



Annual Reports 2020 - 2021



Chair's Report

In the year that will be remembered for the Covid pandemic, by any measure we have had one of the most successful 12 months in our 28-year history. We ended the year with 24 counsellors, had more than 2,000 client sessions in the year, none of which were face-to-face – they were either on Zoom or the telephone – and our bank balance ended the year nearly £15k healthier.

Zoom sessions

Most of our counsellors took to Zoom very quickly. Some did not want to work online, which we respected. We supported our counsellors with regular community meetings to help the transition. Naomi Garrido, our IT Manager, set us up with the iZettle cashless payment system and trained everyone how to use it. We take all major credit cards or direct bank payments.

Clarifying and articulating our policies and procedures

As with many organisations the pandemic brought some of our shortcomings into sharp focus. These were made all the more evident by the departure of our longstanding Counsellor Coordinator Anne Timpson. We urgently need to clarify and articulate our policies and procedures and bring them together in a way that is easily accessible to our clients, our counsellors and our support team.

This transformation project is being undertaken by our Transformation Team and we have allocated a budget of £13k in the year to 31 March 2022, which we are funding out of last year's surplus.

New Practice Management team

As part of the transformation we have a new organisational structure. At the heart of this is the new Practice Management team, which consists of:

Marie George	Practice Coordinator
Kay Tillyer and Susie Masterson	Client Allocation
Lynn Errey	Acting Clinical Director
Naomi Garrido	Admin, IT Manager and Process Developer

I am taking on the role of CEO and when we find a replacement will relinquish my role as Chair of the Trustees.

We will be recruiting for a professional Fundraising Manager to take over from our fundraising trustee, Juliet Henderson, and a Clinical Director to replace Lynn Errey who will be leaving at the end of the year.

We are also actively seeking three new trustees by the end of 2021.

Contact me for more details on these roles including job descriptions.



Vision, mission and values

Mid-pandemic we were lucky to be joined by Chrissie Allanson, an experienced marketing executive. She helped us clarify our vision mission and values as a first step towards being able to communicate with our audiences – prospective clients, counsellors, trustees and support staff. You can find the output of our work on page 6 of this report.

Safeguarding our clients

As part of our strategy to become better at safeguarding our clients we have now made the group supervision we offer mandatory, and sessions will become three hours rather than two. The result is an increase in costs of £5,000 per year and we will be actively fundraising to find this money as we think it is critical for the service we offer.

The Old Schoolhouse – nearly our new home

I can report that we are getting ever closer to the Old Schoolhouse in East Oxford being our new permanent home. Our plan is to take a 25-year lease on one of the big rooms there and convert it into three therapy rooms. We will use these for our work and when they are not in use we will rent them out by the hour to private counsellors, therapists and alternative medicine practitioners. We estimate that the conversion will cost at least £30k and as soon as we get the green light from Oxford City Council Planning Department we will be fundraising for this.

Last but absolutely not least, I want to thank Anne Timpson for everything she has done for us over the years, most lately as our Counsellor Coordinator, and Linda Gillham who gave us priceless consultancy advice in her short time with us as Practice Manager. I also want to thank all the people who make donations each month via direct debit. They make a vital contribution to our continued ability to offer our service.

If you would like to set up a direct debit yourself here are our bank details:

The Listening Centre
Bank: CAF Bank
Sort code: 40-52-40
Account number: 000121222

Your donation is in safe hands – we will use it wisely.

With best wishes,

Julian Sharples
CEO

Treasurer's Report

For those of you who are new to our finances, it's quite simple. The money that comes in each year (our income), minus the money we spend each year (our expenditure), creates either a surplus (if it's positive) or a deficit (if it's negative). This surplus or deficit then directly affects our bank balance.

Income and expenditure: This year vs last year

	2019–2020	2020–2021	Difference
Income	£25,397	£37,256	Up 47%
Expenditure	£29,034	£22,495	Down 23%
Surplus/Deficit	-£3,637	£14,761	Up 506%
Opening bank balance	£14,214	£10,577	
Closing bank balance	£10,577	£25,338	Up 140%

We reduced our expenditure because there was no requirement to hire rooms or to pay for counsellor travel expenses, and we increased our revenue through negotiating more realistic fees at the assessment stage, rather than leaving this to the counsellors themselves, and going cashless, which meant clients did not miss payments.

Income breakdown: This year vs last year

	2019–2020	2020–2021	Difference
Grants	£7,910	£10,500	Up 33%
Client fees	£14,485	£23,578	Up 59%
Individual donations	£2,019	£3,173	Up 57%

Once again we have to thank Juliet Henderson and her team for continuing to bring in grant money and our individual donors who, through their monthly donations of £5, £10 or £20, make a vital contribution to our finances.



Budget for 2021-2022

For the coming year we are budgeting to break even on our operations while investing £13,280 in our transformation programme to clarify and articulate all our policies and processes. This will still leave us with a bank balance of £12k, which is up on our opening bank balance last year.

	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Difference
Income	£37,256	£37,305	£49
Cost of operations*	£22,495	£37,322	£14,827
Surplus/Deficit on operations	£14,761	-£17	-£14,778
Transformation project costs	-	£13,280	£13,280
Total deficit	£14,761	-£13,297	-£28,058
Opening bank balance	£10,577	£25,338	
Closing bank balance	£25,338	£12,041	

Red figures denote a negative amount

*The increased cost of our operations results from:

- Hiring a Clinical Director
- Hiring a Fundraising Manager
- Paying the market rate for the work done by our Practice Coordinator and Client Allocators.
- Increased supervision costs, now that we have 24 counsellors

We are not budgeting for the new Fundraising Manager to bring in any additional revenue in the year.

Julian Sharples
Acting Treasurer

Vision, mission and values

This year we clarified and articulated our vision, mission and values. The purpose of this exercise was to help our decision-making and ensure that our communication is based on firm foundations.

Our vision

A vivid and compelling picture of a better future. An inspirational statement of an ideal future

A society where mental wellbeing is the foundation of a healthy community and psychotherapy and counselling are accessible by all those who need them.

Our Mission

What we are doing to get there

We offer face-to-face and online psychotherapy and counselling that are affordable, professional and safe. We work to raise awareness of and promote the benefits of psychotherapy and counselling. We work with training institutions to provide placements for students.

Our values

Principles and standards that guide us

Affordable

We believe that psychotherapy and counselling should be available to all those who need them and can benefit, regardless of their income.

Inclusive

We want everyone to feel welcome, enabled and supported to achieve their potential without discrimination. We are committed to having a diverse range of clients, therapists, trustees and associates.

Safe

We provide clients with a safe space in which to develop and grow at their own pace, by providing suitable counsellors or psychotherapists who adhere to strict codes of ethics and safeguarding that are aligned with recognised accrediting bodies.

Supportive

We nurture and encourage mutual support and self-care among all members of the organisation.

Innovative

We embrace change and aim to continually improve our service through listening, learning and innovating.



Financial support and people

Financial Support

The Listening Centre gratefully acknowledges financial support during the year from:

Sir Victor Blank Charitable Settlement
J A Pye Settlement
Yapp Charitable Trust
St Michael & All Saints
The Albert Hunt Trust
Salesian Sisters
Individual donors

Counsellors

Adrian Osbourn
Beata Kruszelnicka
Catherine Mason
Christine Marie Jones
Claire Green
Daisy Beckham
David Field
Drew Cooper
Helen Brocklehurst
Kanika Lang
Kay Tillyer
Linda Luckhurst
Lucia Sarmiento
Mandy Happe
Marie George
Nicky Reed
Polly Khalid
Rachael Bentovim-Gill
Rodney Young
Simon Hughes
Susie Masterson

Trustees

Julian Sharples (Chair and Acting Treasurer)
Ian Eastwood
Lynn Errey
Juliet Henderson
Dawn Robinson

Administrative Assistant

Naomi Garrido

Practice Coordinator

Marie George

Client Allocators

Kay Tillyer
Susie Masterson

Bookkeeper

Robin Frazer

Accountants

Mercer Lewin, Chartered Accountants
41 Cornmarket Street, Oxford OX1 3HA

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Clients' words

"I can't thank my counsellor enough. She was fantastic, made me feel at ease, was very friendly and always on the end of the phone for me."

"This therapy happened just at the right time. I would not have been able to carry on without these weekly counselling sessions."

"I found the fact I could pay an affordable amount extremely helpful. It really helped me speaking to 'the counsellor', who is very good at what he does. Thank you very much!"

"After one or two sessions it was life saving. The more I talked to the counsellor, the better I felt. She made me feel so much better about myself."

"I have seen these things on American programmes where people go to talk to someone. I knew it was what I needed but did not know it was here. Thank you very much."

"I have been in counselling for almost ten years. Now I'm hoping for the first time in my life that I may no longer need professional help."

*“It was very helpful and made me start valuing myself,
thanks to your counselling and great help.”*

*“Supportive, understanding, helpful, sympathetic –
very, very useful at a difficult time in my life.”*

*“I feel I’ve got what I needed and more
importantly improved massively.”*



The Listening Centre
Leys Children's Centre
Cuddesdon Corner
61-63 Cuddesdon Way
Blackbird Leys
Oxford OX4 6SB

Tel: 01865 794794
www.thelisteningcentre.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1098571

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1098571

**THE LISTENING CENTRE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Mercer Lewin Ltd
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
41 Cornmarket Street
Oxford
OX1 3HA

THE LISTENING CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Listening Centre is registered with the Charity Commission (No 1098571).

The charity is constituted by deed, dated 21 June 2003.

Charity Address: The Leys Children's Centre
61-63 Cuddesdon Way
Blackbird Leys
Oxford OX4 6SB

The charity is administered by a committee of management comprising:

Chair: Julian Sharples
Other trustees: Ian Eastwood
Juliet Henderson
Lynn Errey
Dawn Robinson

The objective of The Listening Centre (TLC) is the preservation and protection of good health for people in need in Blackbird Leys and the surrounding area by providing a counselling service.

The charity offers, and has offered since 1993, a regular, low-cost counselling service, provided by counsellors under supervision. This supervised counselling also helps the trainee counsellors to attain necessary experience required for their professional qualifications.

TLC provides regular group supervision sessions for its volunteers, and has an ongoing programme of professional development for its counsellors through the delivery of workshops and training sessions.

Julian Sharples

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LISTENING CENTRE

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet appended to this report.

Respective responsibilities of Committee of Management and Examiner

The committee of management are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; they consider the audit requirement of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility, when performing an audit, to carry out an examination of the accounts and to report to you.

Basis of Examiner's statement

My report is in respect of an examination carried out under s145 of the Act and in accordance with directions given by the Charity Commissioners under subsection 5(b) of that section. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the committee of management and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records which is primarily limited to analytical procedures and of such enquiries of the committee of management as was necessary for the purposes of this examination. Procedures undertaken do not constitute an audit.

Examiner's statement

Based on my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, accounting records have not been kept in accordance with the Act, or that the accounts presented do not accord with those records or comply with the accounting requirements of the Act. No matter has come to my attention to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



A Churchill Stone FCA DChA
Mercer Lewin Ltd
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41 Cornmarket Street
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11 February 2022

THE LISTENING CENTRE
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH

	General funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
Income			
Bank interest	5	-	5
Client contributions	23,578	-	23,578
Donations and other income	3,173	-	3,173
Grants	10,500	-	10,500
Workshops	-	-	-
	<u>37,256</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>37,256</u>
Direct charitable expenditure			
Administration expenses	4,348	-	4,348
Advertising expenses	420	-	420
Bank charges	401	-	401
Bookkeeping fees	288	-	288
Co-ordination fees	5,760	-	5,760
DBS checks	263	-	263
Independent examiner's fees	600	-	600
Insurance/BACP membership	1,151	-	1,151
Printing, stationery and postage	-	-	-
Recruitment expenses	2,743	-	2,743
Room and office hire	102	-	102
Sundry expenses	364	-	364
Supervision, clinical and consultancy	4,953	-	4,953
Telephone	775	-	775
Volunteer expenses and travel	100	-	100
Website and internet	228	-	228
	<u>22,494</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,494</u>
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	14,761	-	14,761
Balance brought forward	10,577	-	10,577
Balance carried forward	<u>£25,338</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£25,338</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	2021 £
Accounts receivable	-
Bank current account	1,988
Bank deposit account	23,505
Prepayments	<u>707</u>
	26,200
Accounts payable	<u>(862)</u>
	<u>£25,338</u>

Non-monetary assets

In addition to the above assets, the charity also owns items of office equipment which are kept at the centre and elsewhere. The costs of these items are included in the receipts and payments account for the year. The total cost of these assets is £3,182.

Julian Sharples

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1098571

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