



Cornerstone Warminster

Cornerstone Warminster.
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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year Ending 31st March 2024

Summary by Chair of Trustees

This year has seen approximately the same level of activity with 714 episodes of assistance recorded from our static Town Centre location and 44 provided by our Mobile Team (down from 76). Whether this decline is a one-off, remains to be seen. Perhaps greater publicity or devoting further resources will be necessary if this becomes a trend. Next year's results should provide a clearer picture and help determine further action. Overall, this brings the total number of client interactions since opening (June 2014) to 5870. In addition, the Counselling Service continued to offer counselling therapy to those on low income who would otherwise be excluded due to affordability.

A positive development this year has been the collaboration with Wiltshire County Council's 'Rough Sleeper Team'. This has involved participation in the weekly on-line operational meeting via Teams, which allows multi-agency sharing of information and common approaches to various associated issues. We believe that this has led to a more efficient response in the placements of a number of rough sleepers. Nevertheless, the critical shortage of Council-controlled (housing association) accommodation for single people below State Pension will continue exacerbate the problem.

Volunteer training has remained a priority in order to keep abreast of developments and provide accurate information to our clients. As well as in-house training, external face-to-face and online learning has been achieved with the help of *Wiltshire Money* and the *Benefits Training Company*. In addition, Cornerstone is a member of the *Warminster Health and Wellbeing Forum*, which facilitates 40+ organisations across Warminster and the surrounding villages to meet regularly, share information and help find solutions to local concerns.

In terms of financial management, expenditures came within the annual budget allocation - albeit leaving an overall deficit for the year.

Our biggest challenge continues to be the recruitment of new volunteers, with the demography of our current team lending urgency to the situation.

Cornerstone Client Data

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

1. Summary

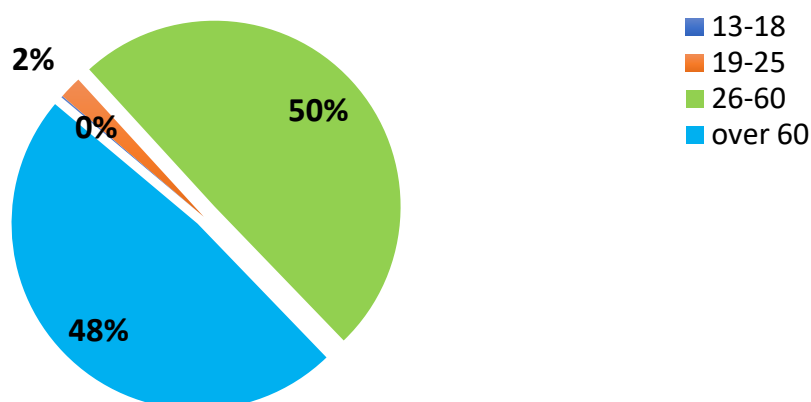
During the reporting period Cornerstone provided **714** episodes of assistance from its static town centre location, with Mobile Cornerstone providing **44** episodes of assistance over the same period. The Counselling Project has continued to provide counselling sessions to those on low income. See analysis below.

2. Analysis – Static Cornerstone

- **Age Breakdown.**

Half the clients fell within the broad age range of between 26 and 60 years of age, which has become a regular trend. The proportion of clients over 60 years requiring help was also similar to previous years and was the next largest group. There were no clients in the 13-18 group and only a small number in 19-25 age group – a similar number to previous years.

Fig 1. Age Breakdown



- **Degree of Need.**

In order to try and assess the nature of the assistance given by Cornerstone, a general 1 to 5 ‘degree of need’ scale has been used. This scale is based upon an individual’s personal circumstances. The vast majority of episodes (71%) relate to clients facing hardship and distress (level 3), through to the most severe instances when serious consequences are likely to occur if the situation is left unchecked (level 5). This highlights the fact that people seeking help are facing generally more serious situations than in previous years. The proportion requiring the most basic help has increased to 13% (from 9%), reflecting a rise in those that need help dealing with situations requiring on-line access/IT skills. In order to clarify how the scale works in practice, two examples are set out below:

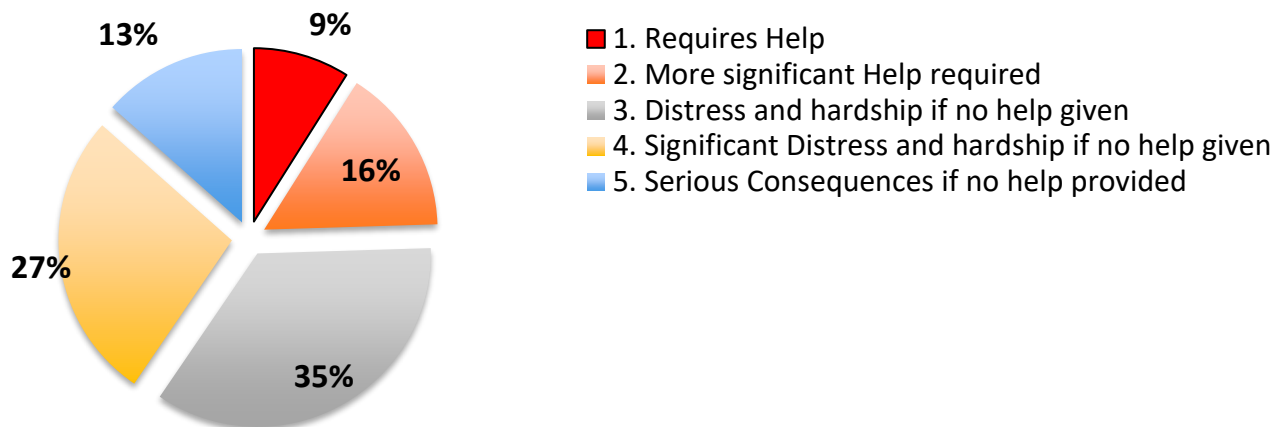
- **1. Requires Help.**

May require help with such things as accessing and completing on-line forms

- **5. Serious Consequences if no help provided.**

A typical example might be someone who is homeless (sleeping rough), unemployed, with no source of income (or limited benefits), in severe financial trouble, in despair and feels there is no one else to turn to.

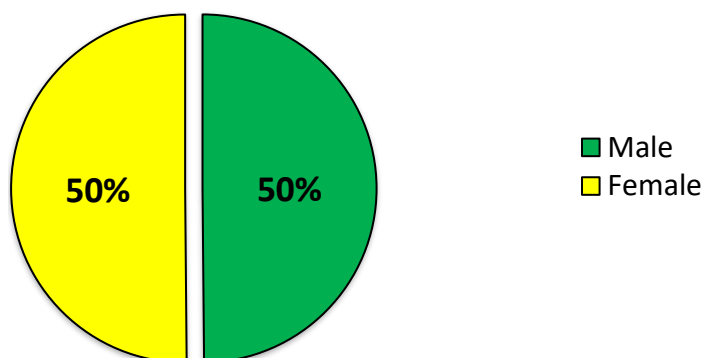
Fig 2. Degree of Need



- **Gender Breakdown**

As seen at Fig 3 below, the proportion of male and female clients, at 50% each, is similar to previous years. However, of those classified as need level 5, the proportion of females has doubled (42%, up from 21% the previous year).

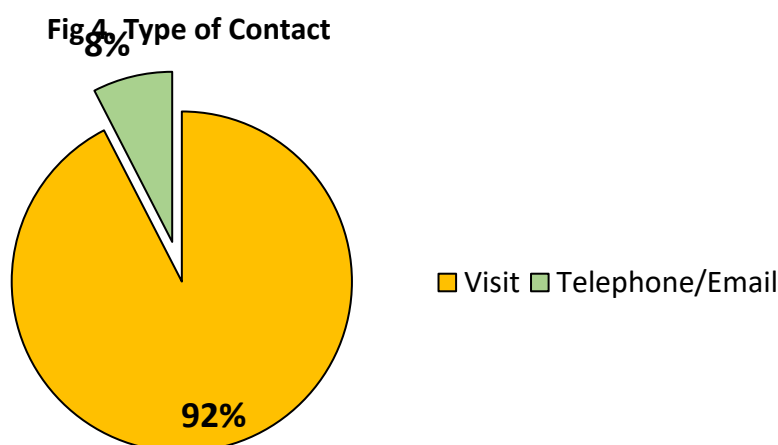
Fig 3. Gender Ratio



- **Type of Contact.**

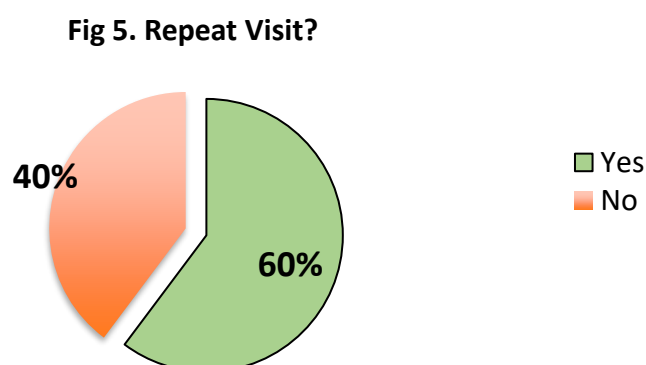
As seen at Fig 4 below, the vast majority of contacts made by clients seeking assistance comprised personal visits to the Cornerstone centre. Although less than half of those seeking assistance stated how they heard about Cornerstone, friends and family were the usual means cited. Others heard about cornerstone through word of mouth, or simply saw the sign as they passed the building and

came seeking help. Other referrals came from the likes of Wiltshire Council, the Food Bank, the Avenue Surgery's Social Prescriber or as a response to Cornerstone's own publicity such as the Warminster Journal, flyers, and website. With less than half of those seeking assistance stating how they heard about Cornerstone, all of the above figures serve only to indicate that referrals come via a range of professional and voluntary organisations as well as the more traditional sources.



- **Returners.**

As seen at Fig 5 below, over half of all episodes of assistance involved prior attendees. Return visits can relate to on-going or more complex issues that require further assistance, or that because of their general socio-economic situation they continue to experience various other difficulties. Because a level of trust and confidence tends to develop, clients often look to Cornerstone for practical or moral support when dealing with subsequent personal challenges.



3. Mobile Cornerstone – Summary

This service has been designed especially for those in our community who find it difficult to travel to our Warminster town centre location because of a lack of

mobility. Typically, this might be due to a physical disability or lack of transport, especially in the more isolated villages and hamlets. As well as undertaking home visits upon request, the Mobile Cornerstone team has continued to engage with local communities in the more isolated locations. In addition to this, on a number of occasions Cornerstone has accompanied individual clients to specialist appointments, such as benefit appeals hearings, specialist assessments and Job Centre appointments.

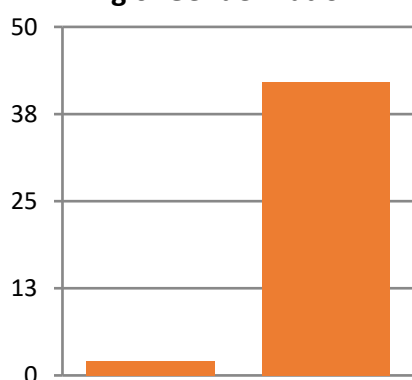
Mobile Cornerstone has provided **44** episodes of assistance, a decrease from the 76 episodes the previous year. Whether this decline is a one-off remains to be seen. Perhaps greater publicity or devoting further resources will be necessary if this becomes a trend. Next year's results should provide direction.

4. Analysis – Mobile Cornerstone

- **Gender Breakdown**

As seen at Fig 6 below, the vast majority of mobile clients were female.

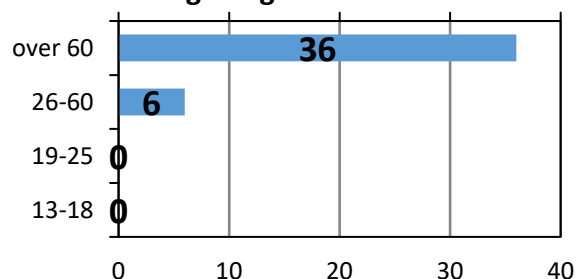
Fig 6. Gender Ratio



- **Age Breakdown.**

The majority of Mobile Cornerstone clients were aged over 60 years, with relatively few under 60 years.

Fig 7. Age Breakdown



- **Venue of Assistance**

Apart from a few visits to rough-sleepers 'locations, Mobile Cornerstone visits have taken place in the clients 'home.

5. Warminster Counselling Project

Under the Lead Counsellor, four qualifying counsellors were offered a placement with the counselling service. This served two purposes: First, it provided a free or very low-cost counselling service to those who would otherwise be denied therapy because of affordability. Second, it provided trainee counsellors with a means of gaining the requisite number of hours for Level 4 accreditation. We operate with two dedicated counselling rooms and offer 2 sessions per counselling room each day we are open (Monday, Wednesday and Friday). Counselling sessions have continued to be provided throughout the year.

The metric chosen to measure the Project's output is the total number of counselling sessions undertaken (as opposed to the number of clients). This is because one client may require 6 sessions, whilst another may require 12. Thus, simply stating that 2 clients were counselled would fail to reflect the counselling support provided or the resources used.

Cornerstone Training Overview: 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

We are still operating with a reduced number of Volunteers; this is a combination of a post-Covid slump and a reflection of the older demography of the group. There are more opportunities for face-to-face training but some training by external organisations continues to be offered via Zoom. In addition to the cascading of information and training as it is received, the primary method of training is in the form of shadowing on the job.

- Wiltshire Money continued to offer relevant support via Zoom, email and face-to-face training. They send out weekly updates and monthly newsletters. Any useful/relevant information was forwarded to Trustees and Volunteers.
- The *Benefits Training Company* continue to send relevant updates and support, via email or Webinar. As above, anything relevant was disseminated as appropriate. This is quite an expensive option.
- Cornerstone is a member of the Warminster Health and Wellbeing Forum. We are one of 40+ organisations across Warminster and the surrounding villages who meet quarterly to share information and concerns. Any new and relevant information and support is disseminated amongst Trustees and Volunteers and, where appropriate, displayed in the general area.

- Cornerstone Volunteer Forum met on 26th April. A representative from the Fudge Trust spoke to us regarding the charitable fund available for those in need in Warminster. Volunteers and Trustees were able to share their good news stories as well as their concerns.
- We signpost other local support groups that might be of interest to either clients or Volunteers. For example, the Chat Cafe in Warminster is a weekly opportunity (Thursdays) for local residents to meet in a safe place. On 18th January they had a representative of the Victim Support Team in attendance - which they kindly brought to our attention.

Fundraising Report **1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024**

Fundraising during our 10th Financial year has been low key. We have no current Grant applications in at the moment. Future Grant applications will be to:

Warminster Area Board (for Capital items only)

Warminster Town Council.

Wiltshire Community Foundation (for Counselling Costs)

We have been blessed by many Personal donations, and donations from local organizations. We currently use Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). They collect the Gift Aid on our behalf. We have been unable to put on a Quiz Night this year or Lent Lunches.

We have received Donations from Warminster Relief in Need and St Johns Trust Heytesbury.

It is very difficult to find grants for running costs for the Charity, as such we look to Fundraising efforts and personal donations including Standing orders to keep the Charity going.

Cornerstone Volunteer Report **1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024**

As at 31st March 2024 there were 22 volunteers and 9 Trustees.

All volunteers and trustees have completed application forms, have had references taken up and have been checked by DBS. They have read the Safeguarding Document and signed to say so. New volunteers have interviews and induction before proceeding further. Blank rotas are available for volunteers to add their own names for convenient dates. Training is still given

‘in house’ and volunteers also attend relevant outside training courses where applicable.

In April 2023 a new volunteer considered working in Admin – to understudy in the office as part of training.

Our Volunteer Forum was held on April 26th when we had speaker Fran Pearson talking about the Fudge Trust

In September efforts were made to recruit more volunteers by inviting church leaders to our sessions to view the work we do as part of our ministry in Warminster. Also, by giving talks about our charity to various churches and other organisations in town. Eva also contacted volunteers on our list who have not been on the Rota for a while.

I would like to thank all volunteers for their support and commitment to Cornerstone and the invaluable work they do in supporting the vulnerable in our society. It is very much appreciated – thank you.

Safeguarding Report **1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024**

Cornerstone remains committed to putting Safeguarding at the forefront of its priorities so as to protect its clients and volunteers alike.

A Safeguarding Policy is in place and is updated to ensure it complies with current Regulations and GDPR requirements are complied with. All Trustees and Volunteers are DBS checked and updated as necessary. Safeguarding Training is undertaken through a Salisbury Diocese Link. Trustees complete Basic, Foundation and Leadership modules and those involved in recruitment of new Trustees or Volunteers complete a Safer Recruitment module. Volunteers complete the Basic and Foundation modules. The Training is monitored and refreshed every three years.

Any significant Safeguarding concerns are reported to the Trustees who decide what action needs to be taken. There have been no significant events during the period of this Report.

Cornerstone Warminster Accounts
Year ended 31st March 2024

				2024	2023
	Notes	<u>Restricted</u> £	<u>Unrestricted</u> £	<u>Total</u> £	<u>Total</u> £
<u>Incoming Resources</u>					
Income from Donations	1	750.00	2,390.20	3,140.20	3,044
Income from Fundraising Events			0.00	0.00	0
Counselling			1,390.00	1,390.00	810
Expense Refunds			18.41	18.41	412
Total Incoming Resources		750.00	3,798.61	4,548.61	4,266
<u>Resources Expended</u>					
Rent			2,475.00	2,475.00	2,700
Computer Costs			413.44	413.44	497
Equipment Purchases			0.00	0.00	921
Phone & Broadband			1,035.27	1,035.27	889
Insurance			96.00	96.00	137
Counselling Costs			2,015.71	2,015.71	1,680
Stationery & Printing			119.90	119.90	59
Client Expenses		90.00	109.90	199.90	504
Office Expenses			0.00	0.00	0
Kitchen Utilities/Resources			131.54	131.54	109
Sundry Expenses			47.50	47.50	505
Total Resources Expended		90.00	6,444.26	6,534.26	8,001
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		660.00	-2,645.65	-1,985.65	-3,735
Depreciation			0.00	0.00	0
Surplus/(Deficit) after depreciation		660.00	-2,645.65	-1,985.65	-3,735

Cornerstone Warminster Accounts
Year ended 31st March 2024

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
<u>Fixed Assets</u>	2		0.00		0
<u>Current Assets</u>					
Cash in Bank		14,187.12		16,201	
Petty Cash		<u>27.92</u>		<u>0</u>	
		14,215.04		16,201	
<u>Current Liabilities</u>					
Creditors		<u>0.00</u>		<u>0</u>	
			14,215.04		16,201
Net Current Assets			<u>14,215.04</u>		<u>16,201</u>
<u>Represented by:-</u>					
<u>Unrestricted Funds:</u>					
Balance at 1 April 2023		16,199.54			
Less: Deficit for the year		<u>2,645.65</u>			
Balance at 31 March 2024			13,553.89		16,200
<u>Restricted Funds:</u>					
Balance at 1 April 2023		1.15			
Add: Surplus for the year		<u>660.00</u>			
Balance at 31 March 2024			661.15		1
			<u>14,215.04</u>		<u>16,201</u>

Cornerstone Warminster Accounts for Year ended 31st March 2024

Notes to the Accounts year ended 31st March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
1 <u>Income from Donations</u>		
Warminster Relief in Need	400.00	400
General Donations	1,890.68	1,072
Fudge Trust	0.00	1,000
CAF	761.52	72
Wiltshire Council	0.00	500
St Johns Heytesbury	88.00	0
Warminster & District Food Bank	0.00	0
Plain Women's Institute	0.00	0
	<u>3,140.20</u>	<u>3,044</u>
2 <u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Computer Equipment at Cost	2,144.00	2,144
Depreciation:		
At 1 April 2023	2,144.00	2,144
Charge for the year	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>2,144.00</u>	<u>2,144</u>
Net Book Value at 31 March 2024	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0</u>