Stockport. The future looks exciting with a branch 'move' in the not too distant future, the new Samaritans telephone system, Connect, and an exciting project with Network Rail ahead of us.

The introduction of the 3 Rings rota system has been a real success. This was a big cultural change for the branch and was received very positively.

I am proud of what we have achieved during my term as Director, and I know that under the Directorship of Wendy 54 and her new Deputies and teams, the branch will continue to go from strength to strength. Please keep up the good work and continue to fit Samaritans into your busy every day lives, however difficult that may seem at times. What we do is invaluable to so many people.

There are significant challenges ahead but the future looks good for Stockport Samaritans and I look forward to continuing to be a part of that.

Treasurer's Report – Pat 57

These have been very difficult financial times for so many people and we have been fortunate that the generosity of the public and our own Samaritans has resulted in giving us a small profit for the year.

Income and Fundraising.

We continue to be grateful to SMBC for their continuing grant which covers the rent and electricity. Thanks also to all those organisations and individuals who have so kindly raised money for the branch or given donations, helping to cover most of our other vital expenses. Despite having fewer projects the amounts raised have been quite substantial and my thanks to the volunteers who have given time to organising and helping at these events. Without them we could not fund our branch.

Expenditure

The branch functions without any paid staff and administration and housekeeping costs are low. We have heavily subsidised conference and training costs this year as we believe that this is of great importance to the quality of care that we offer our callers.

I would like to thank the committee and branch members for their help and support and particularly to our director for her dedication and enthusiasm over the last three years.



On Call Support (OCS) – Joan 82

The On Call Support Team continues to be the mainstay of the structured support system for all volunteers in the Branch. They are there at the start of the shift, throughout its duration and at the end of the shift, when they enable volunteers to offload any feelings about distressing calls before they leave the centre. However this role does not end there, they monitor calls that have been taken and contact volunteers that they feel may need additional support over the next few days. This enables volunteers to deal with very difficult topics with the knowledge that their wellbeing is of paramount importance.



As the role demands a high level of time commitment, recently two members have gone on leave and two new volunteers have joined the team after undergoing Regional training to better equip them for the role. It is essential to maintain a strong team over the summer months when volunteers take their annual holidays.

In addition to providing daily support to volunteers, the Team meets once a month to discuss anything that has arisen during their shifts on Call. This is an essential exchange of information as it includes concerns about volunteers' wellbeing, caller care problems, procedural issues and awareness of good practice which helps to ensure that the Branch continues to provide the best possible service to callers. It is also a forum where the Team members can provide support for each other in dealing with any problems that have arisen.

The Quick Reference Books situated by the phones have become invaluable as a source of instant access to procedural issues. These are under constant revision to ensure they reflect any changes in policies.

Finally I would just like to thank all the members of the Team for the continued commitment and support they have provided to the Branch over the past year, in addition to fulfilling their monthly commitment to their shifts on the helpline.

Caller Care – Dom 32

Over the past year we have monitored our callers of concern through the caller log, the white board and Samaritans input to the caller care team. The process continues to be one of continual review at the end of which bulletins are produced for the caller care folders.

Regionally and nationally the callers of concern have been updated to give more details as to the reasons for their inclusion. We hosted the November Regional Meeting at the branch and my thanks to Pam 49 for all her assistance. Emails are checked and reviewed regularly and our responses continue to be good. The email numbers have also been steadily rising over the year.

May I finish by thanking everyone in the branch for the continued support in bringing to our notice the callers of concern. Its only from this input that we are able to build up the callers profiles. Finally, thank you to the caller care team, Pam 49, John 21, Sonya 30 and Jo 86 for their help and assistance over the year, it has been much appreciated.



Selection & Recruitment – Debra 42

After the departure of Gill 89, I took over the Deputy role in September 2009, just as Selection was undergoing big changes. The new 'Selection Manual' was being compiled at General Office using information and resources that demonstrated best practice in a review of Selection at a national level. This manual is now being used in all branches and like the SIT I programme for Initial Training it ensures that we are all 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.



Since June 2009 we have held two very successful Information/Selection evenings and it seemed that the guidance and resources in the new manual greatly improved the experience for all concerned. Feedback received from the attendees of the Information/Selection in January was very positive. This was very reassuring as it was the first time we had used the material in the new manual. The Selection Team received it very positively too.

I'd like to thank the team for their dedication, support and hard work; Mary 4, Pam 55, Dave 65, Penny 50, Kerry 6 and Jo 45.

Thanks also to Sarah 35 for doing the publicity for both events and Peter 56, Wendy 54 and Mary 80 who also helped out in different ways.

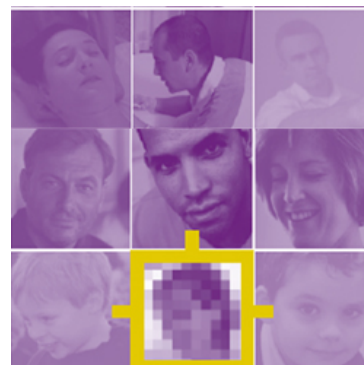
We have welcomed 15 new volunteers to the branch and wish them every success.

Vetting & Barring – Wendy 54

January 2010 was the reintroduction of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks for all new Prep Sams; eventually to be rolled out later this year to include all existing members of the branch.

It was generally a positive experience with good communication between the Selection and Training teams and myself.

We experienced a few teething problems; the need for a longer gap between interview and SIT I being one problem flagged up; thus allowing collection of necessary documentation and the sending off of forms to General Office. This then had a knock-on effect in that trainees were unable to commence shifts until their CRB results were returned. All the trainees brought the necessary documents on time and were very patient with both myself and the system. Hopefully the next time round, it will be even quicker for everyone involved.



Initial Training & 3 Rings – Graeme 88

Once again, following on from Debra's excellent selection evenings, we have run two very successful training courses this year. As Wendy has already indicated the CRB checks do cause her a lot of work and there is now a need to review the 'timeline' for training to fit in with this necessary bureaucratic process.

The well established Initial Training Course now involves Samaritans Initial Training Part 2 - this is a chance to review progress, reinforce key points and discuss any issues that may have arisen. This module must be completed before trainee Samaritans can get their number.

Many thanks to Joan 82, Dave 25, Margaret 28, Becky 17 and Pam 49 for the time that it has taken to help deliver this training and the vast experience they bring to it.

Training new Samaritans has been a great experience and allowed myself and the training team to get to know the newer members of the branch well. Feedback from the Trainees has been excellent and all seem to have found it a rewarding experience.

We are the first branch in the North West region to 'go online' with 3 Rings Online Rota Management System. There are currently 23 Sams branches using the system. The majority are in Wales and the Marches with the remainder spread out over a further nine regions around the UK, with around 3,390 individual volunteers currently on the system. (November 2009).

Having chosen this cost effective and well supported software, a team from this branch (Graeme 88, Sharon 3 and Elizabeth 39) have customised it to suit our needs.

All volunteers have been trained and it has not only completely replaced the paper rotas within the branch remote access to 3 months rotas has been a popular new tool for all volunteers.



Ongoing Training – Chris 93

During the year, we have had sessions open to all branch members on:

- Suicide (including reflection on volunteers' personal beliefs/experiences)
- Trans sexual/gender/vestitute people

There have also been sessions on mentoring, On Call Support and a variety of regional training events.

Most members of the branch have attended at least two of the training sessions, although there are a very small number of volunteers who unfortunately have not been able to attend any. Many thanks and well done to those volunteers who have managed to achieve or exceed the training commitment this year.

Thanks to all those who have helped with the training and all the best to the new Ongoing Training Team!

Volunteer Care – Liz 79

Volunteer care has seen another busy year supporting volunteers on short and long term leave. Many of those who have taken leave have returned which is great news and we are very pleased you are back.

Volunteer care has offered the following services over the last year:

- Sorting out leave and staying in regular contact with those on leave.
- Follow up calls to volunteers who have dealt with difficult calls. In most cases OCS placed a request and the calls were in addition to OCS follow ups.
- Confidential support to volunteers on private and Samaritan related issues.
- An introduction to the service for new volunteers in the form of an informational letter.
- Cards sent to volunteers, on behalf of the Branch.

All Samaritans have different needs with regards to support they want from volunteer care. The service is built around each individual Samaritan who gets in touch. This year support has been offered by text, email and regular phone contact.

I would like to thank Tony 66 for the extra help he has given me and also for the Sams Sam service he continues to offer us all. Thanks Tony.

This year sadly saw Doreen leave the Branch. Doreen was a Samaritan at Stockport for a long time, but decided to leave due to ill health. Doreen was the deputy for volunteer care for many years at the Branch and I know many of us benefited from her care and support. I would like to wish her well and thank her once again for all she has done for Stockport Samaritans and for looking after us all so well. Thank you Doreen.



It has been a privilege to be the deputy for volunteer care at Stockport Samaritans, for the last 3 years. You are a very special bunch and I hope you have been well served.

Branch Email – Pam 49

Despite a national decline in the number of E Mails received last year (mainly due to the introduction of SMS in some branches), I am really pleased that we actually increased the number of E Mails we responded to in 2009 by 10% - 278 in total.

It appears that E Mail is still one of the preferred methods of contact for young people up to 24 years of age, as 40% of our contacts were within this age group. It is good that we have been there for these young people who otherwise might not have felt able to contact us.

I would like to thank all the new Samaritans who have come through over the last 12 months for embracing the E Mail system and have actively contributed to the increase shown.

Finally, can I just say that the quality of Stockport's responses remain constantly within the 'very good' – 'Excellent' category when evaluations are undertaken, and for this I think we can all be very proud of ourselves. Let's hope that we can continue the good work throughout 2010. Thank you again.



Branch Statistics – Dave 25

There were small increases in the numbers of telephone contacts in 2009, and a larger increase in the number of email contacts. The apparent reduction in face to face visits was caused by one persistent caller who affected the statistics for 2008. There was a significant increase in the ratio of female to male callers. This is not completely explained by the large female to male ratio of email contacts (2 to 1), but also applies to the phone contacts. This trend is continuing in 2010. The reduction in the number of occasions on which follow up was offered has not greatly affected the number of follow ups accepted and made.



Caller Summary for 2007/08

		2009	2008	Change
Total contacts		19355	18651	3.6%
Snap calls		9345	9134	2.3%
Samaritan contacts		10010	9517	4.9%
	By telephone	9708	9208	5.2%
	Face to face	24	56	-133.3%
	By email	278	252	9.4%
Male contacts		4846	4754	1.9%
Female contacts		4879	4506	7.6%
Uncertain		285	257	9.8%
Suicidal feelings				
	Not explored	2001	1895	5.3%
	Explored but no response	236	157	33.5%
	Suicidal feelings expressed	2098	2028	3.3%
	No suicidal thoughts	7912	7489	5.3%
Follow Up				
	Offered	79	104	-31.6%
	Accepted	39	41	-5.1%

The Samaritan Vision is that fewer people die by suicide.

Our Mission - we work to achieve this Vision by making it our Mission to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicide feelings and suicidal behaviour. We do this by:

- Being available 24 hours a day to provide emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of emotional distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide
- Reaching out to high risk groups and communities to reduce the risk of suicide
- Working in partnership with other organisations, agencies and experts
- Influencing public policy and raising awareness of the challenges of reducing suicide

We are committed to the following values:

- Listening, because exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people to reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them
- Confidentiality, because if people feel safe, they are more likely to be open about their feelings
- People making their own decisions wherever possible, because we believe that people have the right to find their own solution and telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them
- Being non-judgemental, because we want people to be able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection
- Human contact, because giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair