# SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

England & Wales · Charity number 1187362

## Details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Other names** | PCAS |
| **Status** | Registered |
| **Legal form** | CIO |
| **Registered** | 2020-01-14 |
| **Register** | View on the Charity Commission register |

## Contact

| | |
|---|---|
| **Address** | P C A S Suite 1<br>The Willow Tree<br>Willow Street<br>Oswestry<br>Shropshire<br>SY11 1AJ |
| **Phone** | 01691658008 |
| **Email** | simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk |
| **Website** | www.shropshirepcas.co.uk |

## Activities

**Objects:** TO RELIEVE DISABLED PERSONS PRIMARILY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, LIVING OR WORKING WITHIN SHROPSHIRE AND POWYS, THROUGH THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION, ADVOCACY, PEER COUNSELLING AND BEFRIENDING.

**Activities:** We provide independent advocacy to any adult with any disability including multiple disabilities and complex needs. We help any age from 18 upwards including older people, any ethnicity, any gender, any sexual orientation. We work in Shropshire including Telford & Wrekin, offering: Short, Medium and Long-Term help.

Downloaded from opencharities.uk/ew/1187362

## Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities

## Geography

- Powys
- Shropshire
- Telford & Wrekin

## Finances

| Period end | Income | Expenditure | Assets | Employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2025-03-31 | £185,225 | £183,067 | - | - |
| 2024-03-31 | £202,023 | £194,074 | - | - |
| 2023-03-31 | £178,258 | £190,873 | - | - |
| 2022-03-31 | £195,608 | £184,262 | - | - |
| 2021-03-31 | £244,798 | £157,048 | - | - |

## Trustees

| Name | Role | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| Doreen Ellis | | 2020-01-14 |
| ELAINE CLARE HARRIS | | 2020-01-14 |
| Neil Gwynne Pulker | | 2022-11-28 |
| Russell Jones | | 2020-01-14 |

Downloaded from opencharities.uk/ew/1187362

**SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187362

# Accounts




# ANNUAL REPORT

PCAS
Person Centred Advocacy & Support
Together We Can

**OCTOBER** 2025

**A FREE TO USE, 100% INDEPENDENT, CONFIDENTIAL, ADVOCACY SERVICE**

# Table of contents


| | |
|---|---|
| What is independent advocacy? | 2 |
| Background, Mission and Aims | 3 |
| Welcome from our chair | 4 |
| Managers report | 5 |
| Our Impact | 6 |
| Impact support: Trustee spotlight, case studies and client quotes | 12 |
| Our Advocates | 19 |
| Structure, Governance and Managment | 20 |
| Trustees and Principle officers | 21 |
| Financial review | 22 |
| Independent Examiner's Report | 23 |
| Financial activities | 24 |
| Trustee's Responsibilities and Statement of Disclsoure | 34 |
| Thanks to our funders and donors | 35 |
| PCAS Contact details | 36 |

# WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

## AT SOME POINT IN OUR LIVES, MOST OF US WILL NEED AN ADVOCATE.

You may need help to make a difficult phone call, need someone who can write a letter, or someone to attend a difficult meeting with you.

In many cases, the Advocate is a friend or family member, for others, it may be a nurse or social worker. **But what if you dont have any of these people to help?**

Or the problem relates in some way to your family, G.P, or social worker? This is where independent Advocacy can help. An Advocate will support you to speak up for yourself as they are ONLY there for you and have no ties to other agencies or people in your life. An Advocate helps you to get the information you need to make real choices about your circumstances, supporting you to put your choices to others.

**PCAS assist with:**

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discredited against or whom services find difficult to serve
- Supporting disabled people at risk of losing their tenancy
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options - and to make their views and wishes known



- Care issues, accommodation, financial management and paperwork
- Support at meetings and long-term support in order to stay living in their own homes for longer
- PCAS can speak on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves
- PCAS helps people with Mental Health needs, something we have done for 30 years now
- PCAS helps clients through Adult Safeguarding processes
- Child Protection/child in need work.

**Our compassionate team will empower and uplift clients to enhance their quality of life, ensuring every voice is valued.**

It is important to recognise that an effective Advocate will use their knowledge, experience and skills to enable their client to have the best life possible. This might mean the Advocate telling the client about options that the client has never thought of themselves.

It is also an Advocate's job to be realistic with their client, as not all things a client may want will be possible.

**PCAS**
Registered Charity Number 1187362

# BACKGROUND, MISSION AND AIMS

**PCAS Advocacy Service** was started in 1995 by Shropshire Disability Consortium to provide a community based independent advocacy service for people with ANY disability over the age of 18 in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. PCAS was set up by disabled people who recognised a need for individuals to be supported to ensure their voice was heard. PCAS is committed to ensuring individuals are as involved as they can be in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to raise awareness of a person's rights and ensure they are safeguarded against in instances where people are unable to do so for themselves.

PCAS is a registered charity, to maintain its independence it is managed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of individuals who have an interest in and a commitment to the work PCAS does. The Board holds a strategic role, having responsibility to oversee effective governance by ensuring PCAS meets its legal and charitable obligations. **www.shropshirepcas.co.uk**

## OUR MISSION

PCAS provides independent advocacy for adults with any disability, physical, sensory, learning or mental health. We aim to be the Service of Choice, to secure clients' rights, services, and to ensure they are listened to, empowered and treated with respect. We further aim to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or ethnicity.

## OUR AIMS

Assist disabled persons primarily, but not exclusively, living or working within the Counties of Shropshire and Powys, through the provision of Advocacy and information.

- Be recognised as the "Go to" service for Advocacy support
- Enable disabled people to make informed choices, by giving them the information they need
- Help rebuild confidence and self-esteem through being valued as a person
- Provide a service enabling the opportunity for people to take control of their own lives
- Challenge decisions made on behalf of people which they disagree with
- To listen to and engage with a client and actively involve them in any action PCAS assists with

We also have a set of priorities that we use to plan what we want to achieve every year.

**This year we have continued to develop our service to meet the growing needs of local people who are requiring more long-term assistance with their finances, enabling disabled people to stay living in their own homes for longer.**

# WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR

## "PCAS WILL CELEBRATE BEING 30 THIS YEAR"

Hello again and welcome to our Annual Report 2025. After a spell as Treasurer I am now back in the 'hot seat'.

I have spent most of the past couple of years looking after my daughter, who was in hospital with a mental and physical breakdown from February 2023 until March 2024. Her recovery has been slow, but thankfully, she is now making good progress.

**This personal experience has given me further insight into the work of our Advocates.**

My friend and I have applied for the television show 'Bargain Hunt'. We are through to the audition stages, having been selected from hundreds of applicants. Fingers crossed that we make it to the final round and can look forward to our five minutes of fame on the tv!

The charity's Advocates support clients to speak up for themselves, get the information they need to make choices about their circumstances, often at the most difficult times in their lives.

Very often people with a disability are overlooked. They often struggle to get their voices heard or can struggle with things that many of us take for granted, but, **PCAS can offer a shoulder to lean on and a vital lifeline to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.**



**DOREEN ELLIS, CHAIR OF PCAS**

**PCAS will celebrate being 30 this year and this is an amazing achievement for such a small charity.** We are very proud to still be here in these difficult times. Our charity is so needed, we are unique and provide a bespoke service to each and every client.

We listen to their issues and stay with them until we have got them sorted. No other service visits people in their own homes as we do, this makes such a difference as many clients are unable to come to an office and feel much more comfortable in their own environment.

**The charity has suppoted more than 11,800** people during its 30 years and has **helped clients access more than 14,738 new services in the last 10 years alone**. This is becoming ever more difficult as many services no longer exist for our clients to enagage with or gain assitance from.

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## "THIS YEAR IS OUR MOST CRITICAL... SURVIVAL IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR WORK"



**SIMON ARTHUR, MANAGER**

Hi everyone

Wow...PCAS has reached 30 years old, time really does fly when your enjoying yourself!

Over the last 30 years we are **proud to have helped and supported over 11,800 people**.

Without our **amazing workforce** this would not have been possible, so this is a huge heartfelt **THANK YOU** to each and every one of you.

This year we have welcomed two new workers onboard to help us with the huge waiting list that just never ends, a massive welcome to Ben and Sam.

There are huge changes going on in the world, and here in our county of Shropshire we have had MANY changes. **This year we have helped each of our clients with the biggest number of issues in 30 years.** The increase to 17 issues per client just shows the state of services and the problems disabled people face every single day of their lives.

**This year is our most critical** and I really hope that I am here to write my report next year because all our grant funding runs out at the end of November 2025. Our fear?

What will people with disabilities, with such complex issues, do if we close? (Answers on a postcard please!).

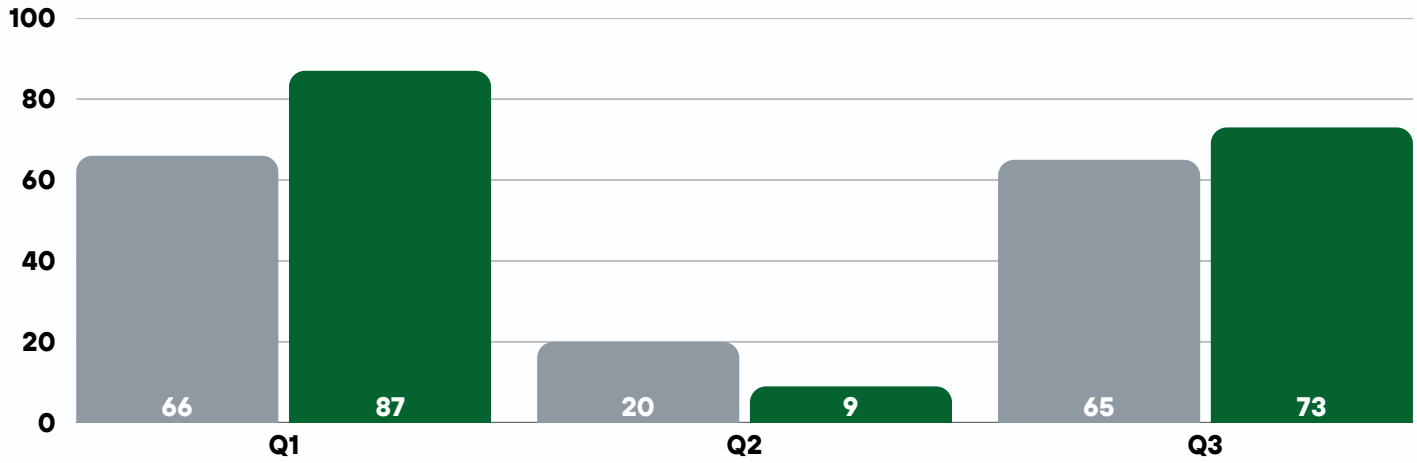
We have been looking into a five year plan, but as we speak **survival is presently at the forefront** of our work.

Then hopefully, with survival secured, we can move into looking at a plan for future sustainability. We aim to look at our way of working from the top down as we think after 30 years, we need to investigate the whole service - what currently works and what doesn't, how we need to adapt to ensure we are around for the future - every single aspect.

I can only assure everyone reading this that myself and the wonderful team are doing everything we can to carry on the amazing work we have done in the county of Shropshire these past 30 years. We are fighting to secure our future.

Financial year April 2024 - March 2025

# PCAS HELPED 228 INDIVIDUALS*




**Q1.** Are you at risk of losing your tenancy?

**Q2.** Are you able to manage your own money/banking?

**Q3.** Are you in any debt?

## Note

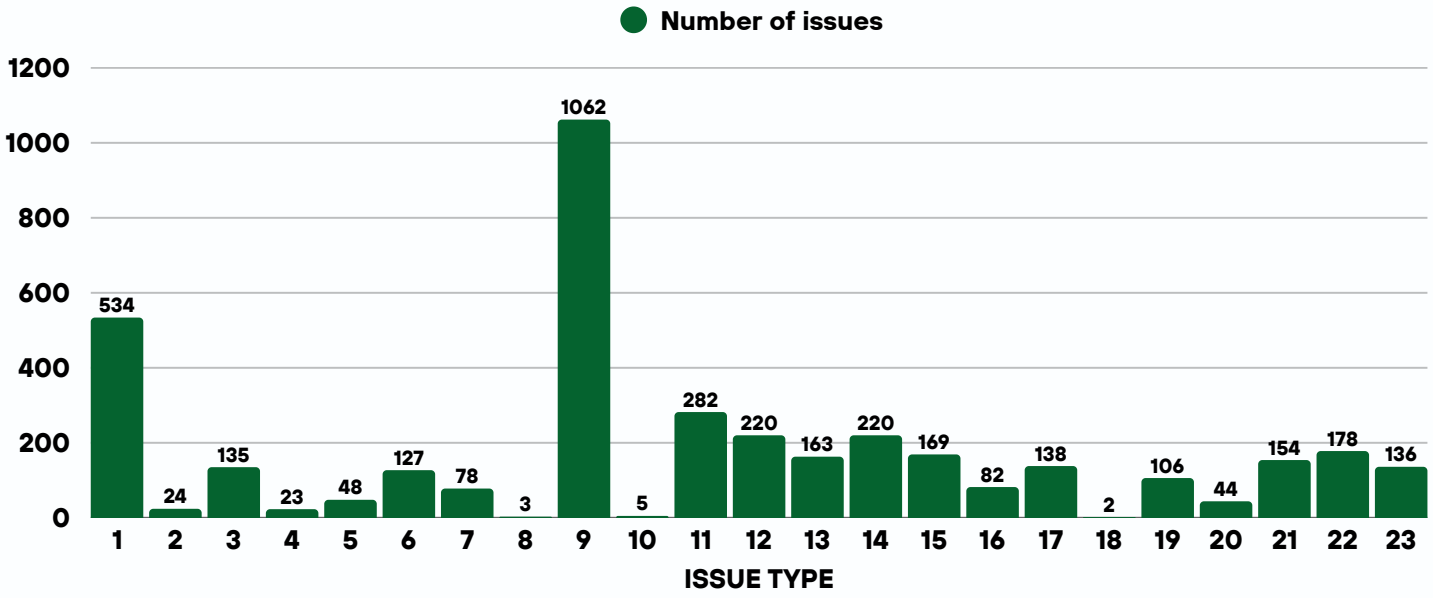
More clients thought they could manage their own money until their Advocate started working with them. The Advocate and the client then agreed they could not manage their money without guidance to avoid debt.

* 17 less than last year as PCAS offer long term help and have many complex cases

**Financial year April 2024 - March 2025**

# PCAS SUPPORTED 3933 CLIENT ISSUES

## A 132 ISSUE INCREASE COMPARED TO LAST YEAR




1 = Accessing other services
2 = Adaptations
3 = Care issues
4 = Child protection
5 = Compilaints
6 = Consumer goods/services
7 = Debt
8 = Discrimination
9 = Documentation support i.e Checking post, filing and reading
10 = Employment
11 = Empowering clients i.e confidence building and decision making
12 = Financial help
13 = Form filling
14 = Health
15 = Housing
16 = Legal
17 = Mental health
18 = Non instructued advocacy
19 = Relationships & Family
20 = Safeguarding
21 = Social care
22 = Support in meetings
23 = Utilities

Over this financial year PCAS have helped clients with a huge 3933 client issues, which show the complexity of cases that we have been working with. Our advocates are working tirelessly to support our clients as they sort through the complex issues to enable our clients to be in a more stable place.

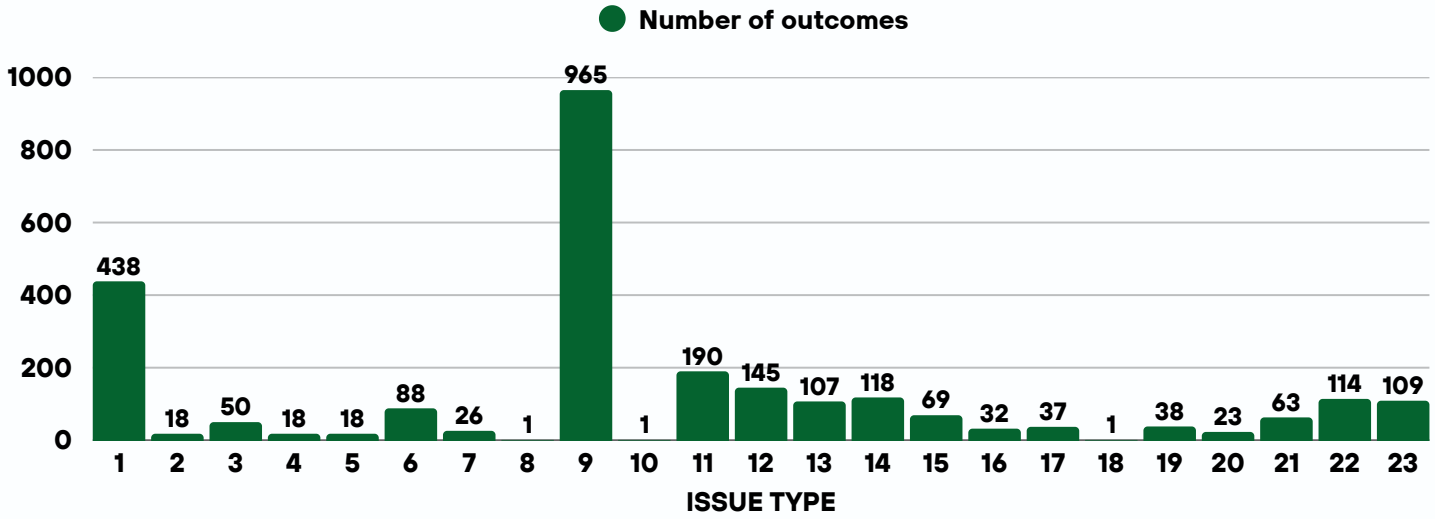
Dividing the amount of issues (3993) by the amount of clients helped (228) gives
**an average of each client having over 17 issues**
that they needed support with.

**Financial year April 2024 - March 2025**

# PCAS SUPPORTED

# 2669 POSTIVE OUTCOMES

## AVERAGE 12 PER CLIENT




1 = Accessing other services

2 = Adaptations

3 = Care issues

4 = Child protection

5 = Compliants

6 = Consumer goods/services

7 = Debt

8 = Discrimination

9 = Documentation support i.e Checking post, filing and reading

10 = Employment

11 = Empowering clients i.e confidence building and decision making

12 = Financial help

13 = Form filling

14 = Health

15 = Housing

16 = Legal

17 = Mental health

18 = Non instructued advocacy

19 = Relationships & Family

20 = Safeguarding

21 = Social care

22 = Support in meetings

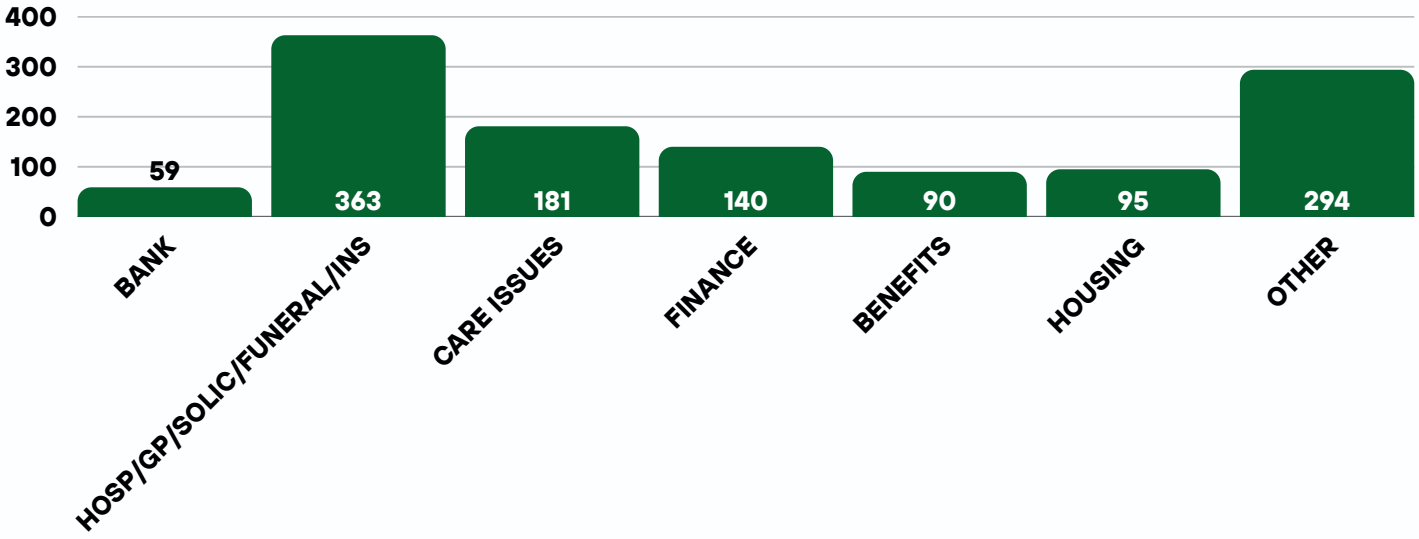
23 = Utilities

**Financial year April 2024 - March 2025**

# PCAS SUPPORTED

# 1222 CASES

## FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES




Clients often require many other services to put their life back on track, **an average of 6 other services per client this year**.

Our Advocates are very skilled and persistent at getting other services involved to help their clients. This can be very challenging, as many are still working from home, or have closed, or are at capacity because of high demand. Advocates can get frustrated by some services who seem unable to do what they should be doing and are funded for.

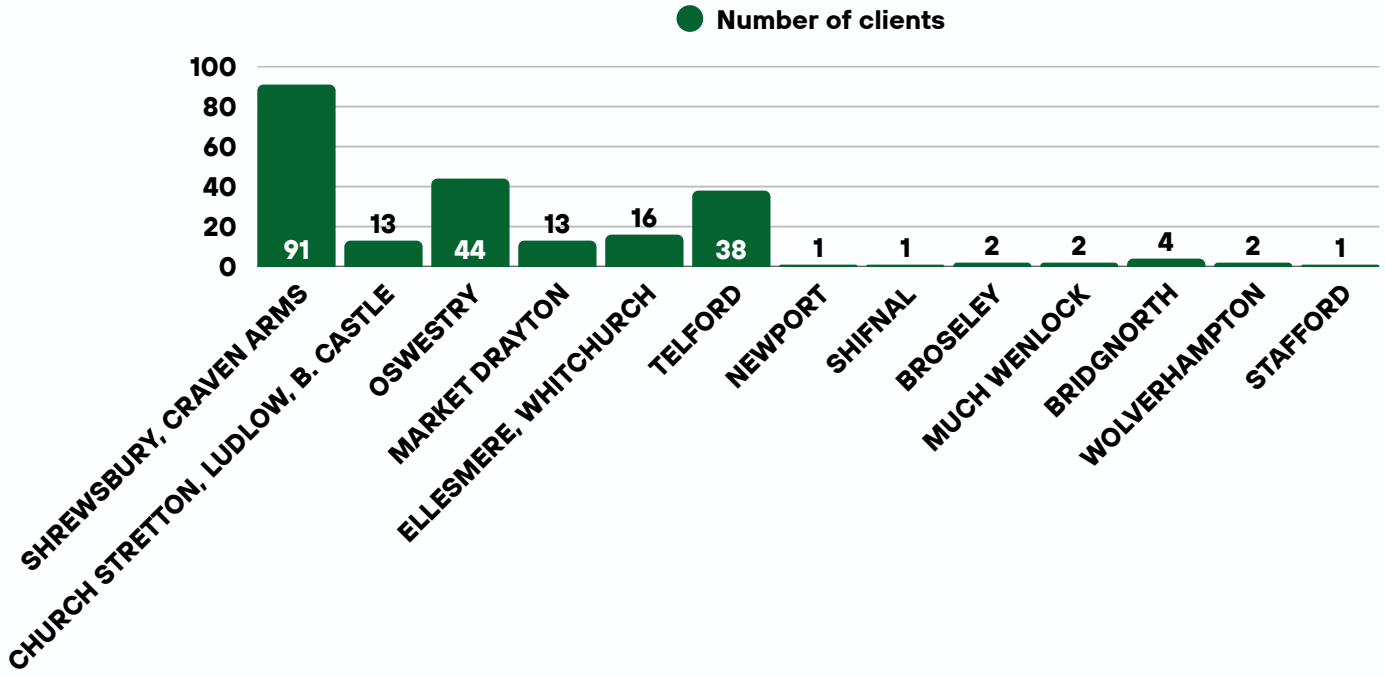
**Financial year April 2024 - March 2025**

# PCAS VISITED

# 228 POSTCODES

## 1605 INDIVIDUAL VISITS

## AVERAGE 7 VISITS PER CLIENT

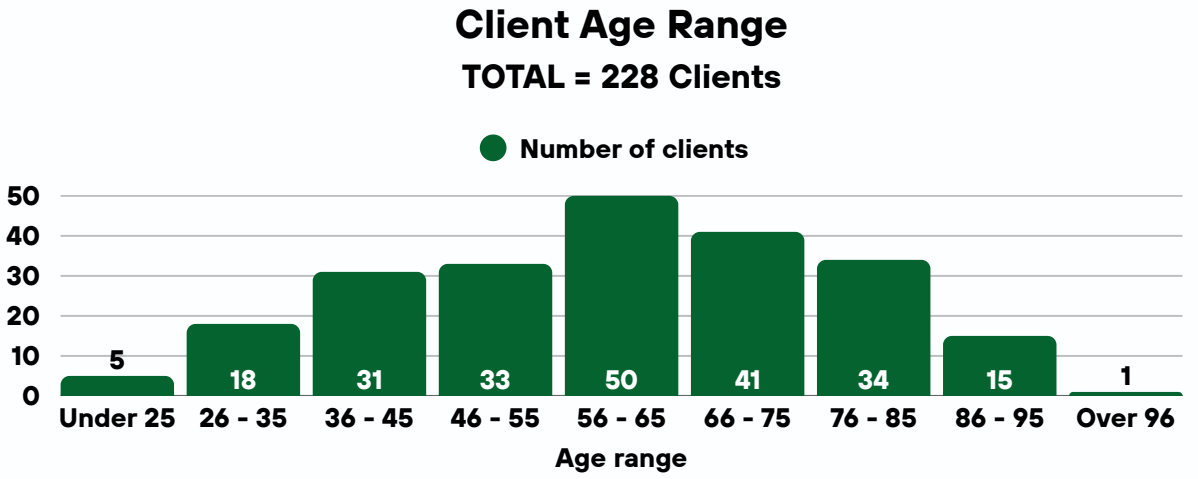


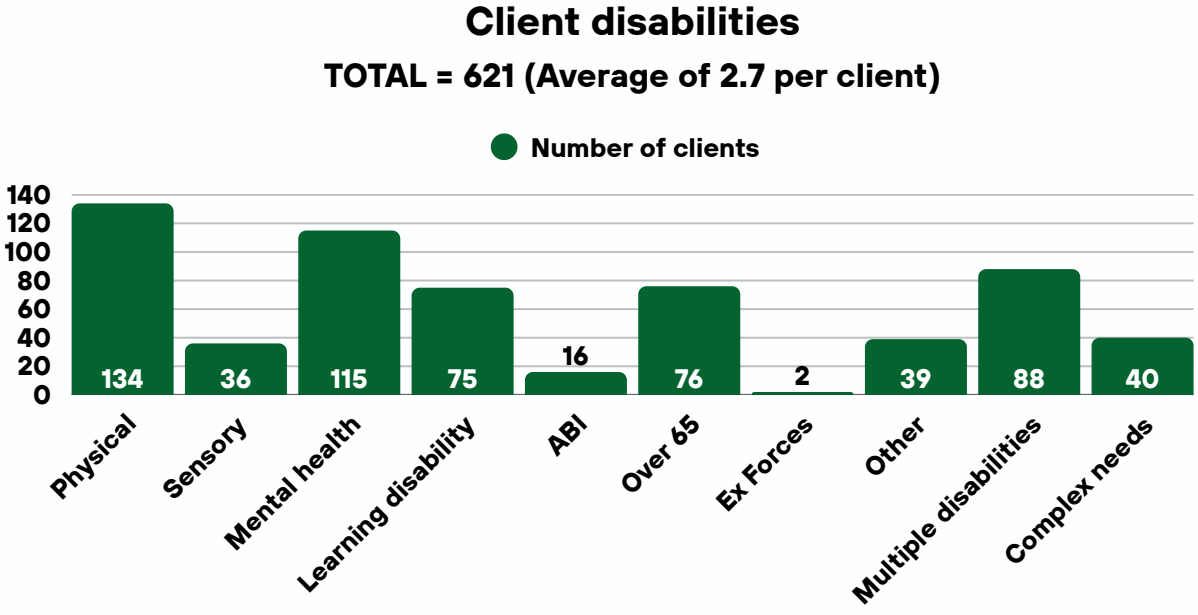
Financial year April 2024 - March 2025

# PCAS SUPPORTED

# 621 DISABILITY CASES

## OVER A WIDE RANGE OF AGES AND DISABILITY TYPES



# IMPACT SUPPORT - TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

## "THE ADVOCATES SHOWED ASTOUNDING COMPASSION, AND SKILLS IN HELPING THEIR CLIENTS..."

This week is voluenteers' week, I am extrodinarily privileged that in my role for Wesleyan I am able to voluenteer and support so many fantastic causes across the UK.

Alongside the volenterring I do with Wesleyan's partners, I use my volunteer leave entitlement of 2 days a year to work with Shropshire PCAS as a trustee.

Advocacy has been a huge part of my career and it's been a great experience continuing in the industry as a trustee. Last month I used half a volunteer day to join a team meeting, where the team discussed the issues PCAS clients are facing, the advocates showed astounding compassion, and skills in helping their clients navigate the care system, getting their housing needs met and challenging care providers.

PCAS recently rebranded their name to be Person Centered Advocacy and Support, this name really is a great reflection on the enhanced advocacy service they are delivering, which is vital to communities across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.



**JACOB AYRE (BACK LEFT) WITH ALL THE OTHER TRUSTEES**

A huge thank you to Wesleyan for supporting me to continue my advocacy career alongside my paid role and to PCAS for allowing volunteers within their service to gain purpose in their role and to feel really valued.

Find out more about Jacob and his role as a Trustee

# IMPACT SECTION: CASE STUDIES



**My client is a 62-year-old gentleman with literacy difficulties**. I have supported this client over the last couple of months.

Prior to my involvement my client's wife sorted all household bills and any benefits queries they had. Unfortunately, my clients wife sustained a dense stroke which has affected not only her mobility but her speech (dysphasia). This has had a huge impact on their lives, and my client has tried muddling through with support from his children.

However, I am unsure whether they are aware of the full impact his difficulties have on him trying to sort through a maze of changes and taking on the role that was previously completed by his wife. I am currently supporting my client to ensure all utilities etc are up-to-date and in payment.

**My client is a 73-year-old gentleman with a learning disability and literacy difficulties**. I have supported this client and his wife for several years. Unfortunately, last October, my client's wife sadly passed away, leaving him feeling extremely low in mood and not wanting to cary on with life in general.

During this time, my client spent a couple of months in respite. When he returned home, we discussed how he felt and initially he felt he wanted to move as he had too many memories in the bungalow.

We discussed extra care, and what that may look like with support available onsite, also explaining that with time his feelings about moving may change and that he shouldn't rush any decision making.

My support increased to ensure all companies for benefits and utilities were notified of the change in circumstance.



# IMPACT SECTION: CASE STUDIES



**Sheelagh is a 72-year-old lady who lives independently, in her 20's she suffered an acquired brain injury as a result of a car crash**. This has left her with poor memory and she sometimes struggles to undersand letters, forms etc.

She has ongoing health issues with her blood pressure, cholesterol and pain from a prior hip operation causing problems with mobility. I have helped her obtain disability aids that have meant she can remain in her own home.

I often accompany Shellagh to GP and hospital appointments to record what is being said by professionals and helping gather any requested information. I also help her make phone calls as she can struggle to understand and retain what is being said to her if there is too much information.

In the past she has been subject to harassment by her very unpleasant next-door neighbour who has tried to take advantage of her good nature, but I have helped her report this to the police and her housing association. Thankfully he seems to have been rehomed now. She is always happy to see me and always welcoming and appreciative of my help.

**Gemma is a single working mum of three children, two of whom have learning disabilities.** She has no family or friend support. She is hard working and caring but struggles with reading due to her own dyslexia and mild learning disability. She has struggled to negotiate her way through dealings with Social Services and her children's schools. She has suffered from domestic abuse in the past so is very mistrusting of people and professionals who should be helpful but haven't always listened to her.

I have helped her sort out many issues around her home and regularly help her with letters, forms, emails etc. I attend school meetings with her, medical appointments and recently helped her transfer over to universal credit by helping her to complete her online form. This has encouraged her to budget her money better.

She is  good caring mum, but struggles to believe in herself so some of my time is spent encouraging her to see the positive in herself. She is always striving to make her home better for her children.



Recently I was able to help her find a solution to get rid of unwanted goods and rubbish by helping her arrange a household rubbish collection from her garden. This allowed her to tidy and decorate her home to make it more homely for her and her children. She is always grateful and thankful for my support.

# IMPACT SECTION: CASE STUDIES

**James is 38-years-old and has learring disabilities.**

He currently lives with his father who is terminally ill and receiving support from Severn Hospice and has a social worker from the hospice providing support to him. The referral to PCAS came from the hospice social worker asking for support for James to look towards the future when his father would no longer be around in terms of where he would live and what support he would need.

When I became involved James and his father explained that James worked for 6 hours per week as a cleaner at the local fitness centre and has been there for more than 10 years.

They also explained that he received support from a care agency for two 3-hour sessions per week but James was not enjoying this as they either took him shopping or out for a walk and he commented that if felt more like work rather than social support.

I discussed other options with him and suggested he may prefer to attend Greenacres Farm as he preferred to be outdoors and was interested in animals.

I made a referral for a social worker to become involved who has been very supportive and after taking James to look around Greenacres Farm, he is now attending one day a week. He chose to go on Friday's as this is fish and chip day!

I suported James at meetings with his new social worker to discuss what kind of support he felt he would need when his father was no longer around, and we all felt that he could not live by himself, even if he had some support coming into the home as he needed someone around most of the time.

It was agreed that a supported living house would be the best option where he would live with other people who have learning disabilities and required support. I accompanied James and his father to look at two properties in Shrewsbury, both of which had a vacant place.



James has chosen one of these houses and he made the choice because he already knows one of the residents and it is very close to Shrewsbury Town Football Stadium, and he is a keen fan and season ticket holder.

He has been visiting the house to spend a few hours getting to know the other residents and staff and they all have a take away and watch a film. He is looking forward to moving there in the near future.

# IMPACT SECTION: CASE STUDIES

**My name is Tom** and after having a house fire and spending two months in hospital I was discharged into a nursing home.

I had no real idea what was going on and was just happy that I was not sent back to my home as I had been unable to cope there before the fire.

My only means of heating or hot water was a coal fire which meant I had to get out to the coal shed to keep my fire going so that I could be warm and comfortable.

My eyesight is very poor and my mobility not good and it was due to these difficulties that my house caught on fire as I could not see properly to get down to lay the fire safely. I also now have the diagnosis of Dementia.

The nursing home made a referral to PCAS as they were concerned about my welfare as a social worker has been to visit me and said I would be going home.

A relative had flagged up to the nursing home staff that my house was in a state and I had been self-neglecting.

I was given Lynne as my Advocate and she spoke to two social wokers from the ICS Team on my behalf who were adamant that I could go back home and have a bed and commode in my living room and they would have a ramp constructed which would let me get down the back doorstep to get to the coal shed using my walking frame with a bucket of some sort attached to carry the coal.

They also said they would make a referral to the adult social work team to take over my case and would not be visiting me again. The social workers said that by not returning home I had made myself homeless so I would now be self-funding and I would have to pay £1200 per week to cover the nursing home fees which I did for a few months.

Lynne arranged to visit my house with a relative and took photographs of every room and sent them to Shropshire Council's Adult Social Care Team to make them aware of the horrendous living conditions I had been living in at home but when she spoke to them she was informed that they had not received a referral from the ICS Team to take on my case and it had just been closed down.



Lynne then made a formal compliant against the ICS Team on my behalf and finally I was allocated a social worker from Adult Social Care. This social worker came and assessed me and agreed that I would be unable to manage back at home or anywhere out in the community and I was awarded a permanent place in the nursing home funded by Shropshire Council, less my assessed contribution.

I am now safe, secure and very content and happy.

# IMPACT SECTION: CASE STUDIES

What a delightful case this was to work on - a young client with a learning disability, who had a difficult homelife with his family, wanted to explore his options around living away from the family home.

Working with other professionals, several options were looked at. Supported living, living with other people, Shared Lives or living alone. All these options were discussed with the client, myself and other professionals. It was made very clear to the client that these were his choices, we were merely there to support and explain further what these choices looked like for him.

The client was given as much time as he needed to talk, ask questions and explore further what these different options were, and how they could work for him going forward. He was encouraged to speak openly and freely and to ask questions. After many weeks of going over each option, a trial was offered with Shared Lives, which was his preferred option.

He was supported all along this journey and I am sure because of this holistic approach to support, the Shared Lives option has been a total success. He now lives a fuller, meaningful live with his Shared Lives family.

**From:** angela mcnamara
**Sent:** 13 June 2024 17:30
**To:** Simon Arthur <Simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk>
**Subject:** Support

Simon at PCAS
Hi, hope I've got right email address

I just want to say thank you for Jacki my lifeline worker Jackie cousin a star of support in every way

My rock and I'm so grateful for her I've found life shared ether is bearable where it was impossible before put it like that!

Thank you for the wonderful service, second to none

Ange Tranter

# IMPACT SECTION: QUOTES FROM CLIENTS

I wanted to say Thank You to PCAS for all the support I have had in every way. I am so grateful and have found a life shared is bearable where it was impossible before. Thank you for the wonderful service.
***Angela McNamara***

Through PCAS involvement, my bills are in order and no money owed. If my advocate didn't help me I would be in a hell of a mess as I dont have the ability to sort things alone.
***Phil Barrett***

PCAS has made my life easier with more understanding for me.
***Chloe Bennett***

I feel better because I know I have someone I can contact, I'm not so alone. Without PCAS I would be really stuck and even more isolated. I think without my advocate I woold have lost my tenancy, be in a lot of debt and in serious trouble.
***Robin Passey***

My advocate supported me to have my voice heard when making decisions on where to live. Without help, I would not have had the outcome I wanted and my family would have taken all decisions out of my hands.
***Bryan Williams***

PCAS helped me to challenge the landlord and saved my tenancy in Ludlow. Without help I would have been evicted.
***Paul Didlick***

I am no longer being financially abused by my family. I can now access my shower & open my front door, handrails outside have been replaced. I would be in a mess financially without help from PCAS.
***Christopher Beaver***

I know I have someone who will support me. This enables me to attend appointments that I would not cope with by myself. I would not have been able to sort my medical issues without my advocate.
***Chelsea Moore***

I can understand lots of things better and know I can get support if I need it. Without this help, I would be extremely depressed.
***Gillian Chapman***

Everything has changed because of having an advocate. I would have sunk & probably have had a nervous breakdown as I felt overwhelmed with the stuffing knocked out of me.
***Zoe Breiner***

I always feel apprehensive before my advocate visits, and much happier and relieved of stress after the visit. I am less confused and feel more in control and reassured. I would be in a complete muddle without my advocate, I would probably have needed more family involvement, which I didn't want, I prefer someone independent.
***Judith Webster***

# OUR DEDICATED ADVOCACY STAFF



SIMON ARTHUR, WENDY TIMMIS, LYNNE DAVIS, MAURA ATTERBURY, JACKIE COPSON, GLENDA CRAWSHAW

PCAS passed our NEW QPM award in July 2023, which is our 3rd continued (2016, 2020) QPM award. We are very proud to have passed once again. Many things have changed over the years to reflect the change in the way Advocacy Services are provided.

> The QPM is only awarded to organisations who can demonstrate that they provide excellent services in line with QPM standards and the advocacy charter. The QPM is a quality assurance assessment for providers of independent advocacy in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
>
> ***Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM)***

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANACE AND MANAGEMENT

## Governing Document

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and is registered charity (number 1187362).

PCAS supports any person aged 18 or over with ANY disability or multiple disabilities.

There is no charge to our clients for our service, which is something we feel very strongly about. Our clients are often the most vulnerable in society, many having multiple disabilities and who do not fit into the remit of other services.

## Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Prospective trustees come from all walks of life. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please contact the PCAS office on 01691 658008. An informal chat about what we do is the first step, then you would fill in an application form if you are still interested. From there, you would meet a couple of Trustees and the current Board would then vote on your prospective application.

The board of Trustees meet bi-monthly and at other times deemed necessary. Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no payment for their work/time. They are from a variety of backgrounds and bring varied skills and experience to the Board. We currently have 2 previous clients, people with disabilities themselves and those with a professional background, as Trustees. The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and meets the charitable outcomes. Day-to-day operational decisions are taken by the PCAS Manager and staff of the organisation, within the delegated authority conferred by the Board.

## Risk assessment

The Trustees have a duty to indentify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error, this has been done.

## Public benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning the activities for the year.

**PCAS**
Registered Charity Number 1187362

# TRUSTEES AND PRINCIPLE OFFICERS

## TRUSTEES

**CHAIR:** Doreen Ellis
**VICE CHAIR:** Clare Harris
**TREASURER:** Clare Harris
**TRUSTEE:** Russell Jones
**TRUSTEE:** Neil Pulker
**TRUSTEE:** Jacob Ayre

## PCAS STAFF

**PCAS Manager/Advocate:** Simon Arthur
**ASSISTANT MANAGER/SHROPSHIRE ADVOCATE:** Glenda Crawshaw
**SHROPSHIRE ADVOCATE:** Wendy Timmis
**SHROPSHIRE ADVOCATE:** Ben Payne
**SHROPSHIRE ADVOCATE:** Lynne Davis
**SHROPSHIRE ADVOCATE:** Sam Eliott
**T & W ADVOCATE:** Maura Atterbury
**EVALUATION MANAGER:** Allisone Arthur

## PROFFESIONAL ADVISORS

**BANK:** Utility Trust Bank
**BUILDING SOCIETY:** The West Bromwich
**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS:** Border Accountants, 5 Lower Brook Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 2HG

**DATE:** 24/11/2025

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

## RESERVES POLICY

The free reserves of the charity were £64,651 at the year end and Trustees consider this amount to be sufficient for their immediate operating requirements. Included in the £64,651 is £40,000 which has been designated for operating costs should funding cease to allow the charity to continue to function whilst further funding is applied for.

## PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

**The charity has been funded by various grants this year from:**

- The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)
- The Henry Smith Charity
- Sir Robert Mcalpine
- Wesleyan Foundation
- Postcode Local Trust
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- Select Healthcare

The above funders and supporters are the backbone of our charity and without their generous funding we would not be able to provide the service we do.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

We continuously strive to develop our services in order to meet the needs of our clients. Funding is always an issue. However, we endeavour to be proactive as we fight for the rights of our vulnerable client group.

**The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees**

**Doreen Ellis (Chair) :** .....

**DATE:** 24/11/2025

**PCAS**
Registered Charity Number 1187362

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

I report to the Trustess on my examination of the financial statement of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (the charity) for the year ended 31st March 2025.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the Trustess of the charity you are responsbilble for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statement carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1st April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

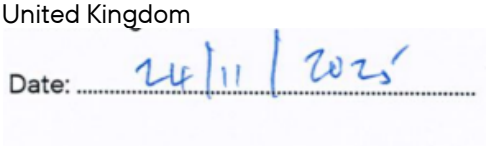
I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1st January 2015. I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



**Jon Ollier FCA**
Border Accountants
5 Lower Brook Street
Oswestry
Shropshire
SY11 2HG
United Kingdom



**PCAS**

Registered Charity Number 1187362

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 31st March 2025. Including income and expenditure account

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

**INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds 2025 £ | Restricted funds 2025 £ | Total funds 2025 £ | Unrestricted 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | | | |
| Donations and Legacies | 3 | 2,918 | - | 2,918 | 3,443 | - | 3,443 |
| Charitable Activities | 4 | - | 181,067 | 181,067 | - | 197,830 | 197,830 |
| Investments | 5 | 1,240 | - | 1,240 | 750 | - | 750 |
| **Total Income** | | 4,158 | 181,067 | 185,225 | 4,193 | 197,830 | 202,023 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 6 | 157 | 176,910 | 177,067 | 210 | 187,865 | 188,075 |
| Other | 9 | - | 6,000 | 6,000 | - | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| **Total Expenditure** | | 157 | 182,910 | 183,067 | 210 | 193,865 | 194,075 |
| **Net income/(expenditure) For the year/ Net movement in funds** | | 4,001 | (1,843) | 2,158 | 3,983 | 3,965 | 7,948 |
| Fund balances at 1st April 2024 | | 60,762 | 33,668 | 94,430 | 56,779 | 29,703 | 86,482 |
| **Fund balances at 31st March 2025** | | 64,763 | 31,825 | 96,588 | 60,762 | 33,668 | 94,430 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

**PCAS**

Registered Charity Number 1187362

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 31st March 2025. Including income and expenditure account

**Balance Sheet**

| | Notes | 2025 £ | 2025 £ | 2024 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **11** | | 112 | | 149 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 156,942 | | 132,535 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling Due within one year** | **12** | (60,466) | | (38,254) | |
| Net current assets | | 96,476 | | 94,281 | |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | | 96,588 | | 94,430 |
| **Income funds** | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | **14** | | 31,825 | | 33,668 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | |
| Designated funds: | | | | | |
| Shut down fund | | 40,000 | | 40,000 | |
| General unrestricted funds | **15** | 40,000 | | 40,000 | |
| | | 24,763 | | 20,762 | |
| | | | 64,763 | | 60,762 |
| | | | 96,588 | | 86,481 |

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on: 24/11/25

Trustee: .....

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**1 Accounting polices**

**Charity information**
Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service is a charitable incorporated organisation.

**1.1 Accounting convention**
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, FRS 102 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable o in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements report on the income for Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service CIO and Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service under the Merger Accounting method as set out in SORP FRS 102 section 27.12-27.13

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, (modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value). The principal accounting polices adopted are set out below.

**1.2 Going concern**
At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

**1.3 Charitable funds**
Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purpose and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

**1.4 Income**
Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STSTEMENTS (CONTINUED)**

**1 Accounting polices**

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

**1.5 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of asset's use.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fixtures and fittings | 25% reducing balance |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

**1.7 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such loss indication exits, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

**1.8 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

**Basic financial assets**

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financial transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**1 Accounting polices**

***Basic financial liabilities***
Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***
Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**1.9 Employee benefits**
The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee to provide termination benefits.

**2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

**3 Donations and legacies**

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 £ | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Donations and gifts | 2,918 | 3,443 |

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

**4 Charitable activities**

| | Counselling & Advocacy 2025 £ | Counselling & Advocacy 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Services provided under contract | 181,067 | 197,830 |

**5 Investments**

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 £ | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Interest receivable | 1,240 | 750 |

**6 Charitable activities**

| | Counselling & Advocacy 2025 £ | Counselling & Advocacy 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Staff costs | 138,374 | 148,797 |
| Depreciation and impairment | 37 | 50 |
| Rent | 6,601 | 6,344 |
| Insurance | 820 | 802 |
| Telephone | 2,778 | 2,065 |
| Postage and stationery | 2,328 | 2,252 |
| Light and heat | 4,794 | 2,453 |
| Repairs and renewals | - | 374 |
| Travel | 19,197 | 19,507 |
| Sundry | 160 | 160 |
| Marketing | 1,978 | 5,271 |
| | 177,067 | 188,075 |
| **Analysis by fund** | | |
| Unrestricted funds | 157 | 210 |
| Restricted funds | 176,910 | 187,865 |
| | 177,067 | 188,075 |

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)**

**7 Trustees**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration on benefits from the charity during the year.

**8 Employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | 2025 Number | 2024 Number |
|---|---|---|
| | 8 | 7 |

| Employment cost | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Wages and salaries | 138,374 | 148,797 |

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

**9 Other**

| | Restricted funds 2025 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Accountancy | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | 6,000 | 6,000 |

**10 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

| | Fixtures and fittings £ |
|---|---|
| **Cost** | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 2,376 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 2,376 |
| **Depreciation and impairment** | |
| At 1 April 2024 | 2,227 |
| Charge for the year | 37 |
| At 31 March 2025 | 2,264 |
| **Carrying amount** | |
| At 31 March 2025 | 112 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 149 |

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

| | Notes | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deferred income | 13 | 58,206 | 36,754 |
| Accruals and deferred income | | 2,260 | 1,500 |
| | | 60,466 | 38,254 |

**13 Deferred income**

| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Other deferred income | 58,206 | 36,754 |

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

| | 2025 £ | 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Deferred income is included within: | | |
| Current liabilities | 58,206 | 36,754 |

Movements in the year:

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.



## 13 Deferred income

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Deferred income at 1 April 2024 | 36,754 | 61,982 |
| Released from previous periods | (36,754) | (61,982) |
| Resources deferred in the year | 58,206 | 36,754 |
| Deferred income at 31 March 2025 | 58,206 | 36,754 |

## 14 Restricted Funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpected balances of donations and grants held on trust for the specific purposed:

| | | Movement in funds | | | Movement in funds | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Balance at 1 April 2023 £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Balance at 1 April 2024 £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Balance at 31 March 2025 £ |
| Henry Smith | 1,561 | 53,800 | (46,838) | 8,523 | 53,800 | (57,426) | 4,897 |
| Postcode | - | - | - | - | 6,250 | (2,682) | 3,568 |
| Reaching Communities | 6,340 | 114,034 | (115,067) | 5,307 | 113,013 | (112,143) | 6,177 |
| Nationwide | 385 | 25,000 | (25,340) | 45 | - | (45) | - |
| Others | 21,417 | 4,996 | (6,620) | 19,793 | 8,004 | (10,614) | 17,183 |
| | 29,703 | 197,830 | (193,865) | 33,668 | 181,067 | (182,910) | 31,825 |

## 15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

| | Balance at 1 April 2023 £ | Movement in funds Incoming resources £ | Balance at 1 April 2024 £ | Movement in funds Incoming resources £ | Balance at 31 March 2025 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shut down fund | 40,000 | - | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| | 40,000 | - | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

**16 Analysis of net assets between funds**

| | Unrestricted funds 2025 £ | Restricted funds 2025 £ | Total 2025 £ | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by: | | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 112 | - | 112 | 149 | - | 149 |
| Current assets (liabilities) | 64,651 | 31,825 | 96,476 | 60,614 | 33,667 | 94,281 |
| | 64,763 | 31,825 | 96,588 | 60,763 | 33,667 | 94,430 |

**17 Related party transactions**

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 – none).

**PCAS**

Registered Charity Number 1187362

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

For the year ended 31st March 2025.

## Independent Examiners

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that Border Accountants be re-appointed as independent examiners for the ensuing year.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of our Registered Charity, as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and applications, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements; and

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Registered Charity and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Registered Charities Act of 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Registered Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Disclosure

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is not any relevant accounting information of which the charities examiners are unaware. Additionally, the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the Charity's examiners are aware of said information.

**This Annual Report was designed and compiled by Allisone Arthur**

# THANK YOU

## TO ALL OUR FUNDERS AND DONORS




The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)

Postcode Local Trust

Lloyds Bank Foundation

The Henry Smith Charity

Select Healthcare

Wesleyan Foundation

Sir Robert McAlpine

Other Donations

PCAS
Person Centred
Advocacy & Support
Together We Can

Advocacy
QPM
AWARD

# CONTACT DETAILS


**PCAS** (Person Centred Advocacy & Support)
Suite 1
The Willow Tree
Willow Street
Oswestry
SY11 1AJ

01691 658008

simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk
(PCAS Manager)

alli@shropshirepcas.co.uk
(Evaluation Manager)

www.shropshirepcas.co.uk


Follow us on Facebook or Twitter
@ShropshirePCAS

PCAS
Person Centred
Advocacy & Support
Together We Can

Advocacy QPM AWARD

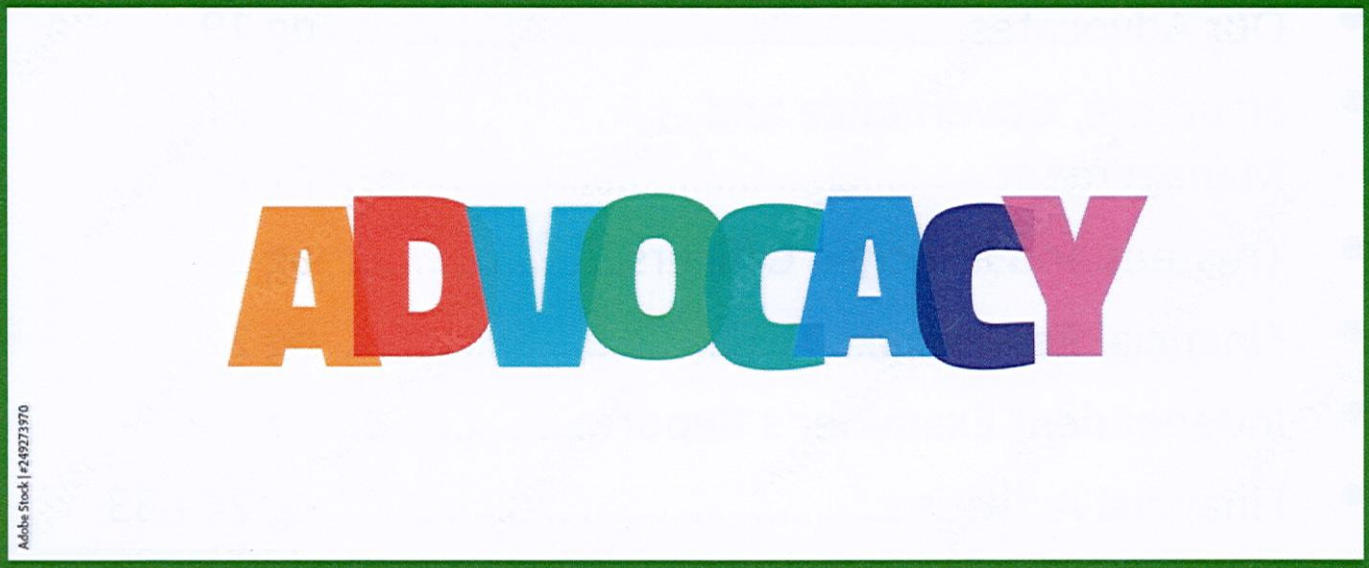
**SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187362

# Accounts

PCAS
Person Centred
Advocacy & Support

Together We Can



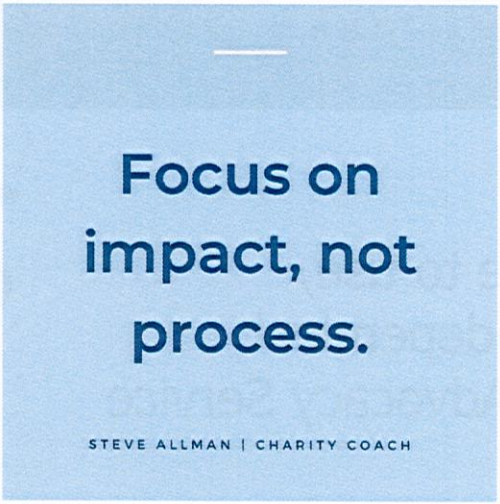

A Free to use,
100% Independent,
Confidential, Advocacy Service

Advocacy QPM AWARD

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service is a registered charity (Registered charity number 1187362)

# Contents


- What is independent Advocacy?..... pg2
- Background, Mission & Aims..... pg3
- Welcome from our Chair..... pg 4
- Managers Report..... pg 5
- **Impact Section**..... pg 6 – 11
- **Impact Section – CASE STUDIES**..... pg 12 – 18
- Our Advocates..... pg 19
- Structure, Governance and Management..... pg 20
- Trustees and Principle Officers..... pg 21
- Financial Review..... pg 22
- Independent Examiner's Report..... pg 23
- Financial Activities..... pg 24 - 33
- Statement of Disclosure..... pg 34
- Thanks to our funders and Donors..... pg 35
- **PCAS Contact Details**..... Pg 36

# What Is Independent Advocacy?

At some point in our lives, most of us will need an Advocate. You may need help to make a difficult phone call, need someone who can write a letter, or someone to attend with you, at a difficult meeting.

In many cases, the Advocate is a friend or family member, for others, it may be a nurse or social worker. **But what if you don't have any of these people to help?** Or the problem relates in some way to your family, G.P, or social worker? This is where independent Advocacy can help, an Advocate will support you to speak up for yourself as they are ONLY there for you and have no ties to other agencies or people in your life. An Advocate helps you to get the information you need to make real choices about your circumstances, supporting you to put your choices to others.

**PCAS assists with:**

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discredited against or whom services find difficult to serve.
- Supporting disabled people at risk of losing their tenancy
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions.
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known.
- Care issues, accommodation, financial management and paperwork
- Supporting at meetings and long term support in order to stay living in their own homes for longer.
- PCAS can speak on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.
- PCAS helps people with Mental Health needs, something we have done for 29 years now.
- PCAS helps clients through Adult Safeguarding processes.
- Child Protection/child in need work.

**Our compassionate team will empower and uplift clients to enhance their quality of life, ensuring every voice is valued**

It is important to recognise that an effective Advocate will use their knowledge, experience and skills to enable their client to have the best life possible. This might mean the Advocate telling the client about options that the client has never thought of themselves.

It is also an Advocates job to be realistic with their client, as not all things a client may want will be possible.

# Background, Mission And Aims

## BACKGROUND TO PCAS AND WHAT WE DO

PCAS Advocacy Service was started in 1995 by Shropshire Disability Consortium to provide a community based independent advocacy service for people with ANY disability over the age of 18 in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

PCAS was set up by disabled people who recognised a need for individuals to be supported to ensure their voice was heard. PCAS is committed to ensuring individuals are as involved as they can be in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to raise awareness of a person's rights and ensure they are safeguarded against in instances where people are unable to do so for themselves.

PCAS is a registered charity, to maintain its independence it is managed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of individuals who have an interest in and a commitment to the work PCAS does. The Board hold a strategic role, having responsibility to oversee effective governance by ensuring PCAS meets it legal and charitable obligations.

***Our Mission Statement Is:***

***PCAS provides independent advocacy for adults with any disability, physical, sensory, learning or mental health. We aim to be the Service of Choice, to secure clients' rights, services, and to ensure they are listened to, empowered and treated with respect. We further aim to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or ethnicity.***

**We Aim to:**

Assist disabled persons primarily, but not exclusively, living or working within the Counties of Shropshire and Powys, through the provision of Advocacy and information.

- Be recognised as the "Go to" service for Advocacy support
- Enable disabled people to make informed choices, by giving them the information they need
- Help rebuild confidence and self-esteem though being valued as a person
- Provide a service enabling the opportunity for people to take control of their own lives
- Challenge decisions made on behalf of people which they disagree with
- To listen to and engage with a client and actively involve them in any action PCAS assists with

We also have a set of priorities that we use to plan what we want to achieve every year.

This year we have continued to develop our service to meet the growing needs of local people who are requiring more long term assistance with their finances, enabling disabled people to stay living in their own homes for longer.

**PCAS Website** www.shropshirepcas.co.uk

# Welcome from our Chair

I took over as PCAS Chair in January 2024 as the previous Chair Peter Quinn was retiring, having been with PCAS for more than 10 years.

I joined PCAS in early 2023 and have been extremely proud to be appointed as chairperson of a charity that does such an amazing job in Shropshire every single day.



**Ben Payne, Chair of PCAS**

PCAS stands for "Person Centred Advocacy & Support".

PCAS is based in Oswestry but covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. We provide one-to-one support and guidance for any adult with a disability who needs an independent advocate.

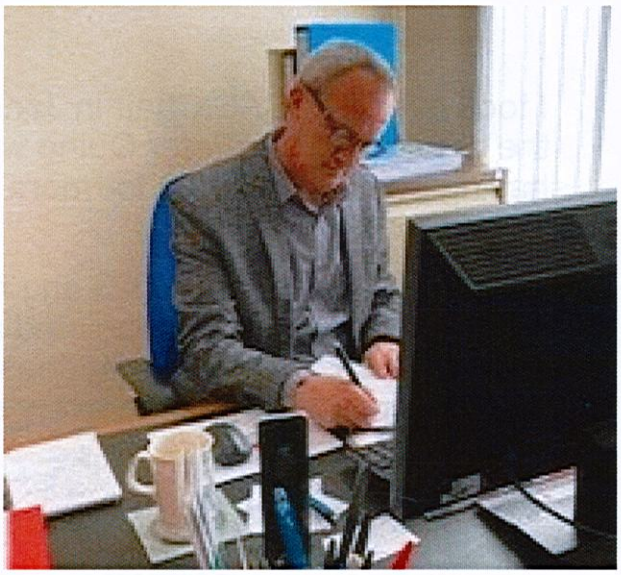
The charity's advocates support clients to speak up for themselves, get the information they need and make choices about their circumstances often at the most difficult times in their lives.

Very often people with a disability are overlooked. They often struggle to get their voices heard or can struggle with things that many of us take for granted. But PCAS can offer a shoulder to lean on and a vital lifeline to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Now in it's 28-year history, the charity has supported more than 10,800 people and in the past year alone, has helped clients access more than 2,000 new services.

I am the operations director for 7video, a Shrewsbury based company making films and animations and also a volunteer for the Teenage Cancer Trust and a mentor with The Prince's Trust. I am also taking a qualification to become a counsellor.

# Manager's Report



**Simon Arthur, Manager**

PCAS – Person Centred Advocacy & Support, yes, we have had a rebranding, PCAS used to stand for Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service, this is still our registered charity name.

But this new branding reflects on how we work as a service, better reflecting how we help and support people. And after 29 years we thought it was time to really focus on what we have done well for all those years. Most people who use us or have used us over the years, over 11,000 of you now, recognise us as PCAS.

You will see in our annual report figures we have worked with less people this year, the reason for this is the complexity of the issues people need help with, and the fact we had to close to new referrals. We have helped the 245 people with 3801 issues this shows an average of 15.5 issues per person, this really causes us concern as being on the frontline, we can see how people are suffering from cuts, cost of living crisis, digital inclusion, huge utility rises to name a few of the factors.

Nothing changes for us we just keep on doing our amazing work, helping and supporting people with disabilities to have a voice, be listened to, and have a better quality of life. Our focus will always be on the person needing help, we will listen, discuss, plan, help and support, always keeping the client at the centre of the work we do with and for them.

During this last year one of our amazing workers Glenda has reached 15 years' milestone of working for us. I must say it has been a pleasure she is so dedicated and hard-working, Glenda is my deputy, so she stands in when I am holidaying or off poorly. She is a star and I hope she continues with us for many years to come Thank you Glenda.

It has been another busy year at PCAS with so many people needing our help and support, unfortunately we cannot keep up with the demands being placed on us, and indeed had to close to new referrals not once but on 4 occasions over the last 12 months. It is a sad fact that the world is in a mess and this has a knock on effect on our service, so many disabled and vulnerable people are fast running out of options to help them, especially over the longer term, I am pretty sure we are the only service in Shropshire that offers this help and support for many years.

In an ideal world we need more funding! around £70,000 a year, if we could achieve this, it would enable us to employ a further 2 full time staff, but with so many challenges in our county as well as around the country, grant funding is so hard to secure, we are lucky that after 29 years we are still here, able to help some if not all that need us.

We will keep on doing what we can for the people of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin in this ever changing world, but we need more supporters, people who can help us to raise funds, offer sponsorship work with us to achieve our goals and those of the vulnerable disabled people we help and support.

# OUR IMPACT



**IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR**
**2023 – 2024**

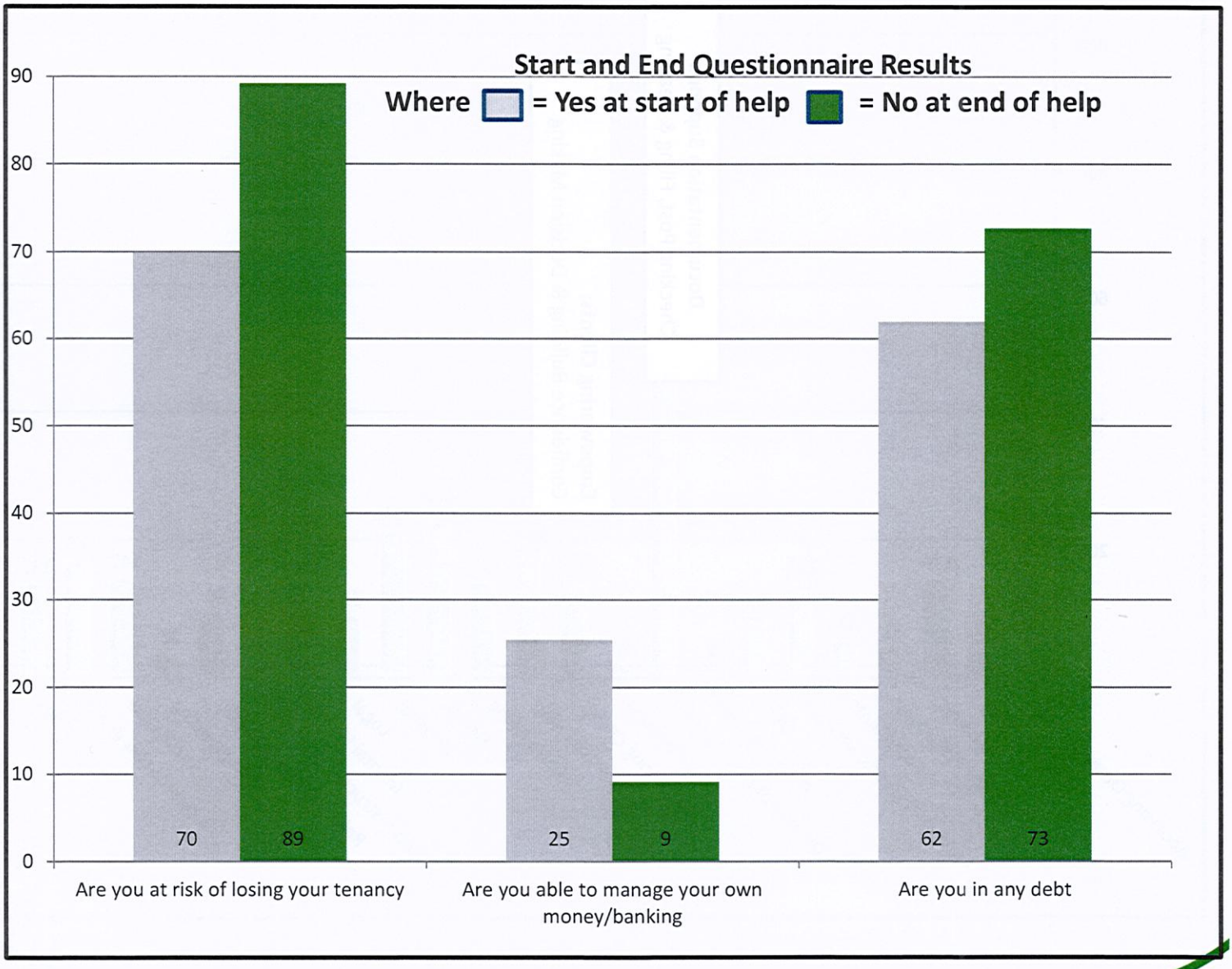
**PCAS HAS HELPED**

**245 PEOPLE**

**WITH 1785 INDIVIDUAL VISITS**

**WITH 3801 ISSUES**

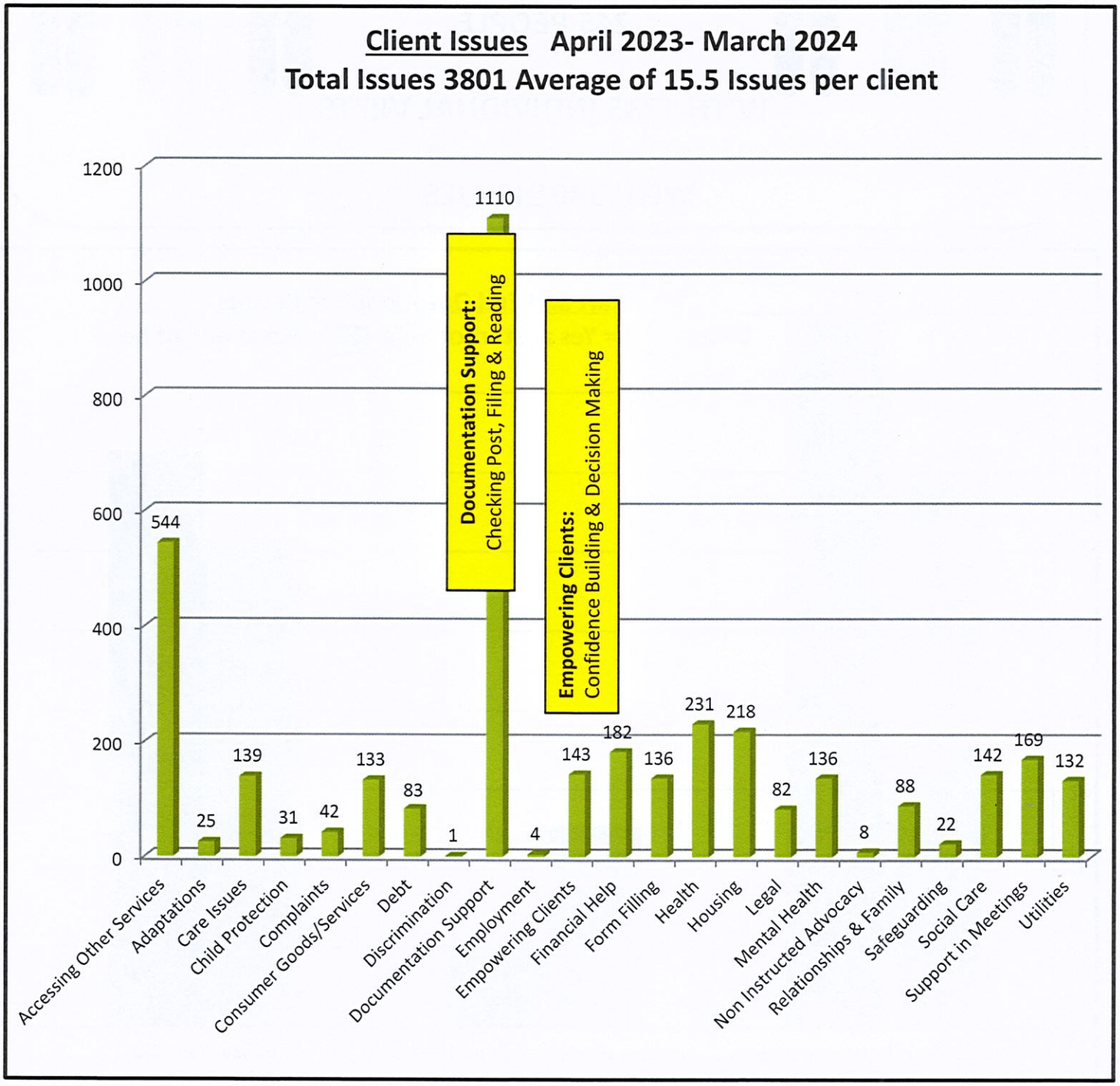




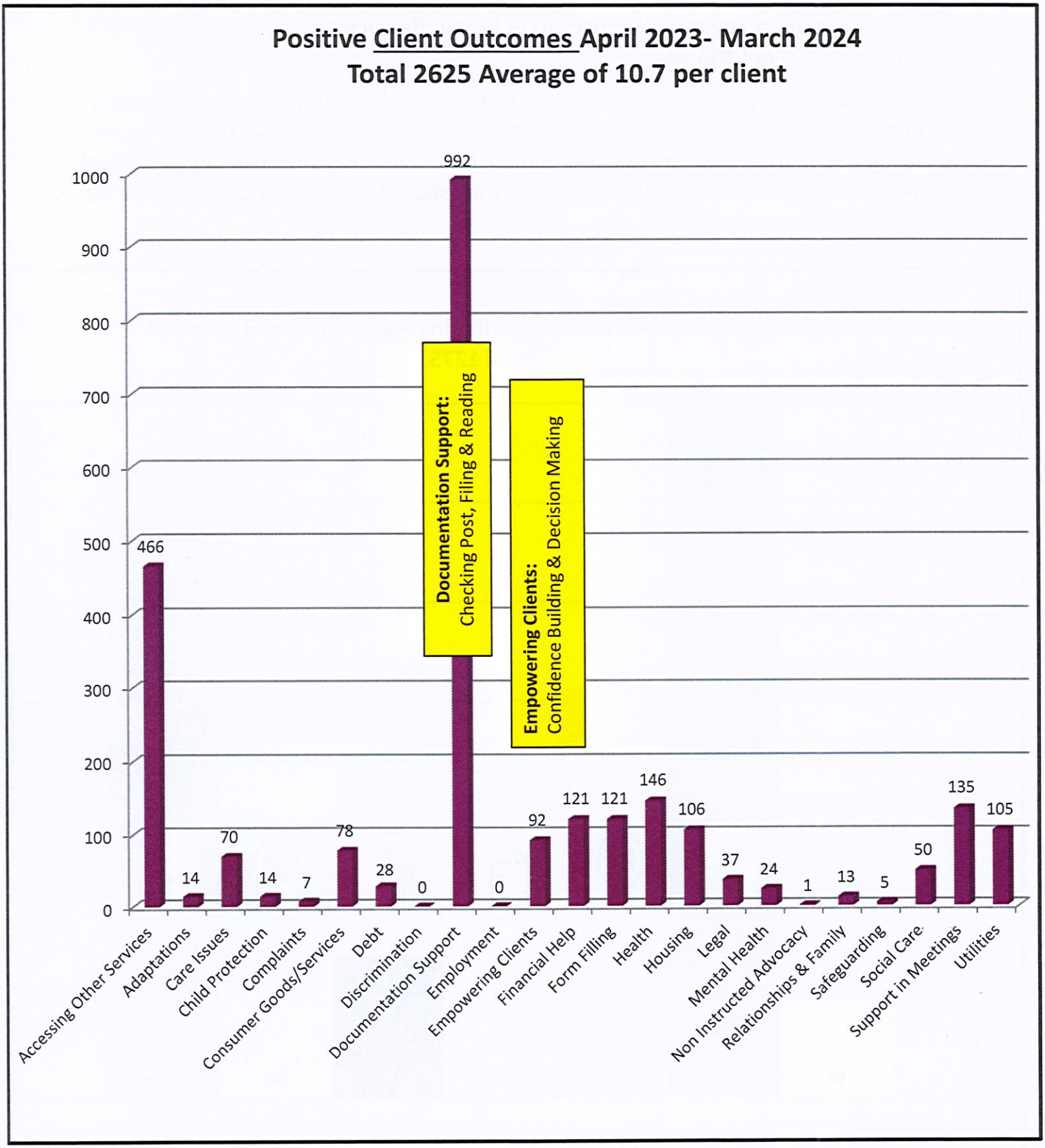
# IMPACT SECTION

Over this financial year, PCAS has helped clients with a whopping **3801** client issues this year, which shows the complexity of cases that we have been working with. Our advocates are working tirelessly to support our clients as they sort through the complex issues to enable our clients to be in a more stable place.

Dividing the amount of issues (3801) by the amount of clients helped (245) gives an average of each client having **over 15 issues** that they need help with.



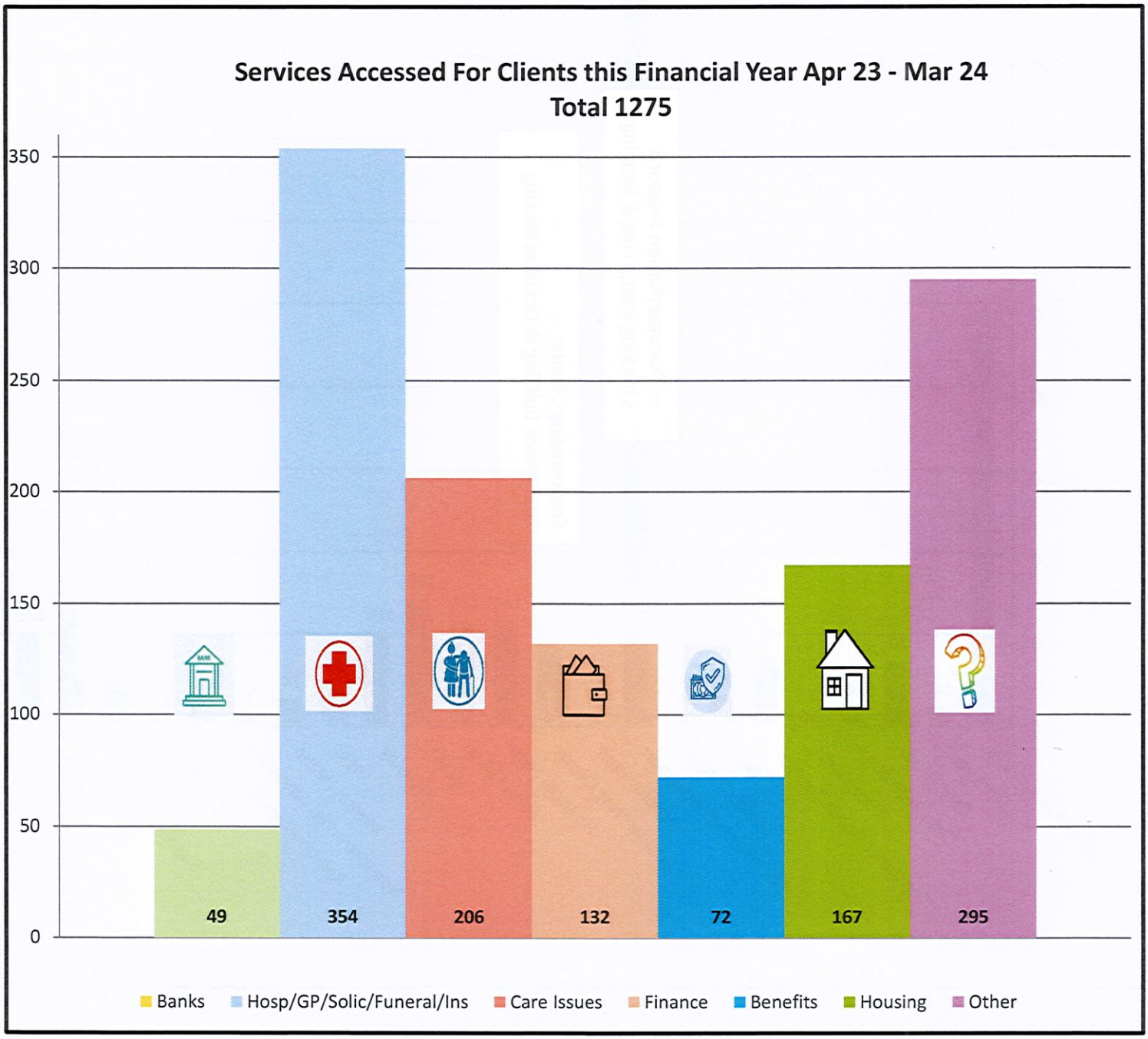
# IMPACT SECTION



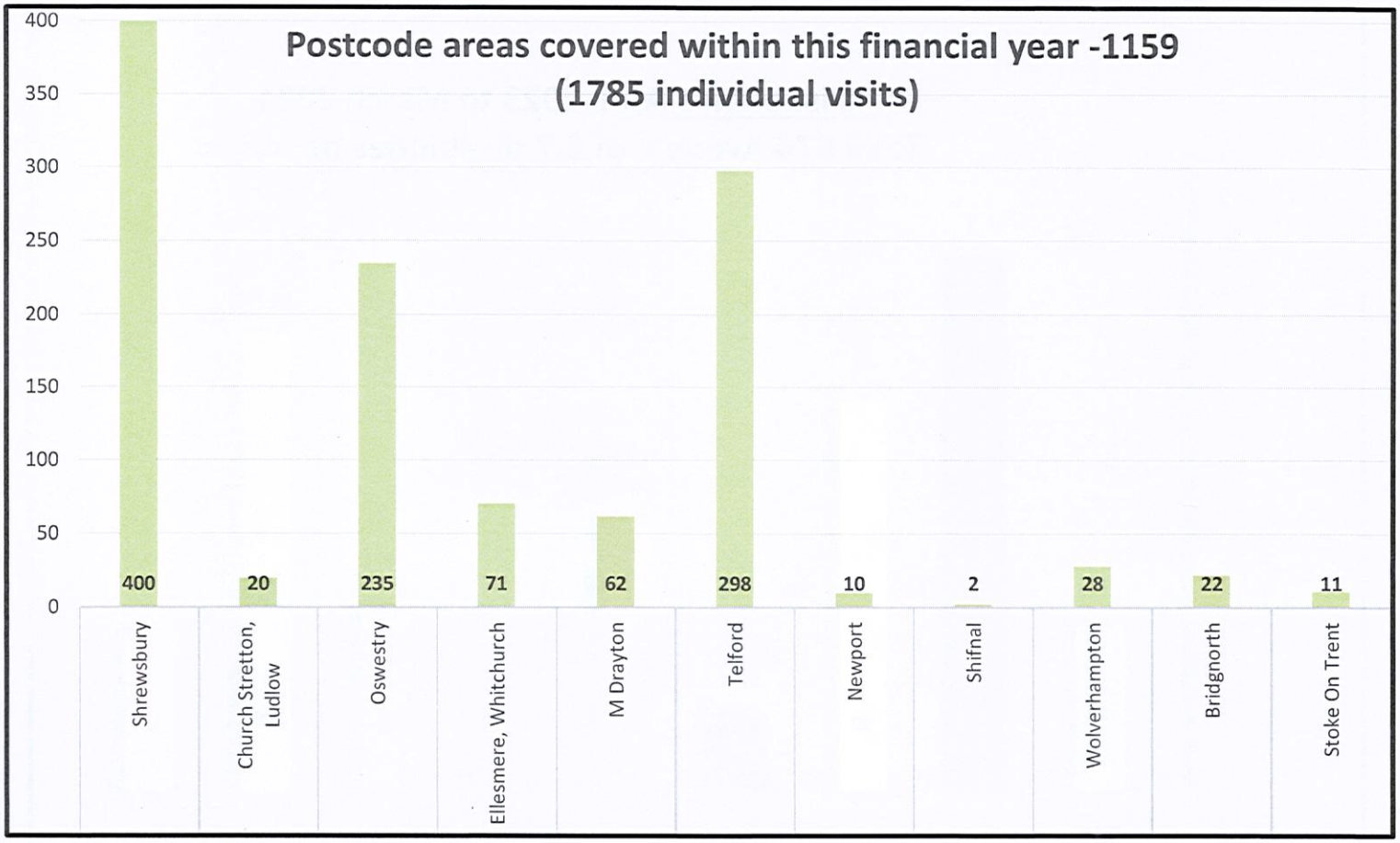
# IMPACT SECTION

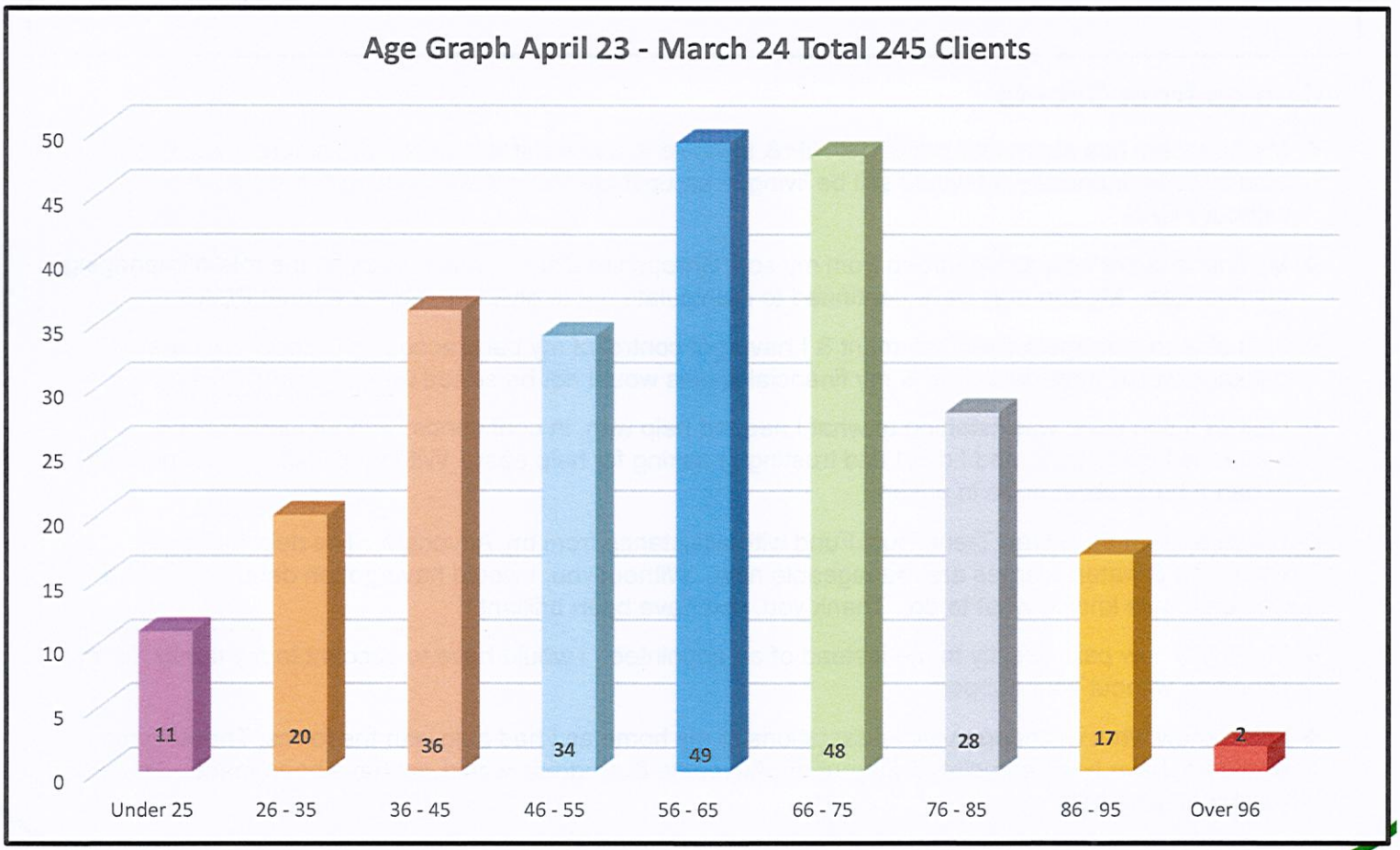
Clients often require many other services to put their life back on track, an average of 6 other services per client this year.

Our Advocates are very skilled and persistent at getting other services involved to help their clients. This can be very challenging, in that many are still working from home, or have closed down, or at capacity because of high demand. Advocates can get frustrated by some services who seem unable to do what they should be doing and are funded for.

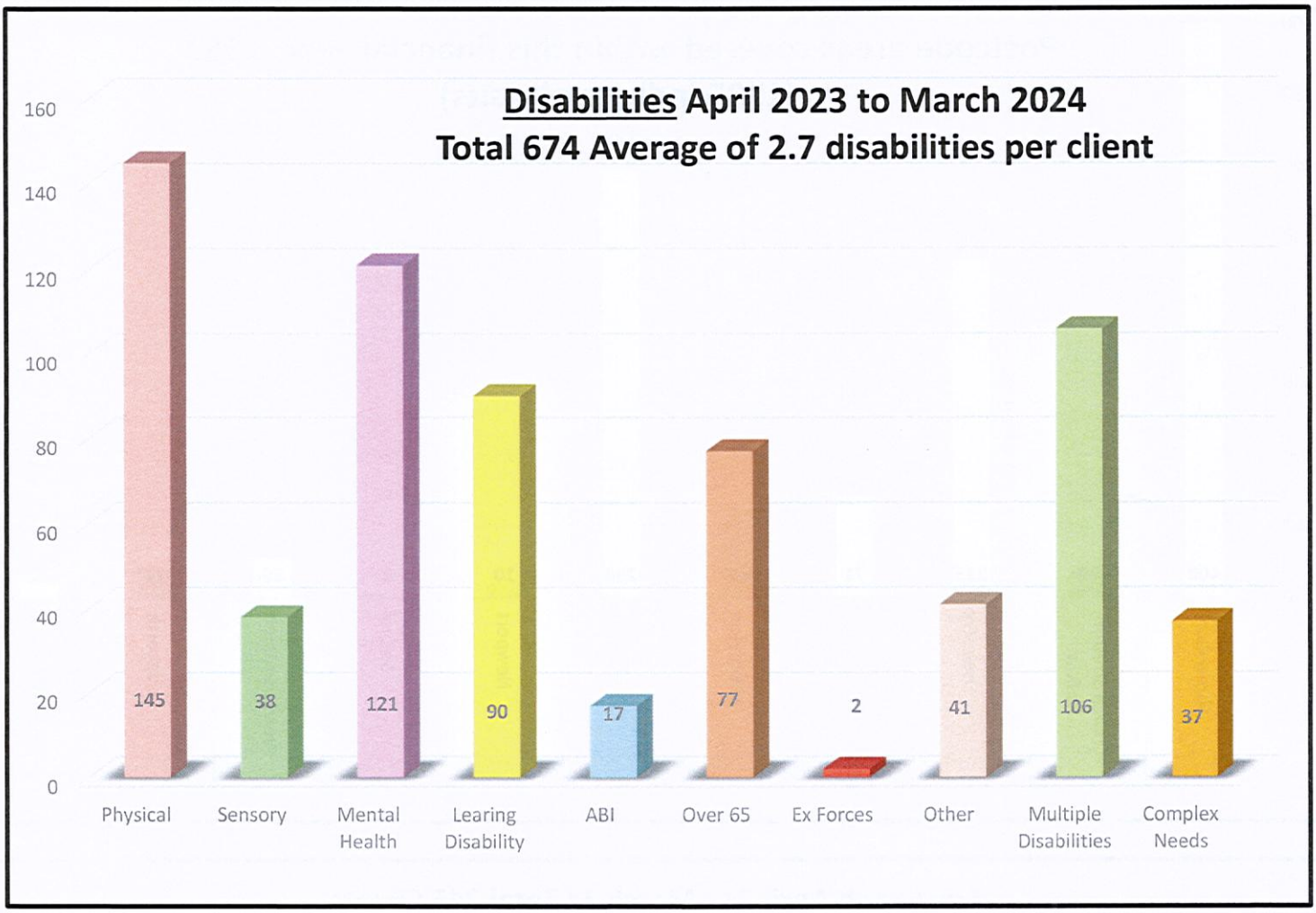


# IMPACT SECTION



# IMPACT SECTION




## Quotes from Clients

- My Advocate has supported me to get PIP & to move to more suitable accommodation. I would not be able to cope financially & I would still be living in an upstairs flat that was getting too much for me without PCAS
- My finances are now safeguarded from my son. Shropshire Council have taken on the role of managing my finances. My son may have continued to manipulate me to give him money without PCAS
- I am able to manage a direct payment & I have got control of my bank accounts & debt. My care package would have collapsed & my financial issues would not be sorted without my Advocate
- I felt as if someone was listening to what I needed help with, in confidence, without judgement & someone I could trust, and I don't find trusting or asking for help easy. Without PCAS I would probably of had a breakdown or be in prison
- I have applied for Seven Trent Trust Fund with assistance from my Advocate. The debt has been written off & water charges are manageable now. Without you, I would have gotten deeper in debt & wouldn't have known what to do. Thank you, you have been brilliant.
- My PIP is now paid directly to me instead of an appointee. I would have to account to my family for my spending without your support
- I now know what will happen with adaptations to my home as I had help with the forms. These forms would not have been completed without my Advocate & progress would not have been made. Thank you for all your help.

# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES

**Thank You, from Ange a client:**

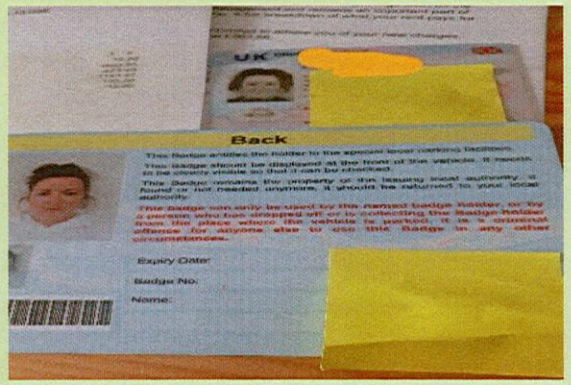
I just want to say thank you for Jackie my lifeline worker, who is a star of support in every way. I am so grateful as I've found life shared is more bearable where it was impossible before.

Thank you for the wonderful service, second to none.

My client needed to renew her Blue Badge, however due to her Acquired Brain Injury, needed support to enable her to collate the information and complete the relevant application.

We went onto the Renew a Blue Badge website and completed the relevant information, we collated the documents and together we removed names etc., and uploaded documents.

After completing the online application and ensuring my client was fully involved, she felt a sense of self achievement, commenting "Oh, I think I could do that myself next time" whilst laughing and then stating – well maybe not!!






When my client disclosed to me she'd had her iPad removed and therefore not only was she unable to access her games etc., she felt she was being treated like a child.

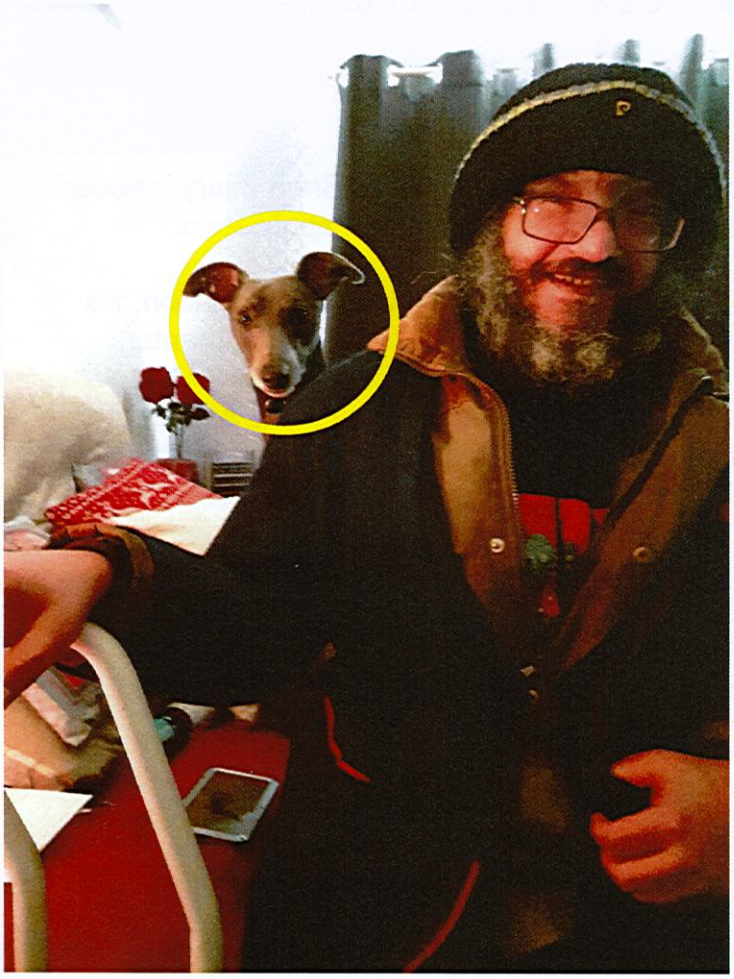
The Social Worker and I explored why this had happened and explaining to staff that you can only deny something if it is in their best interests.

It was agreed that she could have her iPad returned, however a couple of social media apps were to be removed. The client understood why and was happy with this.

This has made a huge difference to my client, as you can see from her smile.



# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES



My name is Midg and I live with longstanding mental health challenges which means the world is sometimes a very difficult place for me.

I try very hard to do things for myself but I always end up getting into a real muddle and that's where my Advocate comes in. Without her I would just sit here on my own not knowing what to do.

My Advocate helps me to access other services that I just couldn't manage to do on my own such as recently: applying for my blue badge, liaising with DVLA about my driving licence and motability vehicle, helping me to draw down on a pension annuity and then to claim tax back on the lump sum, make complaints to my housing association and then get compensation from them for missed appointments and much more over the 7 years we have worked together.

We communicate mainly by text message which is great for me.

I am so grateful to have my Advocate and I don't know what I would do without her, I am very happy to share my story with Shropshire PCAS.

My client said he was honoured to be asked to be included in our Annual Report.

Mr Nasser said "PCAS has been life changing, the light in the darkness and hope for me". He is devoted to his dog **Barney** who photo bombed this picture!

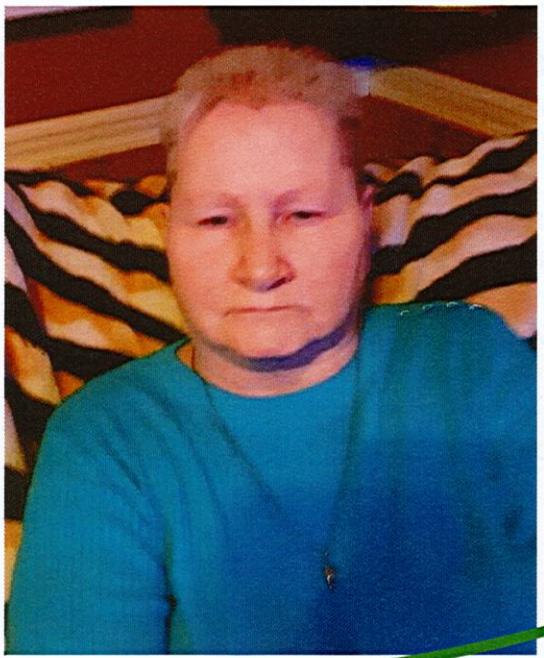
For people in my situation, this service is priceless and precious and I can't explain just how important it is.

I have a neurological condition which leads to cognitive, memory and physical impairment. I need help to access other services, form filing, checking my post, financial help, help with telephone calls and care issues. But most of all to get my voice heard by others. I will continue to need this help as my condition progresses.

I have trouble communicating which is related to my medication, if not administered correctly it has drastic concequeses. I have tremors & spasms. I don't have any family or friends. Talking to my advocate is therapeutic, she is the only person I trust. I have memory problems, am unable to complete forms myself and ensure reviews of health & care take place.

Jackie has made Doctors appointments, arranged my stairlft service, ensures bills and correspondence are up to date, files letters etc. She has arranged adaptations and checks on my welfare. Most importantly to me, Jackie made sure that my dog Barney was included in my domiciliary care plan- he means everything to me.

Care provider – fridge left open by carer & food ruined. Many missed calls
Change of neck fob pendent alarm to watch style alarm.
His medication is delivered.



# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES



My client has MS and no longer able to walk. I applied to an MS Charity that I found online and they agreed to fund a power pack for her wheelchair. This has made it much easier for agency carers or her daughter to take her out on her social visit to town each week as there are two hills to negotiate and they had been struggling to push her wheelchair. I also challenged the incontinence pads that were being supplied to her as they were not absorbent enough and she was constantly wet, especially in the mornings which she found embarrassing and humiliating. After a lot of heated discussion, it was agreed that a more effective but much more expensive pad would be provided for night time use only and this has made things a lot better for her.

I asked for an OT review as she had fallen out of her armchair on a couple of occasions and often seemed uncomfortable when I visited her. Her feet were swelling and there was some breakdown of her skin and I requested she be provided with a rise and recline chair. This was eventually agreed and my client has been informed that her chair will be delivered in the next couple of days. She has temporarily had to stay in bed until the chair is in place which has meant she has been unable to go out for her weekly Costa Coffee which is the highlight of her week, as she is well known in the town and lots of people stop to have a chat with her which she thoroughly enjoys. Despite being stuck in bed, she still managed a smile!

SHREWSBURY FOOD BANK



I recently visited a client who has severe anxiety. She was experiencing a shortfall in her finances so struggling to afford food that week. I helped her to make an application to the local food bank. Whilst with the client, I completed the online referral form to the food bank on my mobile phone and got a positive response straight away via a text to my client, which meant the client could collect a food parcel later on that same day, for which she was very grateful.

Client feedback. "I am grateful for Wendy`s help and very reassured when she visits to help me with my post or with contacting other agencies or organisations which I struggle with due to my mental health and anxiety. I always say everyone should have a Wendy!"

## CASE STUDY – 73 year old with a recent diagnosis of dementia needed support to navigate moving house

Housing Association needed possession of my client`s property, so he had a few options to consider and some important decisions to make that would impact his life.

- Where he was going to move to?
- Who would support him to do this?
- Who would support with the bureaucracy of moving?
- Who would ensure his voice was heard and treated fairly?

PCAS supported the client to ensure his voice was heard, he had clear information in a format he understood, and enabled an informed choice for his future home.

Previous address was not in a good state of repair, and he clearly needed support going forward.

He was offered three options of where to live, it was very important to give the client the time to process what this would mean for him. The three options were in different villages, and I made sure that I discussed all of the options with him, including transport links, family links, local shops, GP surgery to name a few.

He found this process quite challenging, the Housing Association were trying to push things on a bit quicker than his abilities allowed, this is where PCAS step in to explain to the Housing Association that his disability needed to be recognized and that a decision would be made when he had time to process the information, going at the clients pace.

With the time afforded to him, he agreed on one of the options and PCAS supported him to transition to his new address. It was a new build, supported living bungalow – he has since moved in and is making good progress with his new property.

PCAS continue to support the client, as he will need ongoing help with his paperwork, letters, keeping an eye on bills and any unforeseen issues.





# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES



I have a client who has just been diagnosed with a severe sight impairment.

I have helped her liaise with the RNIB who are offering remote telephone support. They have been able to get my client a Certificate of Visual Impairment signed off by her consultant. By scanning this document and uploading it for her, it has allowed me to support my client to ask for a change of circumstances of her PIP award which she has been granted.

It also meant that I could use her certificate to expedite her Blue Badge renewal which I had submitted previously using her current PIP award. She had already been waiting some weeks by using the CVI it helped speed up the process. Her blue badge was duly awarded and has come quickly in the post. She has also been able to get a Disabled Person Bus Pass now she has her certificate of sight impairment.

I am also liaising with the benefit advisor at RNIB to provide the documentary evidence she needs to get my client care contribution accurately calculated. This will hopefully help reduce the cost.

Client says she is grateful for the practical help I have given in liaising with the RNIB and helping get her paperwork sorted to get her new higher rate award of PIP, Blue Badge and Bus pass.

My clients are an elderly married couple. Mrs S has severe physical disabilities and previously received a substantial care package at home. When this fell apart she was moved into a Nursing Home close to their marital home and she has now resided there for over two years. Her husband would visit her regularly.

When I became involved Mr S had also moved into the Nursing Home and was self-funding. This was due to a deterioration in his physical and mental health and neighbours had become concerned about him as he was having panic attacks and knocking on their doors in the middle of the night as he thought someone was in the house. He was also not managing to feed himself properly and leaving food to go mouldy and he was quite unsteady on his feet. He had his Driving License taken away following concerns from his GP.

At this point, a Social Worker informed Mrs S that a care agency had been found that could cover her care needs back at home (4 visits per day x 2 carers) and the plan was that she would go home. Another Social Worker had assessed Mr S and the plan was for him to go home without a care package.

They were both very nervous about this but seemed to think they had no choice but to go along with this plan. Mrs S was very concerned that Mr S was no longer fit enough to provide her with any support at home when the agency carers were not present and she felt much safer in the Nursing Home. However, she felt that she couldn't let him go home by himself as he would not be able to cope. Mr S also wanted to stay in the Nursing Home.

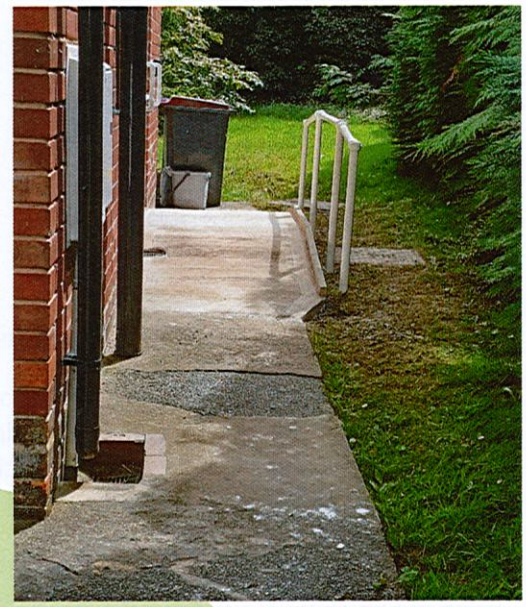
We talked through all the possible options/scenarios and the fact that they would have to sell their house which would mean they would both be self-funding until their capital reduced below the limit.

A new Social Worker was appointed to work with both of them who initially visited Mrs S to talk about when she would go home and the new Care Agency start. I explained to him that both Mr and Mrs S wished to remain in the Nursing Home. He did say "that's a lot of work for me" but took on board the request and did ask if I was willing to assist writing the Support Plan for Mr S to help identify his care needs.

Unfortunately, Mr S has had a fall during the night recently and has broken his hip. He has now had surgery and is back at the Nursing Home but unable to walk and is using a wheelchair. This setback for Mr S should however make it much easier for care needs to be identified so that Shropshire Council will provide funding when this couples capital diminishes and they are no longer self-funding.

# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES





Client is wheelchair dependent and was not able to access the community or attend dental appointments etc., due to the difficulties with access to and from her property.

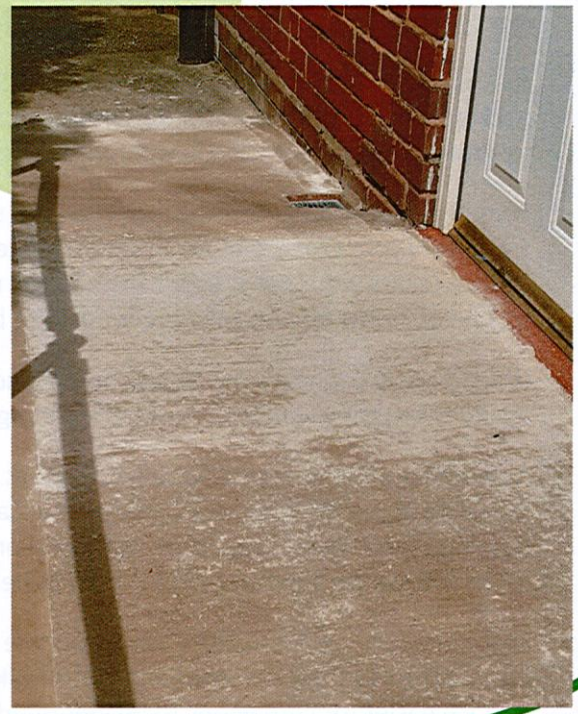
Referral made to W H Group and assessment completed by OT after many discussion as to whether they should provide the access. However I reminded them of the clients Equality & Human Rights to:-

Accessible Housing
Equal Access to Healthcare – without a ramp this was becoming impossible unless ambulance transport was used
Being Part of the community – with the ramp now is situ., the client can interact within the community attend groups or go shopping with the support from a carer.

The client is extremely pleased with the outcome.

**Kathleen, Client**





# IMPACT SECTION – CASE STUDIES



It is inevitable that at times we lose some of our clients, sometimes it is expected, and other times it seems so unfair.

I recently lost one of my younger clients who was a stroke survivor. He was fiercely independent, and overcame lots of issues that his disability came with.

He was affected by significant communication issues around his speech after his stroke, which was very frustrating for him. Lots of impromptu terrible drawing from both him and myself at times, to try and work out what he was saying! A sense of humour is vital in this job, and sometimes helps to lighten the mood. He remained very independent, living out in the community, refusing any social care involvement, but was happy to work with myself.

Such a shame that he was diagnosed with cancer, and only lived for another few short weeks after that.

However, PCAS did make a positive difference to him, his family lived in South Wales, and with his consent, I was in touch with his Mum, who valued PCAS support enormously – we were here for him when his Mum was so far away.

PCAS was enormously touched when his funeral donations were donated to us, which will help someone else in need.

**Thank You, from a deceased clients parents:**

Just a big thank you for all that you have done for Darren over the years, I know how hard he could be. I said to the boys, if there were more people like you around, it would be a better world. Judith, Joanne & Family.

# Our dedicated Advocacy Staff



Simon Arthur, Wendy Timmis, Lynne Davis, Maura Atterbury, Jackie Copson & Glenda Crawshaw

PCAS passed our NEW QPM award in July 2023, which is our 3rd continued (2016, 2020) QPM award. We are very proud to have passed once again. Many things have changed over the years to reflect the change in the way Advocacy Services are provided.

Below taken from the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM)

**The QPM is only awarded to organisations who can demonstrate that they provide excellent services in line with QPM standards and the advocacy charter. The QPM is a quality assurance assessment for providers of independent advocacy in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.**

Advocacy QPM AWARD

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a foundation model constitution for a CIO.

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and is a registered charity (number 1187362)

PCAS supports any person aged 18 or over with ANY disability or multiple disabilities.

There is no charge to our clients for our service, which is something we feel very strongly about. Our clients are often the most vulnerable in society, many having multiple disabilities and who do not fit into the remit of other services.

## Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

Prospective trustees come from all walks of life. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please contact the PCAS office on 01691 658008. An informal chat about what we do is the first step, then you would fill in an application form if you are still interested. From there, you would meet a couple of Trustees, and the current board would then vote on your prospective application.

The Board of Trustees meet bi-monthly and at other times deemed necessary. Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no payment for their work/time. They are from a variety of backgrounds and bring varied skills and experience to the Board. We currently have 2 clients, people with disabilities themselves and those with a professional background. The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and meets the charitable outcomes. Day to day operational decisions are taken by the PCAS Manager and staff of the organisation, within the delegated authority conferred by the Board.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error, this has been done.

## Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning the activities for the year.

# Trustees and Principle Officers

## Trustees

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chair** | Benjamin Payne |
| **Vice Chair** | Clare Harris |
| **Treasurer** | Doreen Ellis |
| **Trustee** | Russell Jones |
| **Trustee** | Neil Pulker |
| **Trustee** | Jacob Ayre |

## Staff – PCAS

| | |
|---|---|
| **PCAS Manager/Advocate** | Simon Arthur |
| **Assistant Manager/Shropshire Advocate** | Glenda Crawshaw |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Wendy Timmis |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Jackie Copson |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Lynne Davis |
| **T & W Advocate** | Maura Atterbury |
| **Evaluation Manager** | Allisone Arthur |

## Professional Advisors

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bank** | Unity Trust Bank |
| **Building Society,** | The West Bromwich |
| **Independent Examiners** | Border Accountants<br>5 Lower Brook Street, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 2HG |

Dated: 30th October 2024.

# Financial Review

## Reserves Policy

The free reserves of the charity were £60,614 at the year end and the Trustees consider this amount to be sufficient for their immediate operating requirements. Included in the £60,614 is £40,000 which has been designated for operating costs should funding cease to allow the charity to continue to function whilst further funding is applied for.

## Principal Funding Sources

The charity has been funded by various grants this year from:
The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)
The Henry Smith Charity
Private Donation
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Select Healthcare
Nationwide Community Grants

The above funders and supporters are the backbone of our charity and without their generous funding we would not be able to provide the service we do.

## Future Developments

We continuously strive to develop our services in order to meet the need of our clients. Funding is always an issue. However, we endeavour to be proactive as we fight for the rights of our vulnerable client group.

## The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees

.....
**Ben Payne - Chair**

**Date:** 30-10-24

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of PCAS – Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service For the year ended 31st March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statement of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

## Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

## Independent examiner's statement

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2 The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3 The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

J.M. Ollier

JONATHAN OLLIER F.C.A.

**Border Accounts**

5 Lower Brook Street
Oswestry
Shropshire
SY11 2HG
United Kingdom

**Dated:** 30th October 2024.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

## INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Total funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | | | |
| Donations and Legacies | 3 | 3,443 | - | 3,443 | 4,117 | - | 4,117 |
| Charitable Activities | 4 | - | 197,830 | 197,830 | - | 173,841 | 173,841 |
| Investments | 5 | 750 | - | 750 | 300 | - | 300 |
| **Total Income** | | 4,193 | 197,830 | 202,023 | 4,417 | 173,841 | 178,258 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 6 | 209 | 187,865 | 188,074 | (46) | 184,920 | 184,874 |
| Other | 9 | - | 6,000 | 6,000 | - | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| **Total Expenditure** | | 209 | 193,865 | 194,074 | (46) | 190,920 | 190,874 |
| **Net income/(expenditure) For the year/ Net movement in funds** | | 3,984 | 3,965 | 7,949 | 4,463 | (17,079) | (12,616) |
| Fund balances at 1st April 2023 | | 56,779 | 29,702 | 86,481 | 52,316 | 46,781 | 99,097 |
| **Fund balances at 31st March 2024** | | 60,763 | 33,667 | 94,430 | 56,779 | 29,702 | 86,481 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

## Balance Sheet

| | Notes | 2024 £ | 2024 £ | 2023 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **11** | | 149 | | 199 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 132,535 | | 148,764 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling Due within one year** | **12** | (38,254) | | (62,482) | |
| Net current assets | | | 94,281 | | 86,282 |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | | 94,430 | | 86,481 |
| **Income funds** | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | **14** | | 33,667 | | 29,702 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | | |
| Designated funds: | | | | | |
| Shut down fund | | 40,000 | | 40,000 | |
| General unrestricted funds | **15** | 40,000<br>20,763 | | 40,000<br>16,779 | |
| | | | 60,763 | | 56,779 |
| | | | 94,430 | | 86,481 |

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 30-10-24

Trustee

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1 Accounting polices

**Charity information**
Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service is a charitable incorporated organisation.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's (governing document), the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable o in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements report on the income for Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service CIO and Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service under the Merger Accounting method as set out in SORP FRS 102 section 27.12-27.13

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, (modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value). The principal accounting polices adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purpose and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

### 1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STSTEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**1 Accounting polices**

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

**1.5 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of asset's use.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fixtures and fittings | 25% reducing balance |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

**1.7 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such loss indication exits, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

**1.8 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

**Basic financial assets**

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financial transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### 1 Accounting polices

***Basic financial liabilities***
Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***
Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

### 1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee to provide termination benefits.

### 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

### 3 Donations and legacies

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Donations and gifts | 3,443 | 4,117 |

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)**

**4 Charitable activities**

| | Counselling & Advocacy 2024 £ | Counselling & Advocacy 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Services provided under contract | 197,830 | 173,841 |

**5 Investments**

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Interest receivable | 750 | 300 |

**6 Charitable activities**

| | Counselling & Advocacy 2024 £ | Counselling & Advocacy 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Staff costs | 168,304 | 166,601 |
| Depreciation and impairment | 50 | 66 |
| Rent | 6,343 | 5,680 |
| Insurance | 802 | 690 |
| Telephone | 2,065 | 3,035 |
| Postage and stationery | 2,252 | 4,552 |
| Light and heat | 2,453 | 3,416 |
| Repairs and renewals | 374 | 557 |
| Subscriptions | - | 149 |
| Sundry | 160 | 128 |
| Marketing | 5,271 | - |
| | 188,074 | 184,874 |
| | 188,074 | 184,874 |
| **Analysis by fund** | | |
| Unrestricted funds | 209 | (46) |
| Restricted funds | 187,865 | 184,920 |
| | 188,074 | 184,874 |

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)**

**7 Trustees**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration on benefits from the charity during the year.

**8 Employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | 2024 Number | 2023 Number |
|---|---|---|
| | 7 | 8 |

| Employment cost | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Wages and salaries | 146,284 | 146,028 |

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

**9 Other**

| | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Accountancy | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | 6,000 | 6,000 |

**10 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

| | Fixtures and fittings £ |
|---|---|
| **Cost** | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 2,376 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 2,376 |
| **Depreciation and impairment** | |
| At 1 April 2023 | 2,227 |
| At 31 March 2024 | 2,227 |
| **Carrying amount** | |
| At 31 March 2024 | 149 |
| At 31 March 2023 | 199 |

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

| | Notes | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deferred income | 13 | 36,754 | 61,982 |
| Accruals and deferred income | | 1,500 | 500 |
| | | 38,254 | 62,482 |

**13 Deferred income**

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Other deferred income | 36,754 | 61,982 |

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Deferred income is included within: | | |
| Current liabilities | 36,754 | 61,982 |

Movements in the year:

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

## 13 Deferred income

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Deferred income at 1 April 2023 | 61,982 | 93,681 |
| Released from previous periods | (61,982) | (93,681) |
| Resources deferred in the year | 36,754 | 61,982 |
| Deferred income at 31 March 2024 | 36,754 | 61,982 |

## 14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpected balances of donations and grants held on trust for the specific purposed:

| | Balance at 1 April 2022 £ | Movement in funds: Incoming resources £ | Movement in funds: Resources expended £ | Balance at 1 April 2023 £ | Movement in funds: Incoming resources £ | Movement in funds: Resources expended £ | Balance at 31 March 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Garfield Weston | 10,026 | 10,000 | (18,662) | 1,364 | - | - | 1,364 |
| Henry Smith | 2,498 | 17,933 | (18,870) | 1,561 | 53,800 | (46,838) | 8,523 |
| Trusthouse | 992 | 6,667 | (7,216) | 443 | - | - | 443 |
| Private | 14,884 | - | (10,168) | 4,716 | - | - | 4,716 |
| Reaching Communities | 3,795 | 111,908 | (109,363) | 6,340 | 114,034 | (115,067) | 5,307 |
| Nationwide | - | 25,000 | (24,615) | 385 | 25,000 | (25,340) | 45 |
| Others | 14,586 | 2,332 | (2,025) | 14,893 | 4,996 | (6,620) | 13,269 |
| | 46,781 | 173,840 | (190,919) | 29,702 | 197,830 | (193,865) | 33,667 |

## 15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

| | Balance at 1 April 2022 £ | Movement in funds Incoming resources £ | Balance at 1 April 2023 £ | Movement in funds Incoming resources £ | Balance at 31 March 2024 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shut down fund | 40,000 | - | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| | 40,000 | - | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)**

**16 Analysis of net assets between funds**

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by: | | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 149 | - | 149 | 199 | - | 199 |
| Current assets (liabilities) | 60,614 | 33,667 | 94,281 | 56,579 | 29,703 | 86,282 |
| | 60,763 | 33,667 | 94,430 | 56,778 | 29,703 | 86,481 |

**17 Related party transactions**

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 – none).

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of PCAS – Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service For the year ended 31st March 2024

## Independent Examiners

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that Border Accountants be re-appointed as independent examiners for the ensuing year.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of our Registered Charity, as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and applications, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements; and

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Registered Charity and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Registered Charities Act of 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Registered Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Disclosure

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is not any relevant accounting information of which the charities examiners are unaware. Additionally, the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the Charity's examiners are aware of said information.

**This Annual Report was designed and compiled by Allisone Arthur**

## Thank You to all our funders and donors

The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)

Private Donation

Nationwide Community Grants

Arnold Clark Community Fund

Lloyds Bank Foundation

The Henry Smith Charity

Select Healthcare

Wesleyan Winter of Giving

Tesco Community Grant

Wynn Foundation

Sir Robert McAlpine

Other Donations

PCAS
Person Centred
Advocacy & Support

Together We Can

**Contact Us:** You can follow us on Facebook or twitter: **@ShropshirePCAS**

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service is a registered charity (Registered charity number 1187362)

# Our Contact Details :-

## PCAS (Person Centred Advocacy & Support)

**Suite 1**
**The Willow Tree**
**Willow Street**
**Oswestry**
**SY11 1AJ**

**Telephone: 01691 658008**

**Web Site: www.shropshirepcas.co.uk**

**Email: simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk (PCAS Manager)**
**alli@shropshirepcas.co.uk (Evaluation Manager)**

PCAS
Person Centred
Advocacy & Support
Together We Can

**Contact Us:** You can follow us on Facebook or twitter: **@ShropshirePCAS**

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service is a registered charity (Registered charity number 1187362)

**SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187362

# Accounts

PCAS

Here when you need us

**Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service**

Registered Charity Number **1187362**

Advocacy QPM AWARD

# Annual report of the CIO for year ending 31 March 2023

**Generic Advocacy Service** helping people with any disability including multiple disabilities locally

Help you make informed choices

We offer long-term help and support

Support you in meetings

Help to manage your money




Support you to find information

Help access other services you need

We come to you

**We are a free and independent service**

# Contents:

What is Idependent Advocacy? ..... Page 3
Background to PCAS and what we do ..... Page 4
Mission Stetment and Aims ..... Page 4
Benefits of Advocacy ..... Page 5
**Our Trustees** ..... Page 6
**Welcome from the Manager – Simon Arthur** ..... Page 7-11
Allisone Arthur – Evaluation Manager ..... Page 12
**Annual Statistics** ..... Page 13-17
Satisfaction Quesstionnaire Comments & Email Support ..... Page 18-19
**Our Advocates** ..... Page 20-25
**Advocates Case Studies** ..... Page 26-37
Client Seenario ..... Page 38
WYNN Foundation & Select Thanks ..... Page 39
Structure, Goverance and Management ..... Page 40
Trustees and Pricipal Officers ..... Page 41
Financial Review ..... Page 42
**PCAS Contact Details** ..... Page 43
Independent Examiner's Report ..... Page 44
Financial Statements ..... Page 45-54
Statement of Disclosure ..... Page 55
**Thanks to our Funders and Donors** ..... Page 56



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

At some point in our lives, most of us will need an Advocate. You may need help to make a difficult phone call, need someone who can write a letter, or someone to attend with you, at a difficult meeting.

In many cases, the Advocate is a friend or family member, for others, it may be a nurse or social worker. **But what if you don't have any of these people to help?** Or the problem relates in some way to your family, G.P, or social worker? This is where independent Advocacy can help, an Advocate will support you to speak up for yourself as they are ONLY there for you and have no ties to other agencies or people in your life. An Advocate helps you to get the information you need to make real choices about your circumstances, supporting you to put your choices to others.

**PCAS assists with:**

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discredited against or whom services find difficult to serve.
- Supporting disabled people at risk of losing their tenancy
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions.
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known.
- Care issues, accommodation, financial management and paperwork
- Supporting at meetings and long term support in order to stay living in their own homes for longer.
- PCAS can speak on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.
- PCAS helps people with Mental Health needs, something we have done for 28 years now.
- PCAS helps clients through Adult Safeguarding processes.
- Child Protection/child in need work.

It is important to recognise that an effective Advocate will use their knowledge, experience and skills to enable their client to have the best life possible. This might mean the Advocate telling the client about options that the client has never thought of themselves.

It is also an Advocates job to be realistic with their client, as not all things a client may want will be possible.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# BACKGROUND TO PCAS AND WHAT WE DO

PCAS Advocacy Service was started in 1995 by Shropshire Disability Consortium to provide a community based independent advocacy service for people with ANY disability over the age of 18 in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

PCAS was set up by disabled people who recognised a need for individuals to be supported to ensure their voice was heard. PCAS is committed to ensuring individuals are as involved as they can be in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to raise awareness of a person's rights and ensure they are safeguarded against in instances where people are unable to do so for themselves.

PCAS is a registered charity, to maintain its independence it is managed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of individuals who have an interest in and a commitment to the work PCAS does. The Board hold a strategic role, having responsibility to oversee effective governance by ensuring PCAS meets it legal and charitable obligations.

## *Our Mission Statement Is:*

***PCAS provides independent advocacy for adults with any disability, physical, sensory, learning or mental health. We aim to be the Service of Choice, to secure clients' rights, services, and to ensure they are listened to, empowered and treated with respect. We further aim to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or ethnicity.***

## We Aim to:

Assist disabled persons primarily, but not exclusively, living or working within the Counties of Shropshire and Powys, through the provision of Advocacy and information.

- Be recognised as the "Go to" service for Advocacy support
- Enable disabled people to make informed choices
- Promote independence and choice of disabled people through the provision of information
- Provide a service enabling the opportunity for people to take control of their own lives
- Challenge decisions made on behalf of people which they disagree with
- To listen to and engage with a client and actively involve them in any action PCAS assists with

We also have a set of priorities that we use to plan what we want to achieve every year.

This year we have continued to develop our service to meet the growing needs of local people who are requiring more long term assistance with their finances, enabling disabled people to stay living in their own homes for longer.

**PCAS Website** www.shropshirepcas.co.uk



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Benefits of Advocacy

The benefits of advocacy are far reaching.

- Advocacy gives a vulnerable disabled person a voice when they feel no one is listening to them.
- They have someone who is independent from all the statutory services and not controlled by government pressures to save money.
- Someone who will listen to the client, find out what the problems are, work with the client to sort out the problems.
- Building a good rapport with the client builds their self-esteem and confidence and can alleviate depression and anxiety, thus improving their mental health and wellbeing.
- Advocacy gives a person a better quality of life through simple little things for instance, reading their post and explaining the contents to someone who is dyslexic means the world to them.
- When someone is being abused they are in a really bad place. Very often they do not realise they are being abused until someone points out that it is wrong for someone to take your money and leave you without enough to pay your bills or buy food. Once the client has gone through the safeguarding process and realises they can have a good quality of life with the money they have coming in we see a totally different person, one who is now enjoying life because they can get out and go for a coffee or go shopping themselves. They now have a good quality of life, and with the safety net of having an advocate who they have built up a good working relationship they know where to go if they need help in the future.
- Very often the clients we help have no one else to help them. This means that the advocate is someone they can talk to about the worries, fears or problems they are having. This is far reaching because our advocate can discuss these worries, fears and problems and if we cannot help we always find someone who can. This circle of support helps the client move forward with their life.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Our Trustees



Peter Quinn - CHAIR



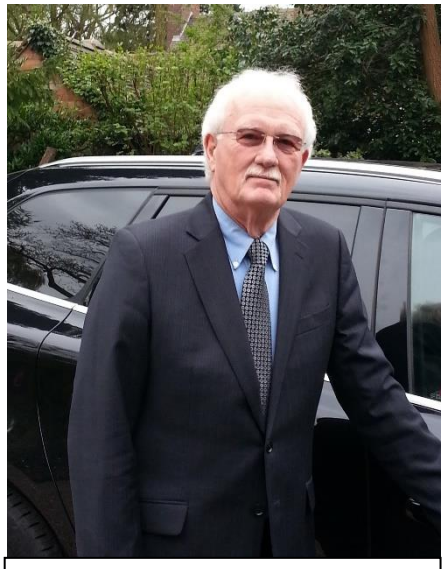
Clare Harris – Vice CHAIR



Doreen Ellis - TREASURER



Russ Jones - TRUSTEE



Neil Pulker - TRUSTEE




Ben Payne - TRUSTEE



Jacob Ayre - TRUSTEE



Registered Charity Number 1187362



# Welcome from the Manager – Simon Arthur

Hi everyone we are approaching our 28th Birthday on 1st April 2023, in fact by the time you read this we will be halfway to 29. No mean feat for a small charity like ours, especially given all the hurdles we have had to get over somehow over the years. For instance, breaking away from the Shropshire Disability Consortium (SDC) in 2004 and taking the leap into the unknown by setting up as a registered charity, we had to do this otherwise we would have closed down like SDC, and the work we do, was and still is, so very important for vulnerable disabled people living in Shropshire and Telford. Without all the support from our funders who recognise how important what we do is, we would have struggled to stay open for this long. I and all the staff and Trustees of PCAS thank all our funders past and present for your continuing support in making PCAS the success it is. 28 years later and here we are, PCAS started in 1995 in our first year we helped 30 people, this year we have helped 325. From small acorns great Oak trees grow, this is what has happened for us.

We have helped 325 people this year, a lower number than last year's 368, but with more long term help needed and more difficult cases coming through to us; for instance, Adult Safeguarding, Child Protection and Financial management (helping to ensure the person can stay living in their own home) with help paying bills setting up direct debits, making sure people do pay bills, this keeps them out of debt and in a tenancy. We have helped these clients with 5004 issues that are affecting their lives, this is an increase in issues from the previous year of 436, working out at an average of 15 issues per person, this is again an increase from an average of 12 issues per person last year.

I guess this has something to do with recovering from the pandemic and this year the cost of living crisis, putting even more pressure on our client groups, who are constantly fighting to keep their heads above water.

After 28 years we continue to have the same goal we were originally set up for in 1995. Namely helping the most vulnerable people in our society, who have any disability, to have a better quality of life, with the help and support they need.

Once again I need to thank the amazing team we have at PCAS our team of amazing workers and trustees, have put so much time and effort in this year, as many of them have for many years now, so we can help people as best we can.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

People's Mental Health has suffered greatly; over the last 3 years we have noticed a big increase in referrals coming into us that are mentioning the client has Mental Health needs. It is good that this is coming more to the forefront of people's minds, because good mental health helps with all the issues people have in their lives.

As always we are so grateful to our amazing funders who support the work we do, and know what we achieve for the people we help. A huge thank you to: - The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities), The Henry Smith Charity, Nationwide Community Grants, Wynn Foundation, Baron Davenports, Tesco Community Grants, Select Healthcare and Neighbourly. Alongside other donations received this year, without all of your help, we would not have been able to do the amazing amount of work we have this year, Thank you so very much.

Over the last 28 years we have helped over **10,800** of the most vulnerable people in Shropshire and Telford to enjoy a better quality of life through working with them and alongside them, ensuring they are listened too. They understand what they are being asked, helping them through Child Protection procedures, Adult Abuse cases, Social Care issues, helping with Mental Health needs, ensuring people with multiple disabilities and complex care needs have the help and support they need to live a better quality of life.

Again this year has seen the continuing effects and fallout from the pandemic, with home working seemingly becoming more prevalent this is having an effect on referrals coming in to our service, because people that need our help, want face to face contact (see graph on following pages where 98% want face to face contact), not over the internet or through zoom or Microsoft teams, where is the personal touch there? Our clients know they are treated as individuals, listened to and valued.

Referrals have continued to grow for help through Child Protection issues, with Managing finances and budgeting and help and support for people with Mental Health needs have grown.

We continue to have a waiting list, indeed in April 2022 we had to close for new referrals as our waiting list had grown so much to over 70 people waiting for our help. Our Trustees have now set a limit of 30 before we close to any more referrals coming in, this may change over the coming year, because we are so unique in the work we do, and how we get other help and support the person needs (our workers are like a dog with a bone) they will not let go until the help is put in place and the person is getting services they need.

There is very clearly a huge gap in services and lack of help out in the community for these complex needs, and the time consuming issues, that people have.

Our work frees up valuable time for Social Care Practitioners who have huge case-loads to cope with themselves, indeed since the year 2000, referrals from Social Care Practitioners have risen from 28% then, to now being over 90% of all referrals made into our service. This clearly shows the pressure on Social Care certainly in Shropshire, I am sure it is the same around the country.

Helping our clients get services delivered in a way they can actually access is still a massive challenge, as so many of the people we help cannot get out to an office appointment, they are not digital savvy so are being "digitally excluded" (a new buzz word this year).

Although our client groups have been struggling with accessing services digitally for many years, it has now come to the front of people's thinking and planning for going forward. Watch out robots and AI are coming. Our clients really struggle with welfare benefit problems or issues to do with

managing their own money. The services being funded for benefit and money help, do need to start thinking about this, and getting out to see these people to be fully inclusive.

We will keep raising the issue through our networks and contacts in the hope one day services will have the necessary funding and workers, to help the most vulnerable who need delivery to change.

Face to face contact with people is so very important for all of us, not just our client groups, but these very people struggle to get help they desperately need because they are being pushed into online and digital that in the main, they have no idea of.

In reality many of our clients cannot use computers and access benefits online, putting them at such a disadvantage when things go wrong or they have to try and respond to requests for information, or to bid on a property. This is just not right people should have services delivered how they need them.

We have started building our social media presence through Facebook, Twitter and Linked-in. Thank you to Kim Gilmour, Simon Harris and Shrewsbury Morris Dancers for helping us build this presence, and the workers for supplying material to use.

This will help us going forward to raise the profile of PCAS, let more people know what Advocacy is, and how we can help, it will hopefully also attract attention from possible funders, donations and sponsorship, time will tell.

As with all things, time spent on this does eat into time we could spend helping clients, and that will always take priority especially with the need increasing year on year.

Funders, fundraisers and sponsors need to refocus on community services like ours, who know the people we help so well, know what really affects their day to day living and all the hurdles they have to get over just to have some sort of quality of life.

**Below I have included some examples of referrals we have received during this year: -**
**W**e have a patient with multiple health issues seeking an advocate to attend medical appointments with them. They lived abroad for a long time and due to this they sometimes find it hard to digest information, although they are an English speaker.

*"Could you please let me know if this is something you are able to offer, or if not, could you recommend another service locally that may be able to assist?"*

**M**r….. requires on-going advocacy support to keep accurate details of the hours, duration and dates that the Personal Assistant visits which is needed for the financial team within the adult social care team, without this on-going support Mr…….. may not be able to receive the personal assistant support that he requires to remain independent.

**M**y son …., aged 38, lives with me. My wife passed away in March this year, and I promised I would take care of him. He suffers from epilepsy, and takes appropriate medication. I am now 66, and my demise gets ever closer. I have registered him with Home Point, and have undertaken a care needs assessment on his behalf. He has been talking for some time about getting a flat, but I worry that he is not 'worldly wise', and has been taken advantage of in the past (financially). He works, but has no idea of utilities, Council Tax, etc. I would like to get him to a place of relative safety where there is someone who can watch over him. He does have some money, but his job for 15 years (McDonalds) does not pay particularly well. I hope there's something you can do to help?



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**I** am seeking help with dealing with financial matters, such as claiming Universal Support and my mortgage. I have recently been diagnosed with ADHD, depression and anxiety and my doctor has been notified of this.
I am not very good at asking for help, but I am struggling to get by (I am self- employed) and while I have tried to use the online benefits calculator, I'm not sure if I'm doing it right as I find numbers and filling such forms in so stressful that I avoid it.
I was advised by my assessor to make an appointment with my surgery to discuss my situation, as I am isolated in a rural area, without transport and spend almost all of my time on my own; I have few friends in Shropshire and no family to speak of, certainly not anyone I can ask for help in any matters.

In Temporary Accommodation no address.
… has been supported by care agency for the past 6 months, however this support is due to end next week – she still requires some on-going support. …. is still in temporary accommodation and requires support to secure accommodation – she has a login for home-point and is bidding on properties but has no prior knowledge of housing services and requires support to navigate this when she gets a property. …. needs further support around confidence building, motivation and resilience. Requires support to increase social network and support in the community so that she is not struggling alone. She has issues with mobility and mental health/ low mood

Male age 34
… requires your service to manage and understand the documentation from various meetings and professionals. …. child is in Local Authority care and in Court proceedings. In addition, …. has his own needs from being treated as a slave for two years, whilst working on a farm four years ago, and being the victim of Modern Slavery. …. was also hit with a hammer on his head and received only treatment for the injuries but no further support.

Female aged 30
…. requires an advocate. …. has a significant mental health difficulty. She is currently diagnosed with Persistent delusional disorder which means she struggles to hold a conversation. Struggles understanding documents and processes. … child is currently placed within Local authority foster placement. She is currently in a relationship with the father of her child who also has his needs. …. has no accommodation of her own in case her relationship breaks down she would struggle with housing …. has to attend Family time in Shropshire to maintain her relationship with her child however the last time that she left her current temporary accommodation she ended up living between her mothers in ……. and her friend's homes…. described travelling on public transport difficult and with your support she would have guidance around this and an outlet to discuss her difficulties.

Female aged 23
I am the social worker for ….. her infant, who was removed from her care shortly after his birth due to safeguarding issues. …. is seeking to have her son returned to her care and will need support in the court arena as she has trouble understanding the written documents, retaining information and understanding the outcomes of meetings/assessments. I would like an advocate for … to assist her with the above.

Male aged 20
… needs help in all involvement with care proceedings to do with the local authority. This may include attending meetings. Understanding paperwork filling in paper work



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**Below are abstracts from 2 referrals received during the last year, from Adult Safeguarding. These give an idea of the complexity of issues we help with: -**

**1.** She had a very turbulent upbringing, witnessing domestic abuse and substance misuse within the home. Many of her behaviours are learnt behaviours.
She is living in a supported living placement at the moment in…, although we are currently trying to find a new placement for her that is geared more towards mental health as opposed to learning disability.
Parents have a big influence over her, will tell her she doesn't need to listen to her social workers. That she should ask us for her money back (Client Property have deputyship for finances).
Concerns around online social media use, giving out the address online. Sending nude pictures to random men she's met online. Having sex with random males etc. New MCA being completed around this at the moment.
Lacks capacity regarding her care and support needs / accommodation.

**2**. Current safeguarding concerns regarding parents domestic abuse / coercion/ control towards ……. following disclosures last week.
…….. does not have a phone, parents have taken them off her. They have advised her that she has mental health problems, that she has a care plan so cannot do anything without their input because she will get into trouble. …… was not known to us until last week so has no care plan.
……. attends …… College and has an EHCP. Although the EHCP states she has moderate learning difficulties and special needs associated with Social and Emotional Mental Health Problems.
……(Safeguarding) and I dispute this. It is said by others that in meetings with her parents she will sit and not speak for fear of getting into trouble. How-ever in a meeting with ASC and ASG, …… was vocal about what was happening in her life right now.
Current needs at the moment relate to lack of life experience due to control of parents, believing that she has all of these things wrong with her and she doesn't.
……. ran away over the weekend following an incident with her father. She is now living at her boyfriend's parent's house in…….. No access to money, phone etc. Contact is going through boyfriend …..and Safeguarding lead at College.

I hope you have found some interesting and thought provoking information in my report, as ever if on reading our annual report you think "I would like to help" come and join us in our quest to make life easier and better for vulnerable people (they may be living next door?).



Registered Charity Number 1187362



## Allisone Arthur

## Evaluation Manager

I've been with PCAS since 2007. I originally came from Exeter in Devon, moving to Shropshire in 1988. I have a grandson with Autism who is 12, attends a special school and know he will need a service like ours one day. I hate to think there may not be any help for him by the time he needs some.

This has been a very difficult year again for everyone & especially for a small charity like ours. Our manager has been hard pressed securing funding and at one point we were on the brink of closing. Since Covid other services closed or were not accessible to our clients, getting them the help they so badly need is sometimes nigh on impossible as many services are STILL working from home. We are lucky to have a manager & advocates who are absolutely dedicated to our charity & helping the most vulnerable of people, often going over and above to do the very best for their client's.

I totally enjoy the challenges brought by our small charity, there is always something new to aim for such as the need to encapsulate statistics in a new way for our funders. I love the variety and "free hand" of organising my own workload. We are a "Team" at PCAS, which includes the Manager, all the Advocates and the support from our invaluable Trustees. As a small team, we are all dedicated and enthusiastic.

I do all the evaluation encapsulation, from building bespoke databases, financial sheets and building graphs from bespoke feedback forms. I provide all the statistics for reporting to our funders, each requiring information in a different format. I also deal with all the Advocates paperwork, inputting data, timesheets etc. This past year, there have been changes to our recording mechanisms and I have streamlined things where I can, adding lots more calculations to my excel sheets.

Take a look at our Web Site which better reflects the work we do. It is crisp and informative. We have a "Donate" button, which we hope will enable us to raise some much needed funds

I have designed and compiled this "AGM" report, so I hope you enjoy reading how busy we have been, and the benefits to those we help, which of course is the most important thing.

It is so great to work for an organisation that values all the staff and we are a fantastic supportive team, who always help each other if needed and we listen to each other, gaining lots of knowledge along the way. I have great respect for our advocates who do an amazing job.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR 2022 – 2023**

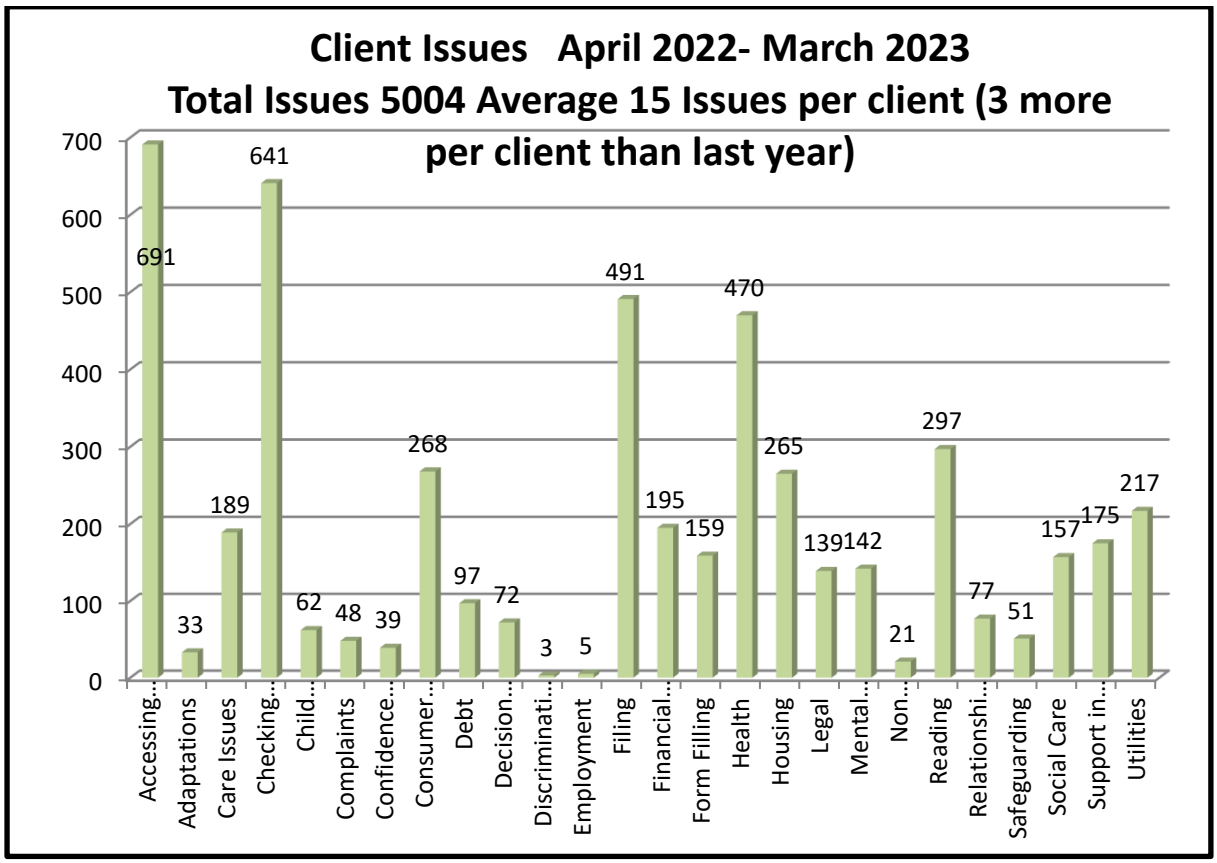
**PCAS HAS HELPED**

**325 PEOPLE**

**43 less than last year as we offer long term help and have many difficult long term cases**

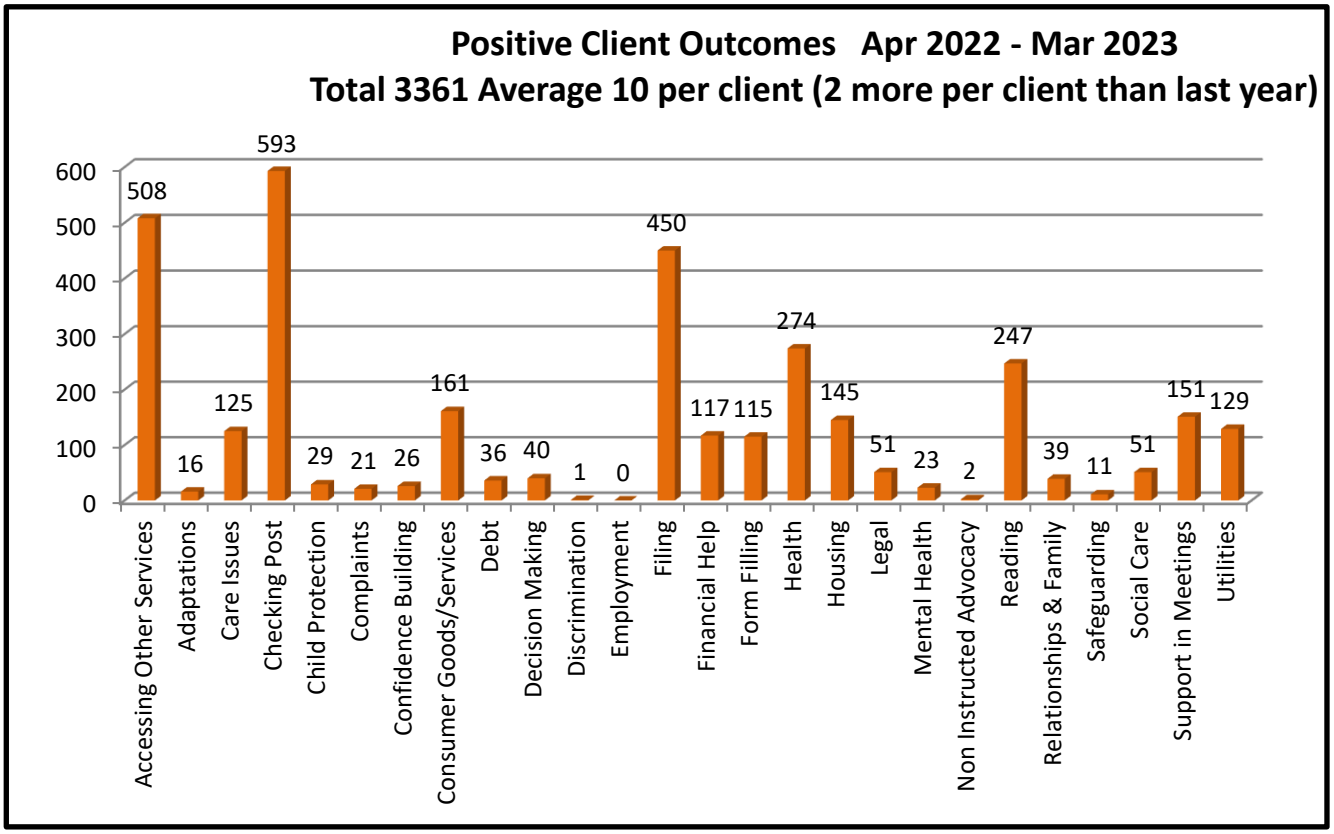
Over this financial year, PCAS has helped clients with a whopping **5004** client issues (4568 last year), so 436 more this year, which shows the complexity of cases that we have currently. This just shows how hard our advocates are working and just how much support our clients need from us and how very difficult their issues are. One wonders who else could have given them that much support.

Dividing the amount of issues (5004) by the amount of clients helped (325) gives an average of each client having **over 15 issues** each client needed help with. That's without the 2034 other services (50 more than last year) we have accessed on client's behalf to assist clients further.

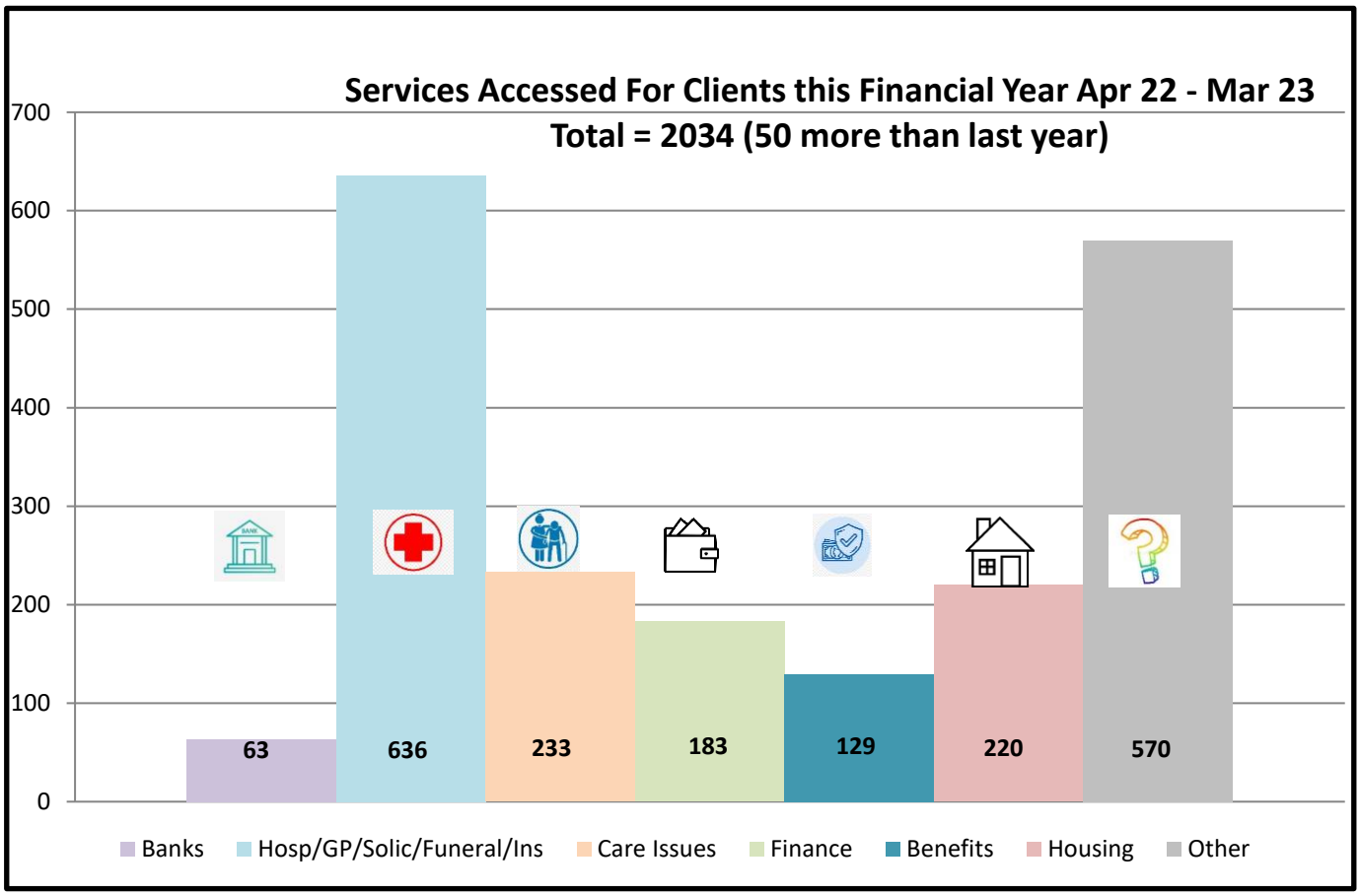


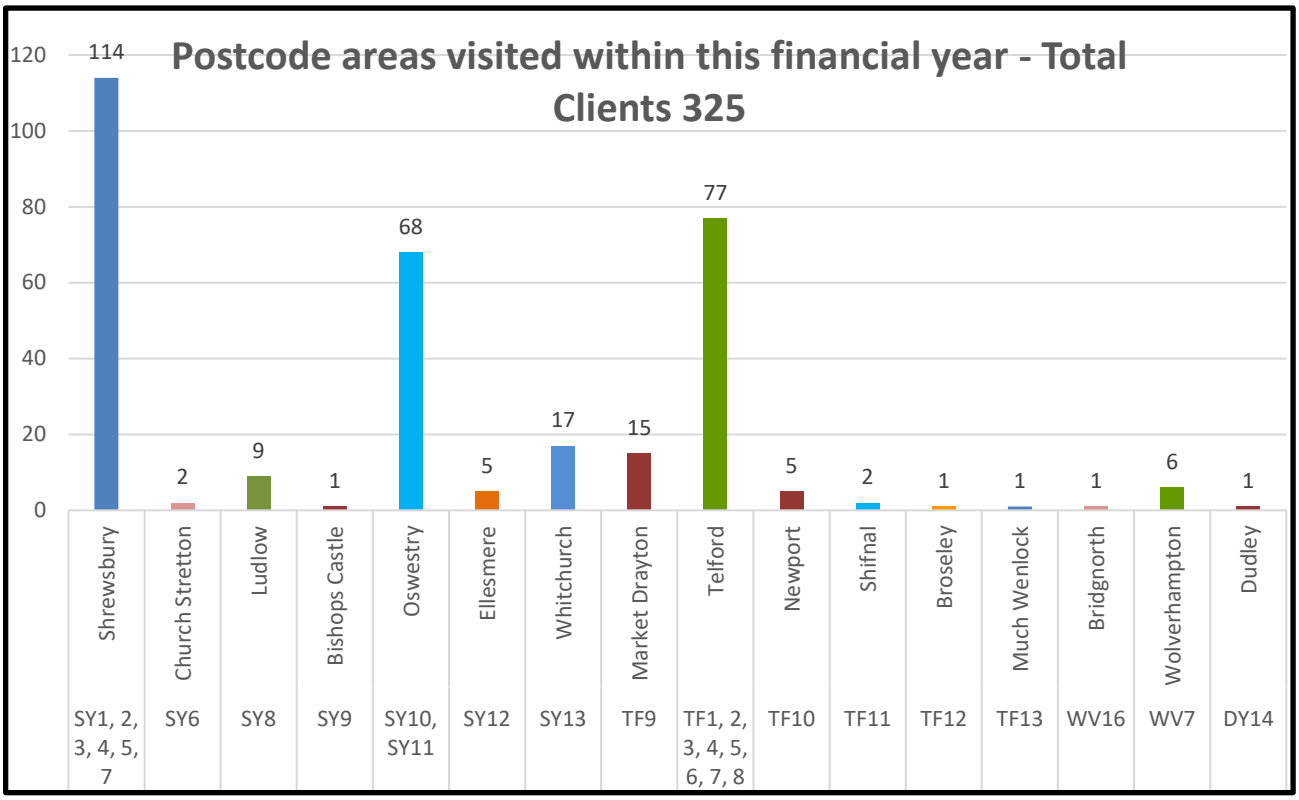



Registered Charity Number 1187362

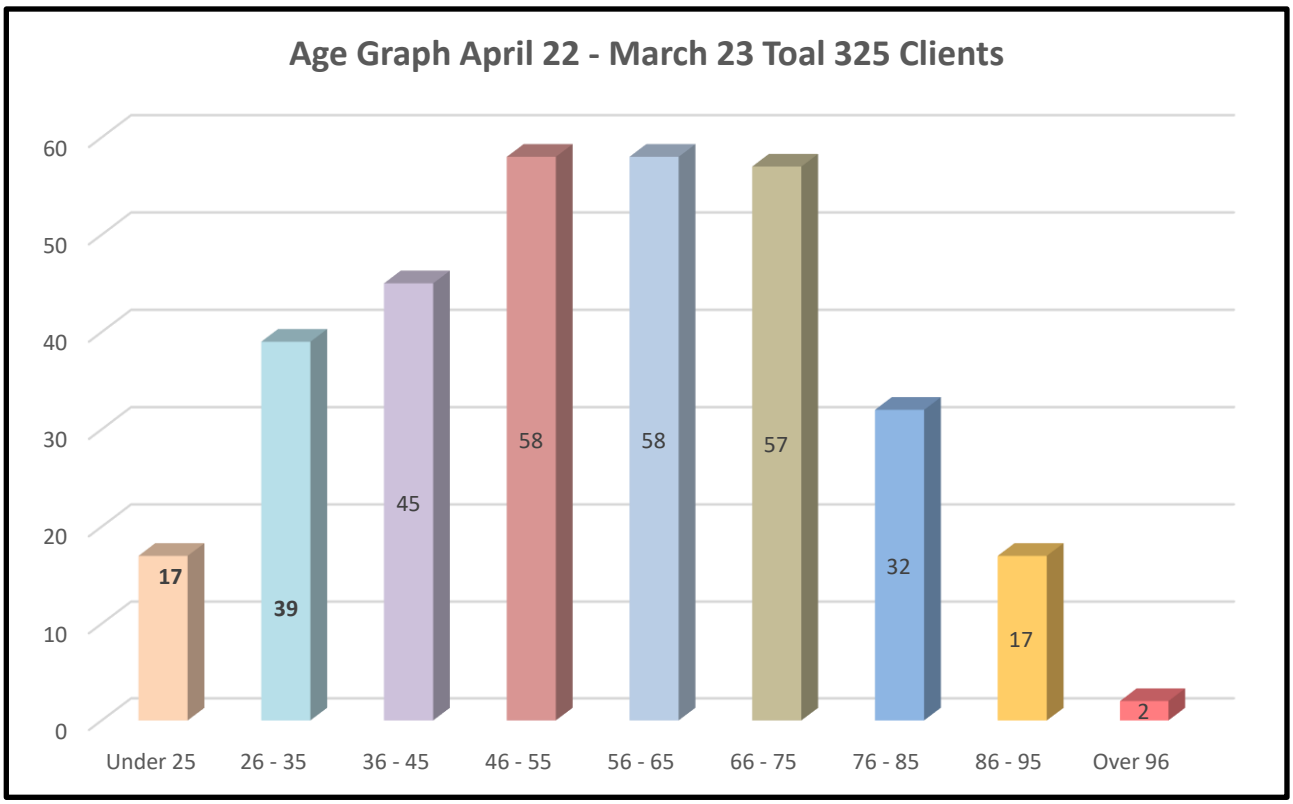



Clients often require many other services to put their life back on track, an average of 6 other services per client this year. Our Advocates are very skilled and persistent at getting other services to help their clients. There is a vast problem trying to access other services for clients, in that many are still working from home, or have closed down, or at capacity.






The above chart shows the area spread in which we have visited our clients this financial year.



## 10,556 STAFF HOURS

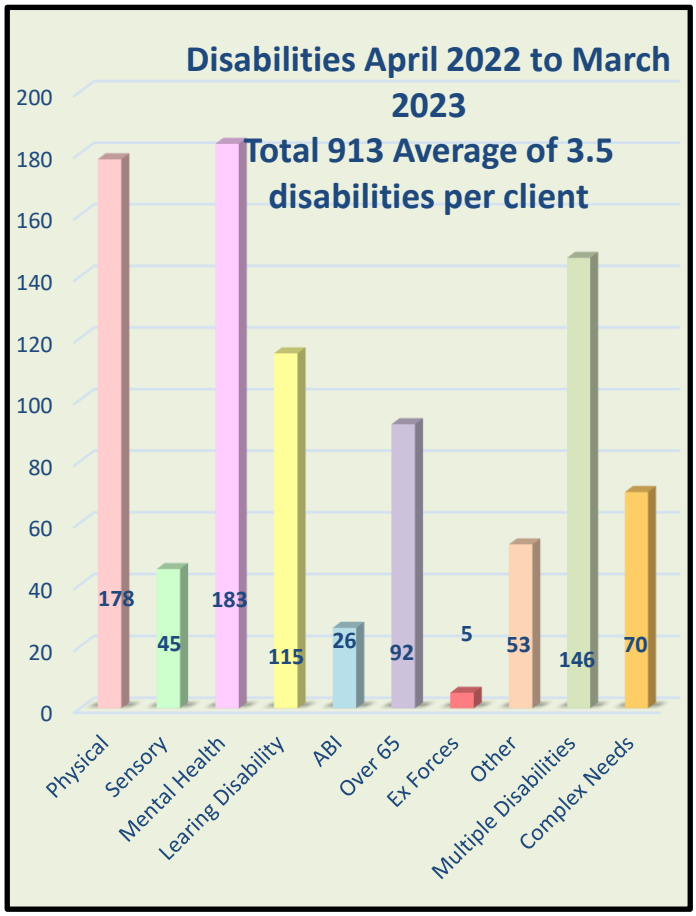


## SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## We have made 1963 individual visits to clients – 104 MORE than last year!



## Covering the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin




## WE SPENT £12.24

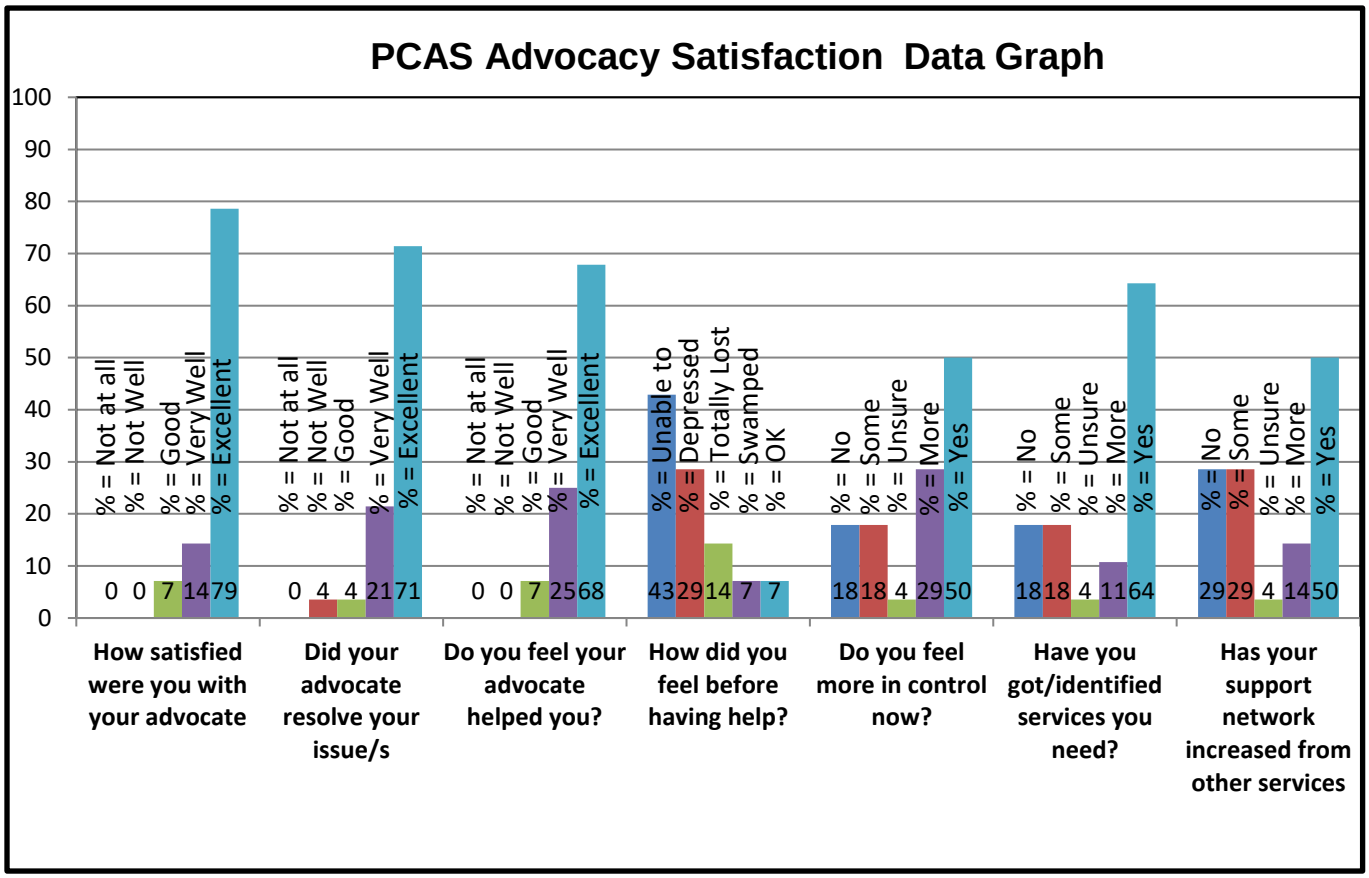
**(£1.90 more than last year)**

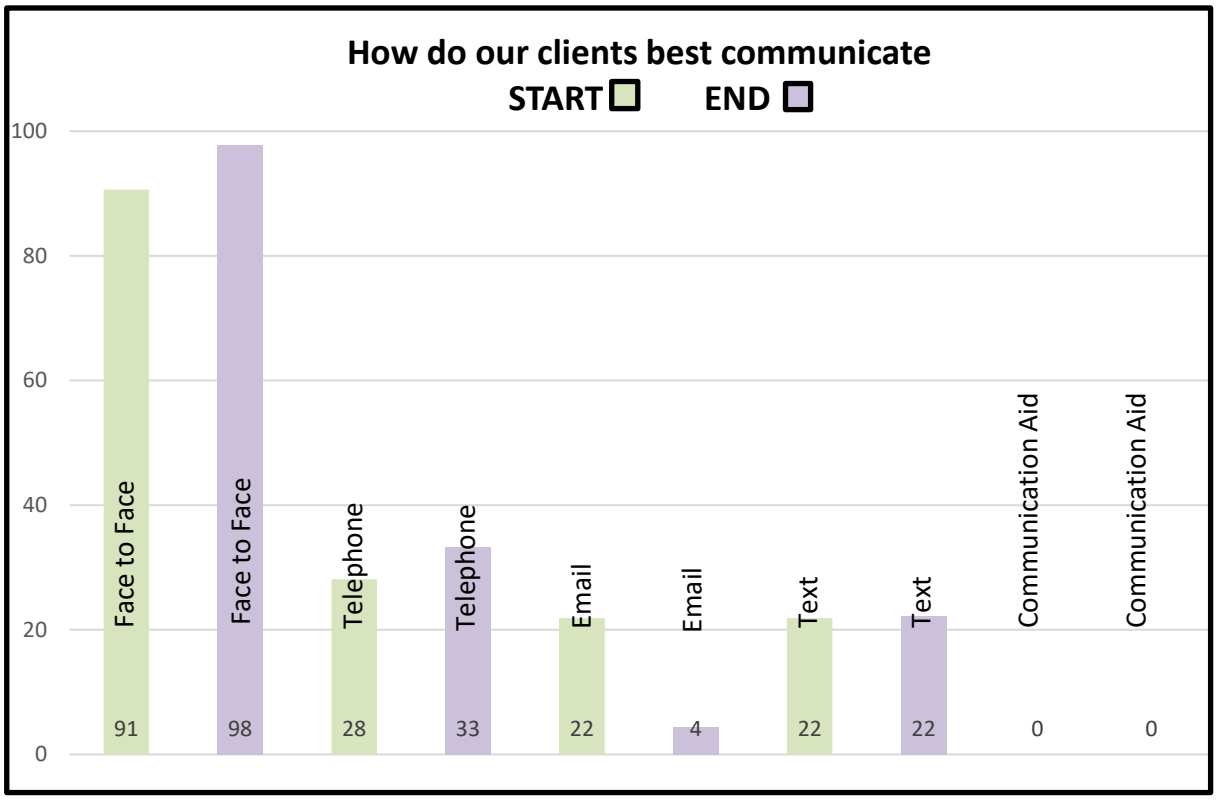


## PER PERSON PER WEEK IN SHOPSHIRE



Registered Charity Number 1187362


PCAS Advocacy Satisfaction Data Graph
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
% = Not at all
% = Not Well
% = Good
% = Very Well
% = Excellent
0 0 7 14 79
0 4 4 21 71
0 0 7 25 68
% = Unable to
% = Depressed
% = Totally Lost
% = Swamped
% = OK
43 29 14 7 7
% = No
% = Some
% = Unsure
% = More
% = Yes
18 18 4 29 50
18 18 4 11 64
29 29 4 14 50
How satisfied were you with your advocate
Did your advocate resolve your issue/s
Do you feel your advocate helped you?
How did you feel before having help?
Do you feel more in control now?
Have you got/identified services you need?
Has your support network increased from other services


How do our clients best communicate
START
END
100
80
60
40
20
0
Face to Face
91
Face to Face
98
Telephone
28
Telephone
33
Email
22
Email
4
Text
22
Text
22
Communication Aid
0
Communication Aid
0

## SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE COMMENTS

**1412 -** Supported through police investigation. I would not have been able to carry on with my allegation if not supported by PCAS

**1400 -** PCAS gave me the courage to do more for myself, before I was confused & left lost

**1202 -** I was in a really bad place, but with PCAS help I feel much better & know I can reach out to them in the future if I need too.

**1283 -** I felt as if someone was listening to the needs I needed help with, in confidence without judgement & someone I could trust, & I don't find trusting or asking for help easy. I would probably have had a breakdown or be in prison without PCAS.

**1401 -** I now have control of my benefits and finances. I have made an application to remain in the UK indefinitely. My finances & benefits would still be under the control of a family member as well as the timing of my application to stay in the UK without PCAS.

**1089 -** I have sold my property to help fund my care in a setting where I am happy & wish to remain. I now have contributions for care from the local authority & I have no debt. I would not have been able to reach this position without help from my Advocate.

**1246 -** From PCAS I have someone who will support me when I don't understand things & support me at medical appointments. I now have my continence & contraception issues sorted. I would have had more issues on top of my mental health issues without PCAS & life would be more difficult.

**1172** – I am more confident & my affairs are in better order. My mental health would be worse without PCAS help.

**1071** – I am not worried as much as I was as I now have someone I trust that I can turn to for support. Without PCAS I would be in a mess.

**1272** – I am able to manage a direct payment & I have got control of my bank accounts & debt. Without PCAS, my care package would have collapsed & my financial issues would not be sorted.

**1429** – I now know what will happen with adaptations to my home as I had help with the forms. The forms to apply for help for adaptations for my wheelchair would not have been completed & progress would not have been made. Thank you PCAS for all your help.

**1420** – I was guided through the child protection process. Without PCAS I would not have had anyone on my side.

**988** – My finances are now safeguarded from my son. Shropshire County Council has taken control of managing my finances. Without PCAS, my son may have continued to manipulate me to give him money.

**1275** – Client does not have capacity to make decisions about future move of accommodation – Best interests decision for client to stay at Woodlands near her family.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**1341** – I can now manage formal child protection meetings on my own without support. I am very grateful for the help; without you I wouldn't have been able to cope with the meetings & wouldn't have participated as I did before PCAS help.

**480** – My Advocate has supported me to get PIP & to move to more suitable accommodation. I would not be able to cope financially & I would still be living in an upstairs flat that was getting too much for me.

**1387** – My PIP is now paid directly to me instead of an appointee. Before help from my Advocate, I would have to account to my family for my spending.

**1289** – PCAS helped me with paperwork & court processes. I would have been absolutely lost & wouldn't have known what to do with my Advocate.

**1317** – I have applied for Severn Trent Trust Fund help & assistance from my Advocate, debt written off & water charges manageable now. Without help, I would have got into deeper debt & wouldn't have known what to do. Thank you, you have been brilliant.

**EMAIL Support for PCAS**

Hi Simon! I hope you are doing well 😊

Thank you so much, this is really kind and thoughtful to tell me you appreciate what we do as a collective to assist and benefit your clients.

I must say, after all my years in case management, I am slowly starting to feel tired and sad over the last couple of weeks with the press/ public. My heart goes out to these children and the life they must have lived. Truly unimaginable.

Social workers try their hardest, we don't come into this job to 'fail' anyone. We couldn't do what we do without other services just like yours Simon, so thank you. Let's all stick together; we will get through this. Thank you so much again for your lovely words
Children's Social Worker

---

Good morning Simon,
Thank you for your encouraging message. It has been very hard times for all of us and I would like to reciprocate and say thank you to all at PCAS for supporting us and our clients throughout these times also!

I was going to get in touch with you about the possibility of spending some time with one of your advocates in the new year. I am starting my final year of a social work degree (I've come a long way since Graceland's!) and from January to July, I am on my last placement and we have been advised to seek shadowing opportunities.

One of the areas I identified as having interest in, was advocacy and although, I have referred for an advocate and have an idea of what their role is, I have never directly witnessed their visits or how they support the individuals specifically to make decisions relating to their health and well-being. Would this be a possibility, if the advocate agrees and the clients agree for me to tag along please?
Kind regards

Adult Social Worker

# Our dedicated Advocacy staff



Lynne Davis, Jackie Copson, Simon Arthur (Manager), Glenda Crawshaw (Assistant Manager), Maura Atterbury, Wendy Timmis & Ann Shaw

**Glenda Crawshaw, Assistant Manager – The Challenges of Independent Advocacy**

As I write this today, it is a beautifully sunny day in June. I have just returned from visiting a 96 year old client which I have recently signed up to our service – and I am so glad that they had heard about PCAS, as they were struggling to find a service to support them.

This is no surprise to us at PCAS, as we are increasingly finding that services are stretched in most areas, and is very frustrating for both us and our clients. Phone calls to energy providers, benefit departments, and the local authority to name a few, can take up a huge amount of our time – indeed I often resort to email, as this can be a more efficient way to get results, but is not always the way the client wants to deal with things. Some like to discuss their issue with a chat.

This past year has seen some very sad losses of long-standing clients I have had for over 10 years, but also some very good positive outcomes for some clients – moving properties, which has greatly improved their mental health, challenging waiting times for medical appointments, and lots of phone calls with energy providers who have been quite unscrupulous through this energy hike recently.

We carry on doing what we do here at PCAS with care, passion and dogged determination to ensure disabled peoples' voices are heard, and as always it is a pleasure to get some positive results for our clients.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Jackie Copson, Advocate - Being an independent Advocate in 2023

As Independent Advocates we have a number of policy documents that inform and provide a framework for our day to day work.

These include The Advocacy Charter, The Advocacy code of practice and a concise list of what an Advocate does do and does not do – The Advocacy Role.

In this short piece I wish to look at two areas covered in those documents.

***"Advocates do not replace social workers, nurses or care workers, or make up for gaps in services that should be provided" (The Advocacy Role).***
***"Advocates should be clear about the nature and extent of their role.***
***They should understand the boundaries of their own advocacy role and non-advocacy roles" (Advocacy code of practice Section 1: clarity of purpose*).**

I have reflected on these statements a great deal over the past year as I have needed to support clients with issues that would not normally be included in my role, for instance where I have prepared food and drinks for a client who struggled to do it themselves and was already frail and ill and had no care package in place because their care package had fallen through and social workers were struggling to find a new care provider.

Or I have helped a client to make space for a hospital bed by moving and emptying many packing boxes stored in the bedroom as the client had recently moved to the area and because they couldn't do so for themselves because of disability, and there quite simply isn't anyone else to do it and no agency that provides such help.

Or I have supported a client with taking medication because their health was deteriorating due to lack of an appropriate care package and not having had their medication, again because social workers were struggling to find and procure a care package for the client.

These 'struggles' to put services/care packages in place for clients can take weeks.

So have I crossed boundaries, have I made up for gaps in services that should be provided?

Yes, I probably have at times but we are dealing with human beings and we can't just do nothing as the standards we walk past without question are the standards we accept.

It is now so difficult to get services for clients without long waiting times i.e. care needs assessments by adult social care practitioners, community dental services for disabled clients who are housebound, domiciliary care packages etc.

The Advocate can be the one consistent person in someone's life and we continue to make a difference by being always mindful of the extent and nature of our role but most of all by responding to human need especially when no one else is doing so.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Maura Atterbury, Advocate – A day in my role as Independent Advocate

Since COVID19 I have seen a real change in the demands on our services as advocates, this may be due to organisations working from home, the demands on Social Services and our NHS?

The main difficulty is trying to contact people as I have found I can be on the phone for long period of time only to have the call terminated, this is very infuriating as the client does usually need to be present before ''The organisation'' will speak to you. Due to the demands on Social Services and our NHS I have also found that I am going above and beyond.

Recently I was supporting a 92-year-old who appeared to be in a significant amount of pain. I was aware the District Nurses had been involved and therefore I contacted them only to be advised ''Well if she's in pain contact the GP we are only out to weigh her'' I explained that I believed she has a pressure sore of some description and noticed she was also in receipt of a new pressure cushion? I asked who could have issued that only to be told Oh we issued it and cream. I was quite direct and asked that they visit ASAP and if they had been out last week I am well aware the client would have informed them of her pain and why had they not contacted the GP? They attended the following day and are now actively involved for pressure care.

Client moved into supported living, the initial assessment was completed by the social worker however when the client was accepted by the housing provider the social worker took a step back. Without family members to support them, it was me who had to move her, hang curtains and put lamp shades up, make bed, empty boxes etc., etc.,

Arrange for medication prescribed by the specialist Nurse to be ordered and delivered to the client as the pharmacies were out of stock. This took me several visits to 2 pharmacies to resolve. We now have measures in place with the specialist Nurse to prescribe 1 month prior to medication running out.

With the above in mind I know I continue to be committed in the capacity of a PCAS Advocate to support people within our community whilst having a real feeling of self-worth and purpose but above all knowing I make a difference to someone's life on a regular basis.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Wendy Timmis, Advocate – Being an Independent Advocate in 2023

Following on from the years affected by covid, being an Advocate has not got any easier. Whilst, as an advocate I strived to maintain our personal contact with my clients throughout this time, many other agencies have reduced their service or changed their contact to telephone contact only instead of face to face. These agencies have been slow to return to face to face contact. Staffing levels may also have impacted this as well as the increase in demand for services.

The cost of living crisis has also affected many of my clients and meant the quest to find extra financial support has had an impact on time spent with my clients for other matters. Attempting to get hold of someone`s utility provider is lengthy and whilst some negotiation on cost does occur it can still leave some clients with a hefty increase out of their already stretched income. I have also found that it is extremely difficult to make contact with any of the DWP departments by phone for a general enquiry for a client as their call centres seem to be under extreme call pressure. It can be very frustrating to get through, start your conversation and then be cut off.

Another frustration has been the reduction of Social Worker provision in Shropshire. This has had a pretty detrimental effect on those of my clients who are involved in Child Protection cases. One poor client has not had contact with her children regularly because she has had at least 4 Social Worker changes over the last 12 months and is now having to await the allocation of a new one.

Changes to the banking world have also impacted clients who do not have access to the internet or struggle with telephone banking. Their local branch has gone so they have to travel over 15 miles to get to a bank if they can. This makes straightforward matters time consuming and also takes up valuable client time when it could be used for their other issues.

Despite all these difficulties I continue to be amazed at the resilience of my clients who seem to accept these constraints and still remain somewhat positive. They remain appreciative of any support they receive from me and any other body I can engage for them. I have also been known to step outside of my remit to help them when no other option is available such as taking someone`s garden rubbish to the tip for them which resulted in seeing a mouse in my car when I got to the refuse centre.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Lynne Davis, Advocate – My Role As An Independent Advocate

This year has been very challenging due to the pressures other services are under which is having a detrimental effect on many clients. This is particularly obvious within Shropshire Council Community Services where they are closing cases down and making a referral to PCAS for advocacy support. On meeting with these clients it is often so obvious that their social care needs are not being met and there are so many issues that need resolving that should have been picked up by other professionals.

I recently received a referral from a local church charity who were concerned about a gentleman they had been trying to help with debt issues. Despite this gentleman receiving a care package under Section 117 of the mental health act and having a mental health Social Worker and a newly appointed Social Work Practitioner from Adult Services who have both visited him recently, I could not believe the unaddressed issues I discovered when I met with him at his home. He lives in a bungalow with level access shower facilities in the bathroom. The shower area is completely unusable as it is being used as a storage area for all sorts of things which need to be put in his shed. He is unable to do this himself due to his physical disabilities and explained that he has only been able to wash with a flannel for the last two years. Neither the care agency providing support or any of the Social Care Practitioners who have visited him have attempted to resolve this issue. He also has frequent falls and has no personal alarm. He tells me that all the professionals involved have said he should be wearing one but nobody has attempted to make a referral for him to be provided with this piece of equipment. I have now made this referral and am in the process of dealing with his showering issue.

I have also had to refer him to a local foodbank as he had no food in the house and no money to purchase any. I went shopping for him to buy him the basics and he is now in receipt of food parcels. It has become obvious from talking him through his financial situation that he has been financially abused/coerced by family members. After explaining to him how this was happening he has stopped giving them money.

All these issues were picked up after two visits from me. I cannot understand how professionals could or would ignore this gentleman's plight. Some of these issues may not strictly be in the remit of an 'Independent Advocate' but nobody else is stepping in to help.

This is just one example of the kinds of scenario I am coming across when meeting new clients. So many vulnerable people are being ignored and let down for many different reasons. I hope my role as someone's Independent Advocate can help them obtain the services and support they are entitled to, and doing so will enable them to improve their independence and ability to have some choices in how they live their lives.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Ann Shaw, Advocate – The Challenges of Independent Advocacy

I have worked as an Independent Advocate for the past seven years. In that time there has been a noticeable decline in other available services. Many charities that have worked in parallel to PCAS have been forced to close, leaving us as the only organisation providing this facility in our area.

Other services, such as Adult Social Care and Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) are stretched and are unable to provide support in a timely manner.
Funding has been cut for many of these organisations. Our own charity is dependent on the constant submission of applications for grants by our Manager, Simon. Our team is aware that, without this funding, our clients, who depend on us to support them, would be left high and dry with no-one to call on.

I have a client aged eighty-seven, who has been unwell for many months. Originally, she lived in sheltered accommodation. However, the level of care provided was sub-standard. Her son moved her, temporarily to his home to look after her around the clock.

She became increasingly unwell, developing symptoms of paranoia. It took many referrals from both her doctor and me to the Community Mental Health Team over a period of months before she was visited by a member of their team. The prescribed medication only increased her symptoms. Her condition slowly worsened. Getting the CMHT to intervene was impossible. Visits were either cancelled or the doctor did not turn up.

All through this period, my client had an allocated social worker, who appeared to understand the problems, but did very little to support the family. Tasks she said she would carry out were never finalised. She did not maintain regular contact with the family and would not return calls. She promised to find respite for the family, but this was not forthcoming. The family were finding it increasingly difficult to cope.

Two hospital admissions led to two separate placements in care facilities. Neither of which have been able to provide care for my client at the level she requires. Adult Social Care and the CMHT are still dragging their heels. She currently has no allocated social worker and the doctor from the CMHT has moved from the area.

I make regular phone calls to both to try and get things moving. The family spend all day with my client making up for shortages in care staff. My client is getting more and more frail, and her quality of life is deteriorating. I am trying my best for the family as a whole, but the challenges presented to me as an advocate by other services seem, sometimes, to be insurmountable.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## CASE STUDIES

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **ZB 1481** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **64** |
| **Disability** | **Physical disability and dyscalculia** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Advocacy support is ongoing** |

**The issue**

The client lives with severe physical disability and complex health issues and moved to the area in order to live (alone) near to specialist hospital, client has no family or other support and was feeling completely overwhelmed with all the issues associated with moving to a new property, this includes sorting utilities and service charges for the property and to make the physical environment safe for her. Client feeling very alone and isolated and was overjoyed to find she could have support from an Independent Advocate.
Particularly needing access to other services that we all take for granted i.e. hairdresser, dental services- client is housebound compounding the issues for her.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Over many visits, client supported to understand her utility bills and the service charges for her supported living bungalow and to set up direct debit for these services so that she could be reassured that she didn't owe money, because of dyscalculia, the client could not have done this without support.
Also to help her access other services as she was completely unfamiliar with the area and to help her improve her physical environment.

**The outcome**

- All utilities etc. now paid by direct debit as per client's wishes.
- Filing system for paperwork is now in place which client is pleased with.
- Client's physical environment has been much improved over time to allow her to move round the home more safely and to have a hospital bed in place.
- Client now has a regular mobile hairdresser and has been registered with community dental services.
- Client has been introduced to local electrical contractors who have carried out some work she needed at her property.
- Meetings with management and owners of independent living scheme set up with myself in present so that client can be reassured that people understand her needs and hopefully allowing her to feel less isolated.
- Support to deal with energy provider.

**The challenges and how they were met**

Much time was needed to achieve client's goals, particularly with supporting her in making her physical environment better but PCAS manager very supportive of this and client overwhelmed with gratitude for the support.
Banking was a definite challenge because client is housebound, bank advisors very unhelpful in telephone calls and much time was needed to address issues which arose in trying to set up direct debits (mostly resolved by use of internet banking App in the end which also presented some challenges).

**Conclusion**

Support for client is ongoing but this is now mainly for helping her to understand correspondence and to maintain the filing system but also to help her to access other services as required and to support her in meetings when required.
Client now has the access to the services that she needs, she feels supported to have a better quality of life and she feels a great deal less isolated.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **714** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **61** |
| **Disability** | **Epilepsy/cognitive issues** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Ongoing support** |

**The issue**

Due to client's seizures she meets with the Epilepsy Specialist Nurse approximately every 6 months. Recently she has had her medication changed that she has been on for many years, this has had a very positive affect however this medication needs to be prescribed by the specialist nurse as the GP's wont prescribe due to the cost?

Prescription arrived late on the Thursday before the first May bank holiday, when visiting the client, the prescription had arrived that morning on looking at the prescription I noticed that it was not for the correct dosage. We tried calling the specialist nurse but no returned calls, the client only had enough medication for a couple of days and therefore it was vital we got her prescription. After discussing the situation the client decided that the prescription she had received should be taken to the chemist so that at least she had 100mg to take instead of the recently increased 150mg.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I took the prescription to the chemist and explained the urgency however was advised that due to the bank holiday they probably would not have this in on time?

After much discussion they agreed to give 4 tablets of 100mg for the client.

I continued calling and leaving messages with the Epilepsy specialist nurse's secretary.

I dropped the 4 tablets off with the client and explained the situation to the care team that should oversee her medication, forwarded epilepsy specialist nurses telephone number and I don't work Fridays and it would be a bank holiday the following Monday.

The following Tuesday I managed to contact the specialist nurse and explained what had happened and that the client had taken 100mg as she had no 150mg he stated the this was fine and apologised. He issued another prescription for the 150mg and I agreed to pick it up and take it to a larger chemist in the hope of gaining access to the medication. This took a further 2 days as the manufacturer that they usually use was out of stock and after trying another manufacturer they were able to order the medication.

**The outcome**

Forwarded the 150mg medication to the client who was extremely relieved and thanked me for my support. I spoke with the care providers and explained the importance of this, they have now documented to request 2 -3 weeks before next prescription is needed.

**The challenges and how they were met**

Source the correct prescription/dosage, locating a chemist that was able to take order and take delivery of medication.

Explain to the care team the importance of ensuring the client has the correct medication in accordance with her care plan.

**Conclusion**

The first prescription for the incorrect dosage actually arrived nearly 2 weeks later.

Client in receipt of correct medication without any ill effects.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **1466 AL** |
| **Gender** | **MALE** |
| **Age** | **61** |
| **Disability** | **PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **12 MONTHS** |

**The issue**

CLIENT WAS LIVING IN A PRIVATE RENTED PROPERTY WHICH NO LONGER MET HIS NEEDS, HE COULD NOT ACCESS HIS BATHROOM WHICH WAS UPSTAIRS, HE WAS SLEEPING DOWNSTAIRS ON HIS SOFA.
HIS MENTAL HEALTH HAD DETERIORATED DUE TO LIVING LIKE THIS, AND HAD GOT INTO DEBT.
HE ALSO NEEDED URGENT DENTAL TREATMENT.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

WE IDENTIFIED THE PRIORITY, WHICH WAS TO ACCESS A HOUSING OFFICER TO HELP WITH THE DEBT AND TO LIAISE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IN RELATION TO FINDING HIM SOMEWHERE MORE SUITABLE FOR HIS NEEDS. ALSO, TO FIND AN EMERGENCY DENTIST WHO COULD SUPPORT WITH SOME MAJOR DENTAL ISSUES.

**The outcome**

I WAS ABLE TO FIND AN EMERGENCY DENTIST FOR HIM, HE HAS STARTED A MAJOR DENTAL PLAN.
I WAS ABLE TO GET HIM A HOUSING OFFICER WHO LIAISED WITH SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL TO GET SOME OF THE ARREARS SORTED, AND ALSO TO GET SOME OF THE OTHER DEBTS WRITTEN OFF.
AND THE BIGGEST RESULT BEING THAT HE HAS NOW MOVED IN TO A PROPERTY THAT MEETS HIS NEEDS, AND HE IS EXTREMEMLY HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME. HIS MENTAL HEALTH HAS IMPROVED DUE TO THIS GOOD OUTCOME.

**The challenges and how they were met**

KEEPING THE CLIENT FOCUSED ON THE PRIORITIES, THIS WAS DONE BY MANAGING HIS EXPECTATIONS AND KEEPING HIM INFORMED OF ANY RESULTS WITH ACTIONS.
MENTAL HEALTH WAS PRETTY POOR WHEN I GOT INVOLVED, THIS WAS MANAGED AS BEST WE COULD BY BEING HONEST AND OPEN ABOUT PROGRESS IN THE CASE AND BUILDING UP TRUST WITH THE CLIENT.

**Conclusion**

I WENT TO SEE THE CLIENT IN HIS NEW PROPERTY VERY RECENTLY, HE TOOK GREAT DELIGHT IN SHOWING ME AROUND – HE SAID HE WAS ABSOLUTELY DELIGHTED WITH IT, AND SAID IT HAD MADE SUCH A DIFFERENCE TO HIS LIFE. HE THANKED OUR SERVICE, AND I THEN SAID I WOULD CLOSE THE CASE, BUT IF HE NEEDED FURTHER SUPPORT, TO GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH US AT PCAS.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **1284 CG** |
| **Gender** | **FEMALE** |
| **Age** | **49** |
| **Disability** | **PHYSICAL, MENTAL HEALTH** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **ONGOING** |

**The issue**

CLIENT HAD A FALL A FEW YEARS AGO WHICH RESULTED IN AN AQUIRED BRAIN INJURY. SHE WANTED SUPPORT WITH MOVING HOUSE, PAPERWORK AND DIVORCE.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I STARTED WORKING WITH THE CLIENT TO SORT OUT PAPERWORK, AS SHE HAD BEEN IN HOSPITAL FOR MANY MONTHS, AND THERE WERE LOTS OF LETTERS TO DEAL WITH.
I PRIORITISED HER NEEDS, WHICH WERE:
1. MOVE PROPERTIES
2. SORT PAPERWORK
3. DIVORCE

**The outcome**

STILL WORKING WITH THIS CLIENT, SHE HAS MOVED WHICH IS A POSITIVE, HER HEALTH HAS VASTLY IMPROVED, THE DIVORCE IS ONGOING. SHE STILL NEEDS SUPPORT WITH PAPERWORK, AND LOTS OF SUPPORT THROUGH THE VERY STRESSFUL DIVORCE.

**The challenges and how they were met**

TRUST WAS A MASSIVE ISSUE WITH THIS CLIENT, AND IT TOOK MANY MONTHS TO BUILD UP THAT TRUST. WE NOW HAVE A VERY GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP, AND SHE CALLS ME WHEN SHE NEEDS SUPPORT. I SEE HER EVERY 10 DAYS OR SO, AND ENVISAGE THAT SHE WILL NEED LONGTERM SUPPORT DUE TO THE BRAIN INJURY

**Conclusion**

THIS CLIENT HAS MADE MASSIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN HER PHYSICAL HEALTH, SHE HAS LOST A LOT OF WEIGHT, WHICH HAS HAD A MASSIVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON HER MENTAL HEALTH. SHE STILL NEEDS SUPPORT ALONGSIDE HER SOLICITOR TO GET A CONCLUSION TO HER DIVORCE. THIS IS A LONGTERM CASE DUE TO HER AQUIRED BRAIN INJURY.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **DO 1510** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **80** |
| **Disability** | **Bowel cancer** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **2 months** |

**The issue**

The client had been in the army for most of his life. He had been diagnosed as end of life. He is in a care home. He was concerned that his family had access to his home and were removing money and property without his consent. He also wanted to return home, however, he was confined to his bed and never tried to get up.

The care home manager told me that the client was no longer end of life and that, if he became a little more mobile, he would stand a better chance of being discharged home.

The client was also estranged from his sons after his wife's death and regretted this.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

After my first visit, I made arrangements for the staff to organise getting the client prepared for a trip to his home to collect any valuables and to get his locks changed (he had lost his own house keys by now). When I arrived to collect him, I was told that, since my first visit the client was getting out of bed and mobilising well.
The locks were changed while we were there, and the client collected some property.

During the intervening period I had been in discussions with the Clinical Commissioning Group about getting a care package for the client that would allow him to return home.

I had also been in touch with the client's son and brother to talk about them visiting him in the care home. I had regular calls with the Care Home Manager and the CCG to expedite his return home.

**The outcome**

Staff at the care home told me that the client had become more positive after my initial visit and had got out of bed for the first time the following day. Going home on a visit had noticeably cheered him up. Arrangements were on track for a return home. The client's son and brother had visited. Although this did not go as well as hoped, with both of them asking where the client's will is located.

Unfortunately, shortly after this, the client fell out of bed and fractured his pelvis. This has put his recovery back for some time and he is currently not able to mobilise unaided.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The first challenge was gaining the client's cooperation. I had been told that he did not engage well with people. However, when I told the client about my long service with local police, we had an immediate rapport and joint respect. He was happy to allow me to work with him to get him home and to help him get his paperwork and bills sorted out.

I expected that getting him out on a home visit would be difficult. However, he made an effort to mobilise, and we were able to get him to his home in a wheelchair accessible taxi.

The current challenge is to get the client back on his feet. He is despairing of ever getting home. I will be working with him to get whatever services he needs to do this.

**Conclusion**

The client is no longer end of life and has a goal of getting home to concentrate his mind. He is also back in touch with his family.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **AW. 1251** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **43** |
| **Disability** | **Mental Health, Autism** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **12 Weeks** |

**The issue**

Client in dispute with Housing Association over work he had done to his garden without obtaining permission from them. He retaliated by engaging a solicitor over items of disrepair inside his property. Due to his mental health issues he became confrontational with staff from the Housing Association and refused to let them into the property or engage with them. He had big plans for his garden and his mental health was severely affected by being unable to get on with the work he had planned, especially as it was springtime and the ideal time for working in the garden. The Housing Association had requested that he provide a drawing of what he wanted to do and their appointed surveyor would look at it and let him know what he could and couldn't do. Client became very agitated and thought they were not going to agree to any of the proposed work and began making threats to wreck his property and undo all the improvements he had made to the internal décor. He has thrown everything in his first floor flat out of the window in the past, including his new living room carpet and lots of his belongings.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I liaised with the surveyor appointed by the Housing Association on my client's behalf and ascertained exactly what he wanted in order to be able to approve works to the garden. I supported my client to calm down and encouraged him to prepare a drawing of the works to submit to the surveyor, explaining that I thought the majority of what he wanted to do would be approved. The surveyor would not give client his direct email address and requested that I submit the drawings on his behalf directly to the Housing Association. I submitted the drawing on his behalf and requested a prompt reply from the surveyor. He was very helpful and of the 22 items of work my client requested, permission for 21 of them were approved within 24 hours of the request being submitted.

**The outcome**

Client's mental health improved greatly and he is getting on with the work in his garden as and when he can afford to purchase the materials he requires. Being outside and having something to do is very beneficial for his mental health. He is far more compliant with the surveyor over arranging to correct the items of disrepair inside the property and a meeting has been arranged for them to meet up inside the property to discuss the finer details. Both have requested my attendance at this meeting.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The challenges were to provide support to my client to prevent him being aggressive towards staff from the Housing Association and to try and understand that they had to follow certain regulations and procedures and were not just being obstructive and victimising him because he had been a drug user and had mental health issues. Also, to try and ensure that staff from the Housing Association were empathetic towards my client and were prepared to listen to him and explain to him why they had made certain decisions.

**Conclusion**

This client needs ongoing support to deal with lots of the issues he has to face. This has to come from someone he trusts who will take the time to explain things properly to him. If he had not had this support he may well have lost his tenancy due to his behaviour towards Housing Association staff and possible damage to the property.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **DC 1470** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **80 years** |
| **Disability** | **Age, frailty and health issues** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **5 months (client trying on his own for two years )** |

**The issue**

Client elderly and frail and recovering from surgical procedures, referred to PCAS by WRVS following discharge from hospital. Client in dispute with Valuations Office Agency (VOA) and had made no progress by his own efforts or indeed with the involvement of Citizens advice bureau (CAB). Client living in very large house alone and needing to have part of the house that was previously designated as a 'flat', merged into the main building; 1. So that he did not need to continue paying premium rate council tax on the unoccupied 'flat' which was unaffordable for him and 2. Because he was now having to use areas of the 'flat' himself because he was unable to use stairs in the main property and was living and sleeping downstairs.
Client in receipt of council tax support for the main part of the house.
Process of trying to deal with VOA and Shropshire Council was making him feel very unwell and "like life wasn't worth living".

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Supported client to make new proposals to the VOA accompanied by photographs of his property and giving a detailed history, first proposal was declined but Independent Advocate persisted until able to communicate directly with a surveyor, Advocate able to point out that though a surveyor had looked at the outside of the building no one had inspected it inside.
More photographs taken and sent to VOA.
All of this was done via email communication which client could not have done by himself, CAB had written letters on his behalf but this along with his attempts to speak to the VOA on the 'phone had proved fruitless.

**The outcome**

The surveyor made the decision to merge the area in the house known as the 'flat' with the main property which was the outcome that the client wanted.
The Council tax banding for the property increased as a result but this did not affect the client financially as he was still receiving full council tax support.
The client also received a substantial refund on council tax he had paid to date which was definitely an extra bonus for him.
Client finally free of feeling stressed and financially overwhelmed.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The main challenge was being able to communicate directly with a surveyor; it became very clear that no one was willing to visit the property in person even though Covid-19 restrictions were slowly being lifted so it was a matter of trying to make the case by presenting as much information by email backed up by the photographic evidence and by persistent email communication.
Having supplied the VOA with signed authority by the client, it was able to communicate directly with independent Advocate.

**Conclusion**

- The surveyor made the decision to merge the 'flat' with the main building, the property council tax banding increased as a result but this did not affect the client financially.
- Client received a substantial council tax refund.
- Client very pleased that an issue he had been trying to resolve for over two years with limited support from other agencies had been resolved fully with the outcome that he wanted and needed and in a period of about 5 months.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **470** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **72** |
| **Disability** | **Literacy difficulties** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Ongoing support** |

**The issue**

Due to client's literacy difficulties (unable to read or write) she requires ongoing support with all correspondence. Client has previously missed a medical appointment as they sent her an appointment in Pictorial format but client thought this was about activities within the scheme she lives in.

Client enjoys keeping connected with her family and therefore I support in writing out special occasion cards.

Client cancelled Virgin media however this incurred charges I supported client with raising a complaint – this is ongoing with no outcome as yet.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Read through contents of mail and explain contents to the client.

With client's consent discussed with GP practise who have noted difficulties and will ensure she is contact by telephone for any future questionnaires/appointments.

Supported client with complaint to Virgin who had passed her case to a Debt recovery, after speaking to debt recovery and explained situation they returned case to Virgin No further action.

**The outcome**

We await the final outcome from Virgin Media

**The challenges and how they were met**

Being able to speak with advisor who understood what we were trying to get across. Challenging their referral to Debt recovery.

**Conclusion**

Ongoing support and encouragement to client in order to live as independently as possible.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **VB 885** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **83** |
| **Disability** | **Mental health issues** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Ongoing** |

**The issue**

The client lives in a bungalow in sheltered accommodation. She has lived there for 6 years and has never been happy there. She is of Russian origin and believes that no-one accepts her because she is educated and foreign. She has never gelled with the local community and is therefore very isolated. I am the only visitor she has.

Although there is no diagnosis of dementia, I feel that there are signs of this condition. She alleges that her neighbours are trying to kill her with poisonous gas. She will not sleep in her bedroom because of this. She will also not shower in her bathroom for the same reason.

The client is also reluctant to disclose her financial situation. Although she does occasionally book herself into a hotel so that she can shower and bathe.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

We have talked about a move to a different scheme within Wrekin Housing Group. I have referred the client into Adult Social Services to get a social worker to support us in a housing move. Her Retirement Living Coordinator appears to be exasperated with the client due to her constant neighbour complaints and is difficult to engage in the situation. I have also suggested that the client seek medical intervention for her memory issues. The client has dismissed this out of hand.

**The outcome**

There is currently no real outcome. The client has agreed to look at corridor schemes in the local area to see if they might be suitable. The client presently has capacity, although this does appear to fluctuate. There is no family that can support her. I will continue to work with her to find her another home and hope that she will feel more settled there.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The client's deteriorating memory means that she continually repeats herself. She has become paranoid about the neighbours, who appear to be a normal family. (The neighbour's wife is undergoing treatment for cancer). I have tried to get the client to realise that the smells she has been experiencing may just be chemicals from local farmland or other wind-borne factors. She does not accept this. I have encouraged her to take part in the coffee mornings and other activities. She will not consider this. It is almost as if she relishes being an outsider. I fear that we will never find accommodation where she will feel happy and secure.

**Conclusion**

This is an ongoing piece of work that, ultimately, may never have a satisfactory conclusion for the client. However, this does not mean that the client will no longer need support. I will continue to work with her to try to achieve the best possible solution for her.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **CB. 1518** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **58** |
| **Disability** | **Physical and Mental Health** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **4 Weeks** |

**The issue**

Client had been referred to PCAS for help with debts. The referral came from a charity he had been to and had used their foodbank. He had apparently been giving money to a relative but they were not sure who. I had worked with this client many years ago in another role and he remembered me and was quite open about his financial situation right from the start. His brother has been asking for money from him to give to their father, he has told client that he and his sister are also providing money to help their father out. He does not see his father but explained that he was a difficult man who would probably not engage with Community Services for any help. He did not have a full picture of his father's finances. Client has been taking cash from his bank and handing it his brother. Client also has issues with Shropshire Council over unpaid care charges from many years ago and has repaid them £3000.00. They have informed me that he still owes £3400.00 which he knew nothing about. I felt the issue of giving money to his brother was a priority to deal with as this could well be financial abuse. Client is now subject to a Section 117 under the Mental Health Act so does not pay for his care.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I have spoken at length to the client, explaining that if his father needs financial support there are benefits he can claim in his own right. This needs to be looked into by the family, not ask client for money as he cannot afford it and quite possibly has debts of his own to repay. He cannot get into the position where he has to go to a food bank in order to survive. I explained how his father may well qualify for Attendance Allowance which is not means tested as client has been told that his father has been diagnosed with dementia.

I suggested that next time his brother asks him for money he refuses and explains that he has financial difficulties himself and cannot afford to do it. I also explained that he was quite possibly being financially abused. I offered to speak to his brother and explain why client could not afford to give money to his father. If client is put under any pressure or keeps giving money to his brother, then I will raise a Safeguarding issue.

**The outcome**

Client informs me that his brother has asked for money to help out their father and he has had the strength to refuse to give him any. He says his brother is now not speaking to him. He says he was able to say No after I had explained the options open to his father to get help elsewhere and how much per week he could get via Attendance Allowance which my client was totally unaware of.

**The challenges and how they were met**

Lack of money which was making client unable to buy food was an issue. I made a referral to the Barnabas Church to enable him to attend their Food Bank. He was very grateful for this and explained that he made one week's food from them last two weeks to enable other people to obtain food from them.

I have visited him regularly to check whether or not he has been asked for money from his relatives and if so, has he refused. I explain to him on a regular basis that there are benefits available to his father and that he cannot afford to give away his money and should not feel guilty if he says No. I am also dealing with other financial issues on his behalf. I have offered to speak to his brother and/or his father and explain on his behalf why he cannot give money to his relatives and also explain to them the options they have available to them.

**Conclusion**

After receiving support from an advocate and having the situation explained to him in very simple terms, this client appears to realise that his family have alternative sources of obtaining financial help and that he should not feel guilty about refusing. He also seems to realize after having things explained to him that he may well be being financially and psychologically abused by family members.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **SB 1309** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **58** |
| **Disability** | **Anxiety ,Depression, PTSD** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **4 Months** |

**The issue**

My client suffers from Mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety and depression. She was living in Housing association property in an isolated area away from the support of her family and spiritual support. She realised that she needed to be closer to that support for days when she was struggling with her health.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

My client heard that there was accommodation becoming available in an area she wanted to move to. She had considered private rental but preferred to stay with the same Housing association in Warden supported. She had spoken to her current warden who advised her to re-apply to Home Point. My client had attempted this by clerical form and was struggling so asked me to help. On speaking with the local Connexus housing officer he suggested that my client just needed to re-enter up to date details on her original application and make sure all her health issues were supported by written evidence. I supported her to do this by helping her complete the online form.

The back log for processing the applications was taking roughly 20 days so my client was mindful and anxious that she might lose out. I was also able to speak to the Connexus housing warden for the area that my client wanted to move to. She remembered my client from previous support and was very helpful.

By supporting my client to liaise and chase up respective personnel within the housing system my client was eventually offered a place in the area she wanted.

**The outcome**

My client has now moved to a bungalow in the middle of the community she wanted to be in. She is close to her church and has friends and spiritual family that can call on her easily when she needs support. She can also access any amenities easily without having to rely on lifts and she can play her part in her church community which is helping her mental health.

**The challenges and how they were met**

It was a challenge to get hold of the Home Point staff by phone as the phone rang out constantly when trying to call them. Email contact was more successful but I did experience overlap in responses when requesting more info to be provided. As the housing stock in Shropshire is limited it is very demoralising to the person trying to find the right home but determination paid off.

**Conclusion**

By having all relevant documentation to support the application and a clear objective from my client as to what she needed and how the move would improve her mental and physical health support she was well prepared to pursue her move.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| Initials & number | JL 1198 |
|---|---|
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **59** |
| **Disability** | **Hearing Impairment/Slight Learning Disability** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **5 months** |

**The issue**

Client lives in rented accommodation and was only receiving PIP having lost entitlement to any means tested benefit due to receiving a small inheritance when her father passed away. Client has been using this capital to live and pay bills so it had reduced significantly to the point where she was panicking about paying her bills and anxious about the prospect of losing her home. This was affecting her mental health and she was constantly worrying.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

With my client`s permission and request, I sought advice initially from her Social worker who could not help. I then spoke with her Housing Association Tenancy Support worker who advised that she would need to claim Universal Credit because of her age. She advised contact via the CAB initially as my client would need to make a telephone claim to UC because she cannot access and sustain a claim via the internet.

I telephoned the CAB whilst with my client and supported her whilst they undertook an assessment of her financial circumstances. They then triaged my client and myself by telephone through to Universal Credit who took the application over the phone. They advised how the claim would be processed via liaison with my Client`s local job centre.

An appointment was arranged for my client at the job centre to confirm her ID and proof of her capital figures and explain next steps. I supported her to do this making sure she had all the correct documents. Another appointment was arranged for my client to attend the job centre with a medical certificate when it had been obtained from her GP.

My client was proactive and managed to collect the medical certificate from her GP and take it straight away to the job centre. When we went back together on the arranged date of the interview the UC claim had already been decided and the first award made to my client`s bank account. The job centre staff were really helpful and explained everything to my client.

**The outcome**

My client now has money towards her rent and is able to get help with her prescriptions. She has also been able to apply for help with her council tax with my support and is now feeling financially more secure.

**The challenges and how they were met**

As my client has her disabilities she doesn't always hear or understand what is said to her straight away. By supporting my client at meetings and by talking for her on the telephone I can help the other party explain what is required and answer questions on her behalf.

**Conclusion**

My client would not have been able to manage the whole process alone but she is now free of worry about her continuing tenancy and having to use her dwindling savings to pay her bills.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**Client Scenario**

Client is in her mid-seventies and is cared for at home with 4 double up care calls per day due to surgery for an aneurysm resulting in a stroke.
Client lives alone and required Cataract surgery, Client requires support in booking in surgery within day unit and transport however as she unable to weight bare and lives alone I was advised she would be an overnight admission.

**1st Attempt**

Booked client in for surgery giving full details of client's difficulties and liaised with her shopper who is extremely helpful. I also arranged transport as the hospital do not do this and this can only be booked 7 days prior to surgery.

Surgery cancelled

**2nd Attempt**

Completed the above process again

Surgery cancelled

**3rd Attempt**

Explained the client frustration due to cancelled surgeries and advised ''it's just one of those things'' completed process again

Surgery cancelled

**4th Attempt**

Contacted RSH as the appointment made by them was 7am and due to client having a care package carers would not be able to accommodate such an early call to complete personal care prior to transport arriving.

Advised that's when the consultant completes cataract (only am) I advised that previous appointments had been made (pm) and explained again the reasons why. Client's shopping lady arrived and whilst I was on the phone to the hospital going through dates and times of available surgery the shopper was on her phone to transport to arrange that. We also had to arrange for client to have a PCR 3 days prior to surgery at Telford hospital (albeit that between having the PCR and admission into hospital she would probably be in contact with upwards of 20 carer's) arranged this appointment and transport to enable client to get there and home.

Surgery went ahead, however although all the information was passed to RSH and she was meant to be an overnight stay she was returned home via ambulance, unable to gain access into her property she was returned to hospital and sent back home in patient transport (my understanding is that they are not able to return patients back to hospital) they made contact with client's shopping lady who supported client. All turned out well in the end and clients awaits a further appointment for the other eye!!!! Watch this space……



Registered Charity Number 1187362

**Many thanks to the Wynn Foundation for their donation to PCAS**




Select Healthcare Group

Our residential home for vulnerable adults with learning disabilities and complex needs has worked alongside PCAS for approx 25 years to provide independent support for our service users to assist them to maintain a good quality of life.

Simon has a great understanding of the support / complex needs of our service users and has been a great support to everyone as and when required.

Simon will be the voice that our service users are not able to make due to their disability and will ensure their rights are promoted in a positive manner.

Everything discussed with Simon is acted on in a professional confidential manner.

**Jeannette Garratt - Registered Manager**



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a foundation model constitution for a CIO.

The charity did not become active until 1 June 2020, the date from which the CIO took over the activities, assets and commitments of its antecedent charity, Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy (registered charity number 1102986)

PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service) covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and is a registered charity (number 1187362)

PCAS supports any person aged 18 or over with ANY disability or multiple disabilities.

There is no charge to our clients for our service, which is something we feel very strongly about. Our clients are often the most vulnerable in society, many having multiple disabilities and who do not fit into the remit of other services.

## Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

Prospective trustees come from all walks of life. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please contact the PCAS office on 01691 658008. An informal chat about what we do is the first step, then you would fill in an application form if you are still interested. From there, you would meet a couple of Trustees, and the current board would then vote on your prospective application.

The Board of Trustees meet bi-monthly and at other times deemed necessary. Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no payment for their work/time. They are from a variety of backgrounds and bring varied skills and experience to the Board. We currently have 2 clients, people with disabilities themselves and those with a professional background. The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and meets the charitable outcomes. Day to day operational decisions are taken by the PCAS Manager and staff of the organisation, within the delegated authority conferred by the Board.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error, this has been done.

## Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning the activities for the year.

## Trustees

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chair** | Peter Quinn |
| **Vice Chair** | Clare Harris |
| **Treasurer** | Doreen Ellis |
| **Trustee** | Russell Jones |
| **Trustee** | Neil Pulker |
| **Trustee** | Benjamin Payne |
| **Trustee** | Jacob Ayre |

## Staff - PCAS

| | |
|---|---|
| **PCAS Manager/Advocate** | Simon Arthur |
| **Assistant Manager/Shropshire Advocate** | Glenda Crawshaw |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Wendy Timmis |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Jackie Copson |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Lynne Davis |
| **T & W Advocate** | Ann Shaw |
| **T & W Advocate** | Maura Atterbury |
| **Evaluation Manager** | Allisone Arthur |
| **Volunteer** | Paul Newman |

## Professional Advisors

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bank** | Unity Trust Bank |
| **Building Society** | The West Bromwich |
| **Independent Examiners** | AZETS<br>Column House, London Road, Shrewsbury, SY2 6NN<br>01691 661144 |

# Financial Review

## Reserves Policy

The free reserves of the charity were £56,580 at the year end and the Trustees consider this amount to be sufficient for their immediate operating requirements. Included in the £56,580 is £40,000 which has been designated for operating costs should funding cease to allow the charity to continue to function whilst further funding is applied for.

## Principal Funding Sources

The charity has been funded by various grants this year from:
The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)
The Henry Smith Charity
Private Donation
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
Select Healthcare
The February Foundation
Nationwide Community Grants
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
Independent Age
Arnold Clark Community Fund
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK
Neighbourly

The above funders and supporters are the backbone of our charity and without their generous funding we would not be able to provide the service we do.

## Future Developments

We continuously strive to develop our services in order to meet the need of our clients. Funding is always an issue. However, we endeavour to be proactive as we fight for the rights of our vulnerable client group.

**The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees**

**…….**
**Peter Quinn - Chair**

**Date: …….**

# Our Contact Details :-

## PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service)

**Suite 1**

**The Willow Tree**

**Willow Street**

**Oswestry**

**SY11 1AJ**

**Telephone:** **01691 658008**

**Web Site:** **www.shropshirepcas.co.uk**

**Email:** **simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk (PCAS Manager)**

**alli@shropshirepcas.co.uk (Evaluation Manager)**



Registered Charity Number 1187362

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
For the year ended 31st March 2023

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the The 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn. I understand that this has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I conform that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

R Harvey-Robson FCA
Azets Audit Services Limited
Colomn House
Shrewsbury
SY2 6NN

Dated

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31st March 2023

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds £ | Restricted funds £ | Total 2023 £ | Total 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Incoming resources from generated funds** | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | **3** | **4,117** | - | **4,117** | 429 |
| Charitable activities | **4** | **-** | **173,841** | **173,841** | 194,929 |
| Investments | | **300** | **-** | **300** | 250 |
| Other Income | | - | - | - | - |
| **Total incoming resources** | | **4,417** | **173,841** | **178,258** | 195,608 |
| **Resources expended** | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | **5** | **(46)** | **184,919** | **184,873** | 178,262 |
| Other | **8** | **-** | **6,000** | **6,000** | 6,000 |
| **Total resources expended** | | **(46)** | **190,919** | **190,873** | 184,262 |
| **Net incoming resources before transfers** | | **4,463** | **(17,078)** | **(12,615)** | 11,346 |
| Gross transfers between funds | | **-** | **-** | **-** | - |
| **Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds** | | **4,463** | **(17,078)** | **(12,615)** | 11,346 |
| Fund balances at 1 April 2022 | | **52,316** | **46,780** | **99,096** | 87,750 |
| **Fund balances at 31 March 2023** | | **56,779** | **29,702** | **86,481** | 99,096 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
Balance Sheet
At 31st March 2023

| | Notes | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | **2023 Total £** | 2022 Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **10** | 199 | **-** | **199** | 265 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Debtors | | **-** | **-** | **-** | - |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 56,580 | 92,184 | **148,764** | 193,252 |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **11** | **-** | (62,482) | **(62,482)** | (94,421) |
| **Net current assets** | | 56,580 | 29,702 | **86,282** | 98,831 |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | 56,779 | 29,702 | **86,481** | 99,096 |
| **Income funds** | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | **12** | | | **29,702** | 46,780 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | **16,779** | 22,316 |
| Designated funds | | | | **40,000** | 30,000 |
| | | | | **86,481** | 99,096 |

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on ……

•

Mr Peter Quinn – Chair

## 1 Accounting policies

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy is controlled by its governing document, a constitution and constitutes a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities": Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cashflows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the accounts, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees' continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

**1.4 Incoming resources**

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known and the receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes.

**1.5 Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fixtures, fittings and equipment | 25% on a reducing balance |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**1.7 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Recoverable amount is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value in use. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset for which the estimates of future cash flows have not been adjusted.

If the recoverable amount of an asset is estimated to be less than the carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount. An impairment loss is recognised immediately in income/(expenditure) for the year, unless the relevant asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease.

Recognised impairment losses are reversed if, and only if, the reasons for the impairment loss have ceased to apply. Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount, but so that the increased carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in previous years. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised immediately, unless the relevant asset is carried in at a revalued amount, in which case the reversal of the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation increase.

**1.8 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, Other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially recognised at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**1.9 Employee benefits**

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

**1.10 Leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged to income on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

**1.11 Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds can only be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

**1.12 Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

**1.13 Deferred income**

Deferred income is released to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period that the income relates to.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

## 3 Donations and legacies

| | **2023** | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Donations and gifts | 4,117 | 429 |

## 4 Charitable activities

| | **2023** | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Services provided under grants | 173,841 | 194,929 |
| Analysis by fund: | | |
| Unrestricted funds | - | - |
| Restricted funds | 173,841 | 194,929 |
| | 173,841 | 194,929 |

## 5 Charitable activities

| | Counselling & Advocacy services | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Staff costs | 166,600 | 166,600 | 160,026 |
| Depreciation and impairment | 66 | 66 | 89 |
| Rent | 5,680 | 5,680 | 5,000 |
| Insurance | 690 | 690 | 644 |
| Telephone | 3,035 | 3,035 | 2,739 |
| Postage and stationery | 4,552 | 4,552 | 3,292 |
| Light and Heat | 3,416 | 3,416 | 2,856 |
| Repairs and renewals | 557 | 557 | 3,458 |
| Subscriptions | 149 | 149 | - |
| Sundry | 128 | 128 | 158 |
| | 184,873 | 184,873 | 178,262 |

| Analysis by fund: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unrestricted funds | (46) | 4,275 |
| Restricted funds | 184,919 | 173,987 |
| | 184,873 | 178,262 |

## 6 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

**Trustees' expenses**

During the year there were no expenses reimbursed to trustees (2022: £0).

## 7 Employees

| Employment Costs | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Wages and salaries | 146,028 | 143,568 |
| | 146,028 | 143,568 |

7 **Employees** *Continued…*

**Number of employees**
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | **2023 Number** | 2022 Number |
|---|---|---|
| Advocacy work | **7** | 7 |
| Administration | **1** | 1 |
| | **8** | 8 |

There were no employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000.

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

**8 Other expenses**

| | **2023 £** | 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Accountancy | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | 6,000 | 6,000 |

**9 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

**10 Tangible fixed assets**

| | **Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £** |
|---|---|
| **Cost** | |
| At 1 April 2022 | 2,376 |
| At 31 March 2023 | 2,376 |
| **Depreciation** | |
| At 1 April 2022 | 2,111 |
| Depreciation charge for the year | 66 |
| At 31 March 2023 | 2,177 |
| **Carrying amount** | |
| At 31 March 2023 | 199 |
| At 31 March 2022 | 265 |

| 11 | **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **2023** | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **£** | £ |
| | Accruals | 500 | 740 |
| | Deferred income | 61,982 | 93,681 |
| | | 62,482 | 94,421 |

## 12 Movement in funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes (all funds are held as cash):

| | | **Movement in funds** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Balance at 1 April 2022** | **Incoming resources** | **Resources Expended** | **Transfers between** | **Balance at 31 March 2023** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Garfield Weston | 10,026 | 10,000 | (18,662) | - | **1,364** |
| Henry Smith | 2,498 | 17,933 | (18,870) | - | **1,561** |
| Trusthouse | 992 | 6,667 | (7,216) | - | **443** |
| Private Grant | 14,884 | - | (10,168) | - | **4,716** |
| Reaching Communities | 3,795 | 111,908 | (109,363) | - | **6,340** |
| Nationwide | - | 25,000 | (24,615) | - | **385** |
| Others | 14,585 | 2,333 | (2,025) | - | **14,893** |
| Restricted funds | 46,780 | 173,841 | (190,919) | - | **29,702** |

## 13 Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year, nor in the year to 2022.

## Independent Examiners

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that AZETS be re-appointed as independent examiners for the ensuing year.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of our Registered Charity, as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and applications, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements; and

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Registered Charity and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Registered Charities Act of 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Registered Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Disclosure

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is not any relevant accounting information of which the charities examiners are unaware. Additionally, the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the Charity's examiners are aware of said information.

## This Annual Report was designed and compiled by Allisone Arthur

## Thank You to all our funders and donors

The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities)

Private Donation

Nationwide Community Grants

The February Foundation

Arnold Clark Community Fund

Lloyds Bank Foundation

The Henry Smith Charity

Garfield Weston Foundation

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

Select Healthcare

Postcode Neighbourhood Trust

Independent Age

Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK

Neighbourly

Other Donations

**SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187362

# Accounts

PCAS

Here when you need us

**Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service**

Registered Charity Number **1187362**

Advocacy QPM AWARD

# Annual report of the CIO for year ending 31 March 2022

**Generic Advocacy Service** helping people with any disability including multiple disabilities locally

Help you make informed choices

We offer long-term help and support

Help to manage your money




Support you in meetings

Support people to find information

Help access other services you need

We come to you

**We are a free and independent service**

# Contents:

What is Idependent Advocacy? ..... Page 3
Background to PCAS and what we do ..... Page 4
Mission Stetment and Aims ..... Page 4
Benefits of Advocacy ..... Page 5
**Welcome from the Chair (Doreen Ellis)** ..... Page 6
Clare Harris – Vice Chair ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Peter Quinn - Treasurer ..... Page 7
Simon Harris – Trustee & IT Specialist ..... Page 7
**Welcome from the Manager – Simon Arthur** ..... Page 8-11
Allisone Arthur – Evaluation Manager ..... Page 12
**Annual Statistics** ..... Page 13-17
**Social Media** ..... Page 18-19
**Our Advocates** ..... Page 20-23
**Advocates Case Studies** ..... Page 24-31
Structure, Goverance and Management ..... Page 32
Trustees and Principal Officers ..... Page 33
Financial Review ..... Page 34
**PCAS Contact Details** ..... Page 35
Independent Examiner's Report ..... Page 36
Financial Statements ..... Page 37 - 46
Statement of Disclosure ..... Page 47
**Thanks to our Funders and Donors** ..... Page 48



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

At some point in our lives, most of us will need an Advocate. You may need help to make a difficult phone call, need someone who can write a letter, or someone to attend with you, at a difficult meeting.

In many cases, the Advocate is a friend or family member, for others, it may be a nurse or social worker. **But what if you don't have any of these people to help?** Or the problem relates in some way to your family, G.P, or social worker? This is where independent Advocacy can help, an Advocate will support you to speak up for yourself as they are ONLY there for you and have no ties to other agencies or people in your life. An Advocate helps you to get the information you need to make real choices about your circumstances, supporting you to put your choices to others.

**PCAS assists with:**

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discredited against or whom services find difficult to serve.
- Supporting disabled people at risk of losing their tenancy
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions.
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known.
- Care issues, accommodation, financial management and paperwork
- Supporting at meetings and long term support in order to stay living in their own homes for longer.
- PCAS can speak on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.
- PCAS helps people with Mental Health needs, something we have done for 27 years now.
- PCAS helps clients through Adult Safeguarding processes.
- Child Protection/child in need work.

It is important to recognise that an effective Advocate will use their knowledge, experience and skills to enable their client to have the best life possible. This might mean the Advocate telling the client about options that the client has never thought of themselves.

It is also an Advocates job to be realistic with their client, as not all things a client may want will be possible.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# BACKGROUND TO PCAS AND WHAT WE DO

PCAS Advocacy Service was started in 1995 by Shropshire Disability Consortium to provide a community based independent advocacy service for people with ANY disability over the age of 18 in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

PCAS was set up by disabled people who recognised a need for individuals to be supported to ensure their voice was heard. PCAS is committed to ensuring individuals are as involved as they can be in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to raise awareness of a person's rights and ensure they are safeguarded against in instances where people are unable to do so for themselves.

PCAS is a registered charity, to maintain its independence it is managed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of individuals who have an interest in and a commitment to the work PCAS does. The Board hold a strategic role, having responsibility to oversee effective governance by ensuring PCAS meets it legal and charitable obligations.

## *Our Mission Statement Is:*

***PCAS provides independent advocacy for adults with any disability, physical, sensory, learning or mental health. We aim to be the Service of Choice, to secure clients' rights, services, and to ensure they are listened to, empowered and treated with respect. We further aim to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or ethnicity.***

## We Aim to:

Assist disabled persons primarily, but not exclusively, living or working within the Counties of Shropshire and Powys, through the provision of Advocacy and information.

- Be recognised as the "Go to" service for Advocacy support
- Enable disabled people to make informed choices
- Promote independence and choice of disabled people through the provision of information
- Provide a service enabling the opportunity for people to take control of their own lives
- Challenge decisions made on behalf of people which they disagree with
- To listen to and engage with a client and actively involve them in any action PCAS assists with

We also have a set of priorities that we use to plan what we want to achieve every year.

This year we have continued to develop our service to meet the growing needs of local people who are requiring more long term assistance with their finances, enabling disabled people to stay living in their own homes for longer and those with Mental Health issues.

**PCAS Website** www.shropshirepcas.co.uk



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Benefits of Advocacy

The benefits of advocacy are far reaching.

- Advocacy gives a vulnerable disabled person a voice when they feel no one is listening to them.
- They have someone who is independent from all the statutory services and not controlled by government pressures to save money.
- Someone who will listen to the client, find out what the problems are, work with the client to sort out the problems.
- Building a good rapport with the client builds their self-esteem and confidence and can alleviate depression and anxiety, thus improving their mental health and wellbeing.
- Advocacy gives a person a better quality of life through simple little things for instance, reading their post and explaining the contents to someone who is dyslexic means the world to them.
- When someone is being abused they are in a really bad place. Very often they do not realise they are being abused until someone points out that it is wrong for someone to take your money and leave you without enough to pay your bills or buy food. Once the client has gone through the safeguarding process and realises they can have a good quality of life with the money they have coming in we see a totally different person, one who is now enjoying life because they can get out and go for a coffee or go shopping themselves. They now have a good quality of life, and with the safety net of having an advocate who they have built up a good working relationship they know where to go if they need help in the future.
- Very often the clients we help have no one else to help them. This means that the advocate is someone they can talk to about the worries, fears or problems they are having. This is far reaching because our advocate can discuss these worries, fears and problems and if we cannot help we always find someone who can. This circle of support helps the client move forward with their life.



Registered Charity Number 1187362



## Welcome from the Chair - Doreen Ellis

Welcome to another year in the life of PCAS, supposedly post Pandemic, but there is still a lot of the virus about. Like the common cold, it is something that we all will have to live with but take sensible precautions against.

I am sure that we all agree that it is good to be leading a near normal life and to be able to be out and about and to socialise with others again. Essential for good mental and physical health!

I am back at my line dancing class and have joined Pilates twice a week. (How fit will I be.....I am more bendy now than when I was twelve!!). I have ventured to Scotland and to the Isle of Wight and I am looking to book a River Cruise on the Rhine.

PCAS has settled well into the new offices which seem to work excellently for both the day to day running of the Charity and for holding meetings with the Advocates and Trustees. As the office is situated on the ground floor it certainly makes access for all much easier.

We are constantly looking for new Trustees. If you think you may be interested, please contact either myself or the office and speak to Simon or Alli. The main qualification is to be committed to helping adults with either a physical, mental or a learning disability by supporting the Charity and its Advocates. You will find that to give a little of your time will be most rewarding. I know that I do, and there is always someone willing to support you until you find your feet. I speak from my own experience so please give some thought to giving a little of your expertise.





## Clare Harris - Vice Chair

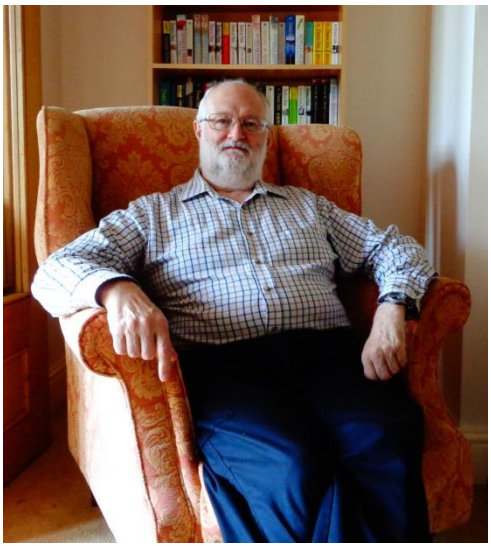
As we continue to cope with the aftermath of the pandemic, we must do what we can to keep this most vital organisation running.

With the support of fellow trustees, who have a wide variety of skills to bring to the charity, we have a united positive attitude, which hopefully will go on for a long time to come.

My thanks must go to the whole team because without their hard work and support we would not have been able to successfully remain open for business for more than 27 years.



Registered Charity Number 1187362



## Peter Quinn – Treasurer

I am a former Mental Health Nurse and Mental Health Nurse Services Manager with over 21 years' service in the NHS, before I had to retire with chronic health and disability issues. I retired to Shropshire in 2004.

I have been a Trustee of PCAS since 2014 as the Treasurer. I bring extensive experience of Mental Health Issues and have insight into what it's like to live with a disability.

My main priority as a Trustee is to oversee financial matters and funding, ensuring our funds are used to good effect and managed in an appropriate manner, as well as supporting our staff to ensure our service remains robust.

I have become a grandfather for the second time recently and have a whole new generation to enjoy, even if at some distance. They are currently based in NYC. I also have my own little bit of woodland to maintain as best I can, it provides many pleasant productive and not so productive hours especially on sunny days



## Simon Harris - Trustee

Having been around PCAS in one form or another for the last 27+ years, either through family or becoming a trustee, it has been my great pleasure to help PCAS in any way I can.

My primary role as a trustee is to look after the IT infrastructure, website and assist with branding and print when needed.

The last few years have brought new challenges on an unprecedented level, as a charity, we have been able to adapt to anything put in front of us. All of the staff have shown incredible resilience to these new challenges and are determined to make PCAS a success

The advocates, staff and volunteers at PCAS are all amazing people who give their all and constantly go beyond expectations, without them we would certainly not be where we are today, my heartfelt thanks go out to each and every one of them.



Registered Charity Number 1187362



# Welcome from the Manager – Simon Arthur

Let me start my report by saying we are still here, with a huge thank you to The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities) and the amazing help and support provided by Lynne Carney from The National Lottery we were so lucky to secure a 4 year grant for over £450,000. This massive grant along with the ongoing support of our current funders meant we were able to continue the work we do for the most vulnerable people in Shropshire & Telford, at least for another year. With The National Lottery grant we have to secure a yearly amount of over £110,000 to match this funding. We are hard at work trying to ensure the security of our amazing charity at least for the next 3 years, in the current climate it is proving very difficult to secure grant funding as there are so many other worthwhile causes applying for the same pot of money. We can only do our best and hope for success going forward.

27 years later and here we are, PCAS started in 1995 in that first year we helped 30 people, this year we have helped 368. From small acorns great Oak trees grow and this is what has happened to us.

Not only have we helped 368 people this year but that is an increase on the previous year, we have helped these clients with 4568 issues that are affecting their lives, this is a huge increase in issues from the previous year of 2134 more, working out at an average of 12 issues per person.

I guess this has something to do with the dreaded Covid (I will not mention it again I promise, maybe) I think everyone has had enough of that after 2 years of chaos. After 27 years we continue to do the same work as we were originally set up to do in 1995, namely helping the most vulnerable people in our society, with any disability, to have a better quality of life with our help and support.

Once again I need to thank the amazing team we have here at PCAS (look below at the start of the pandemic, a couple of us look like aliens landed) the things we do to keep our clients safe!! Workers and trustees have put so much time and effort in this year as they have for many years to help people as best we can.



Now we are coming out of the pandemic and trying to pick up the pieces left behind, we strive to help clients as best we can to move forward and be positive.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

We have come through the pandemic, social isolation and loneliness has now taken hold in our clients new and old. We are working hard to help these people to once again get into the community they live in, and feel safe doing this. People's Mental Health has suffered greatly through being told to shield, stay in, people need to mix with others, so this has not helped our clients at all. But hopefully now we can start once again to see changes in our clients lives for the better, and move forward in our quest as a charity to make the lives of people with disabilities so much better than before we became involved with them.

As always we are so grateful to our funders who support our work and know what we achieve for the people we help. A huge thank you to: - The National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities), Nationwide Community Grants, The February Foundation, Arnold Clark Community Fund, Lloyds Bank Foundation, The Henry Smith Charity, Garfield Weston Foundation, Trusthouse Charitable Foundation, Select Healthcare, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Independent Age, Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK, Neighbourly, and to our Private Donation funder and other donations kindly received during this most difficult of years. Without all of your help we would not have been able to do the work we have this year, Thank you so very much.

Over the last 27 years we have helped over 10,500 of the most vulnerable people in Shropshire and Telford to enjoy a better quality of life through working with them and alongside them, ensuring they are listened too. They understand what they are being asked, helping them through Child Protection procedures, Adult Abuse cases, Social Care issues, helping with Mental Health needs, ensuring people with multiple disabilities and complex needs have the help and support they need to live a better quality of life.

**Some statistics for Telford & Wrekin**

We cover Telford as well as Shropshire

Diagnosed depression in those aged 18 and over is reported as 15.9% of the population in 2020/21, higher than the prevalence for England. This equates to around 24,300 people.

Around 425 Children are in care in Telford & Wrekin and around 170 are on a child protection plan

Telford population has higher rates of poor health on some key measures and the population don't always make healthy lifestyle choices.

Around 24.9% of the population of Telford & Wrekin live in areas in the 20% most deprived nationally, around 45,100 people.

The changing age profile of the borough has seen the proportion of the population aged over 65 increased by 26.9% between 2011 and 2020, an increase of around 7,400 people.

Once again this year has seen the effects of the pandemic and the state of our country, have an effect on referrals coming in to our service. Referrals have continued to grow for help through Child Protection, for help with Managing finances and budgeting and Mental Health needs have grown.

We continue to have a large waiting list, because we are so unique in the work we do, and how we get other help and support the person needs (our workers are like a dog with a bone) they will not let go until the help is put in.

Even when we tell referrers the timescale involved before we can get to help a person they still tell us to put the person on the waiting list, because they know we can really make that difference in a client's life over the long term.

There is very clearly a huge gap and lack of help out in the community for these complex time consuming issues that our clients have.

Coupled with our record over 27 years of joint working with other professionals to get the best result for our clients. We are now the service of choice, because referrers know we help, we are there for the person for as long as it takes.

Our work frees up valuable time for Social Care Practitioners who have huge case-loads to cope with themselves, indeed since the year 2000, referrals from Social Care Practitioners have risen from 28% then, to now being over 90% of all referrals made into our service. This clearly shows the pressure on Social Care certainly in Shropshire, I am sure it is the same around the country.

Helping our clients get services delivered in a way they can actually access is still a massive challenge, as so many of the people we help cannot get out to an office appointment, they are not digital savvy so they really struggle with benefit problems or issues to do with managing their money. There is clearly a gap in the current services delivered in Shropshire and Telford.

The services being funded for benefit and money help, do need to start thinking about this. We will keep raising the issue through our networks and contacts in the hope one day services will have the necessary funding and workers, to help the most vulnerable who need delivery to change.

The clients we help, need so much support from a huge range of other services in the community, especially Community Mental Health services, day services, meeting groups, doctors, carers, to name a few just to have some sort of help.

But like so many others they are stretched to breaking point. They are referring clients into us to try and help, even though our waiting list this year has been the largest ever.

This shows the ever growing need going forward, and we can only hope that government supports and puts more funding into Mental Health services and smaller charities like ours, otherwise there will be another pandemic to do with Mental Health, isolation and loneliness, and coping with the effects of it all.

What we have found over the last 12 months is the enormous effect of the pandemic on our clients Mental Health, their fears and anxieties have been exacerbated even further. People have lived in fear of going out even just to get food, it has clearly been a very difficult time for our clients, we will continue to offer as much help and support as we can.

Face to face contact with people is so very important for all of us not just our client groups, but these very people struggle to get help they desperately need because they are being pushed into online and digital. In reality many of our clients cannot use computers and access benefits online, putting them at such a disadvantage when things go wrong or they have to try and respond to requests for information, or to bid on a property. This is just not right people should have services delivered how they need them.

We have started building our social media presence through Facebook, Twitter and Linked-in. Thank you to Kim Gilmour, Simon Harris and Shrewsbury Morris Dancers for helping us build this presence, and the workers for supplying material to use.

This will help us going forward to raise the profile of PCAS, let more people know what Advocacy is, and how we can help, it will hopefully also attract attention from possible funders, donations and sponsorship time will tell.

As a small charity we are starting to look at Legacy fundraising, this is a huge undertaking and something new for our charity. We have to think of the future and how we can be here in another 27 years' time and Legacy and increasing donations is something we need help with (come and help us if you have time and skills?).

As with all things time spent on this does eat into time we could spend helping clients, and that will always take priority especially with the need increasing year on year.

As we try to survive as a charity and move forward, having negotiated the pandemic we do not want to be a victim of it. Looking at ways of becoming more sustainable over the coming years is a must.

This will be so difficult for smaller charities like ours, who live on the breadline using funding to help as many people as possible in the best way.

Funders, fundraisers and sponsors need to refocus on community services like ours who know the people we help so well, know what really affects their day to day living and all the hurdles they have to get over just to have some sort of quality of life.

Simon Arthur

Manager - PCAS



Registered Charity Number 1187362



## Allisone Arthur

## Evaluation Manager

I've been with PCAS since 2007. I originally came from Exeter in Devon, moving to Shropshire in 1988. I have a grandson with Autism & know he will need a service like ours one day. I hate to think there may not be any help for him by the time he needs some.

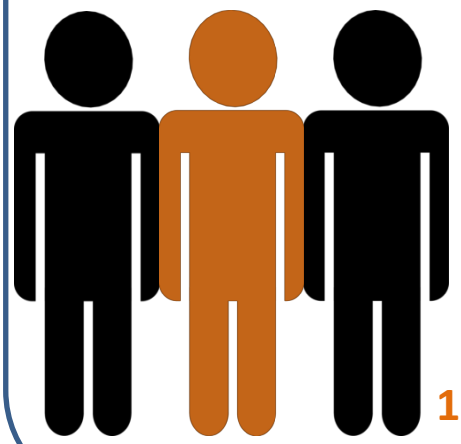
This has been a very difficult year again for everyone & especially for a small charity like ours. Our manager has been hard pressed searching for funding to cover PPE & as other services closed or were not accessible to our clients, getting them the help they so badly needed became nigh on impossible. We are lucky to have a manager & advocates who are as absolutely dedicated to our charity & helping the most vulnerable of people.

I totally enjoy the challenges brought by our small charity, there is always something new to aim for such as the need to encapsulate statistics in a new way for our funders. I love the variety and "free hand" of organising my own workload. We are a "Team" at PCAS, which includes the Manager, all the Advocates and the support from our invaluable Trustees. As a small team, we are all dedicated and enthusiastic.

I do all the evaluation encapsulation, from building bespoke databases, financial sheets and building graphs from bespoke feedback forms. I provide all the statistics for reporting to our funders, each requiring information in a different format. I also deal with all the Advocates paperwork, inputting data, timesheets etc. This past year, I have looked at all our recording mechanisms and have streamlined things where I can, adding lots more calculations to my excel sheets.

We have a new Web Site which better reflects the work we do. It is crisp and informative. We have a "Donate" button, which we hope will enable us to raise some much needed funds

I have designed and compiled this "AGM" report, so I hope you enjoy reading how busy we have been, and the benefits to those we help, which of course is the most important thing.



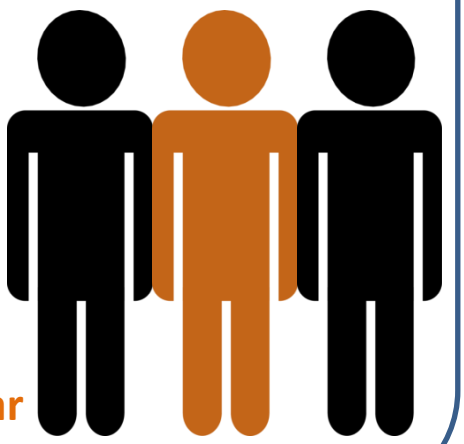
**IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR**

**2021 – 2022**

**PCAS HAS HELPED**

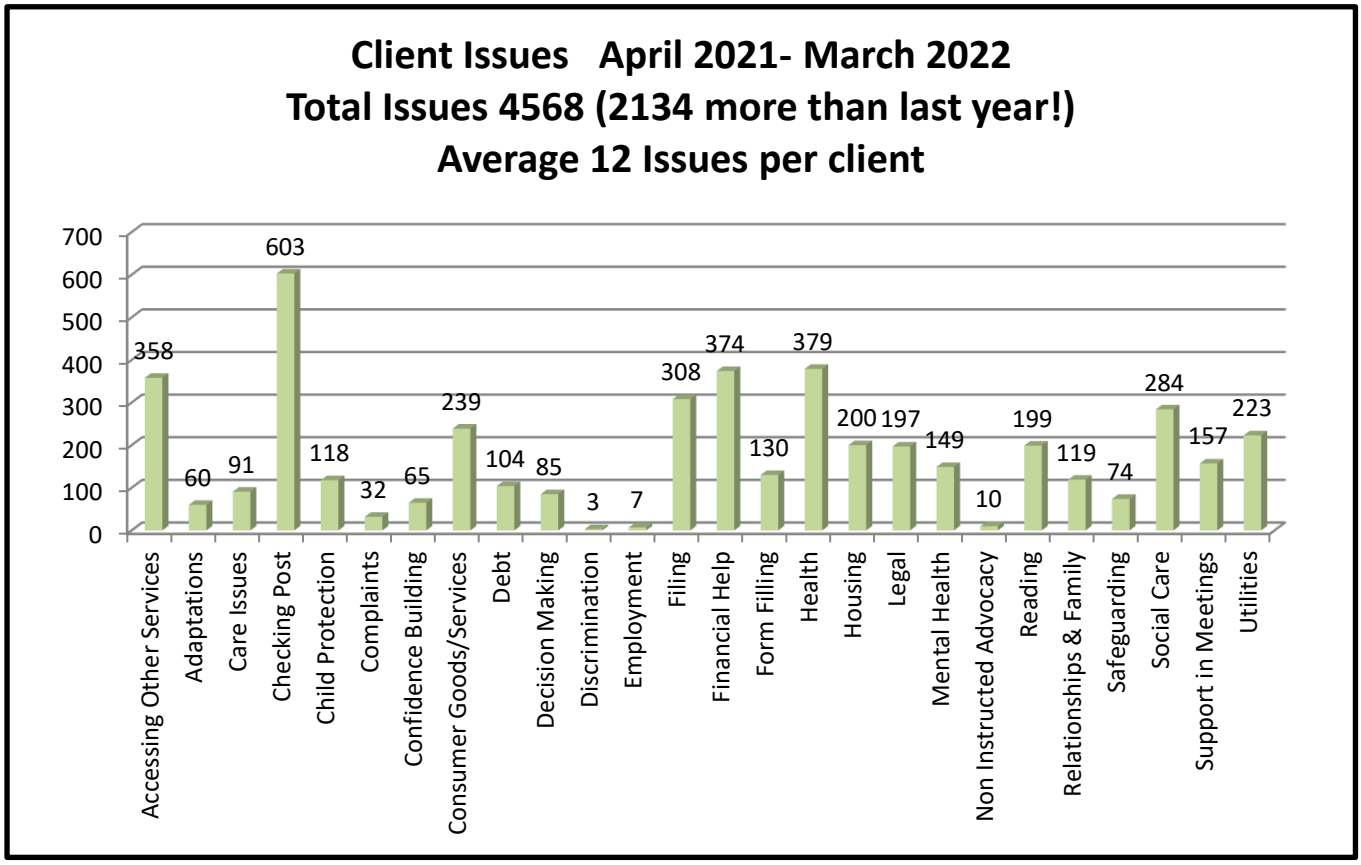
**368 PEOPLE**

**16 more clients than last year**



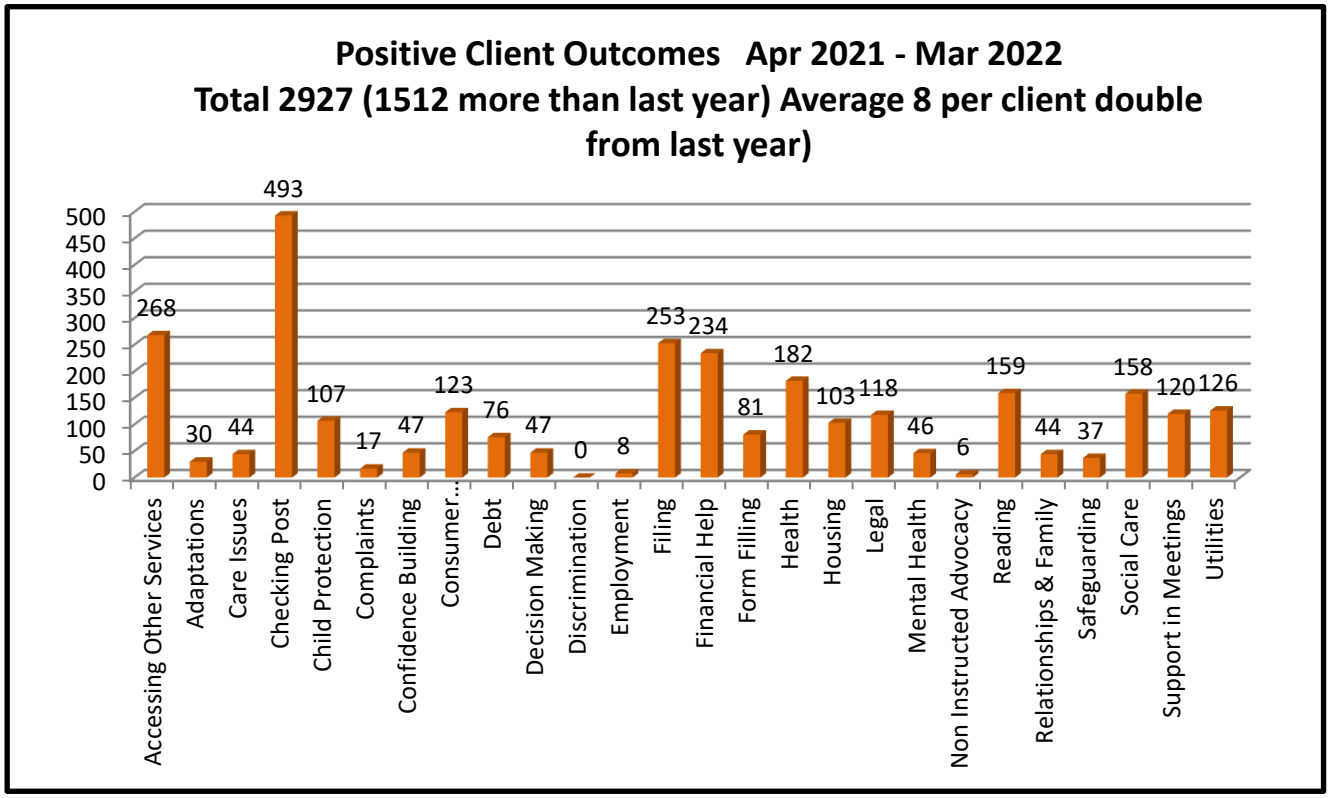
Over this financial year, PCAS has helped clients with a whopping **4568** client issues (2434 last year), almost double from last year. This just shows how hard our advocates are working and just how much support our clients need from us.

Dividing the amount of issues (4568) by the amount of clients helped (368) gives an average of each client having **over 12 issues** that clients have needed help with. That's without the 1984 other services (518 more than last year) we have accessed on client's behalf to assist them further.

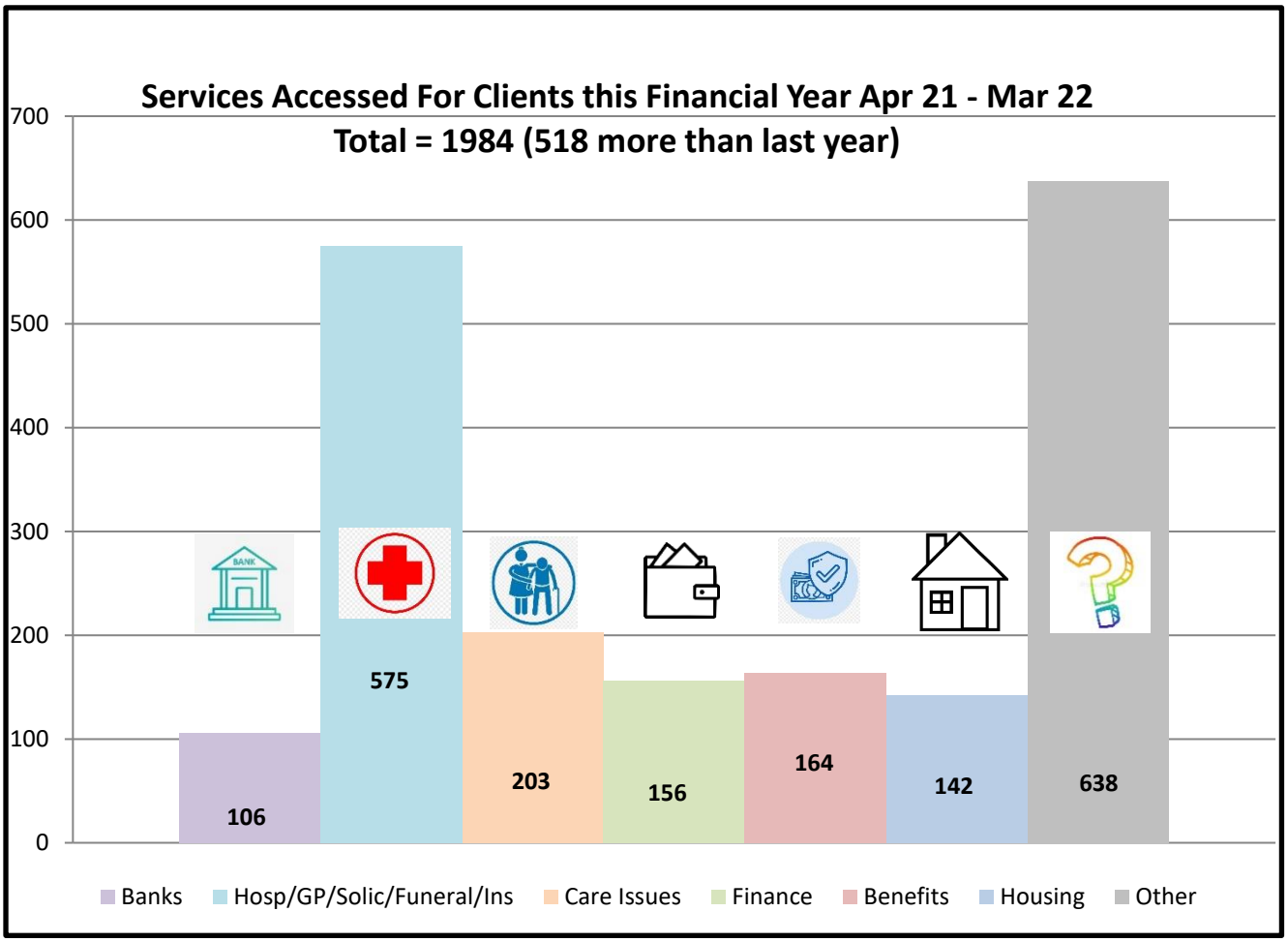


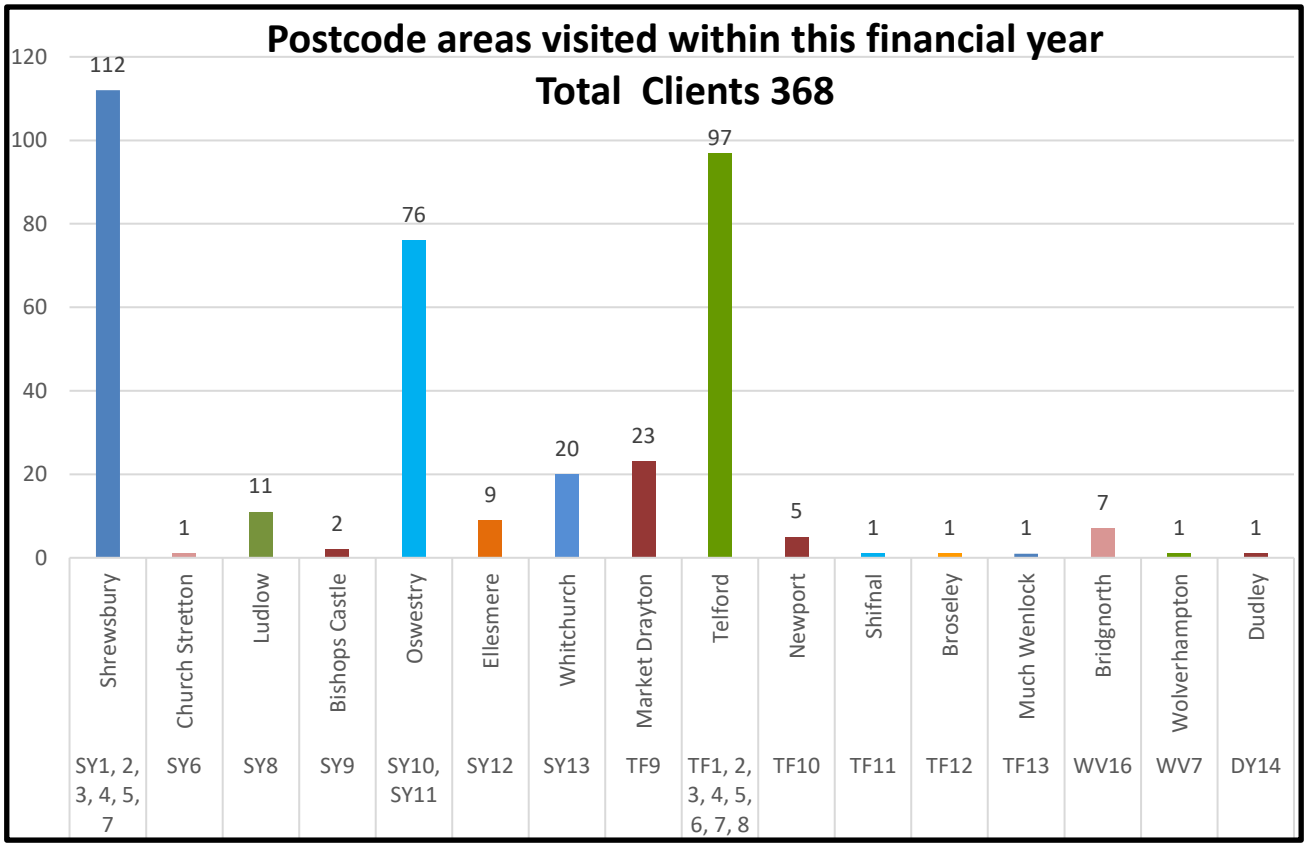



Registered Charity Number 1187362

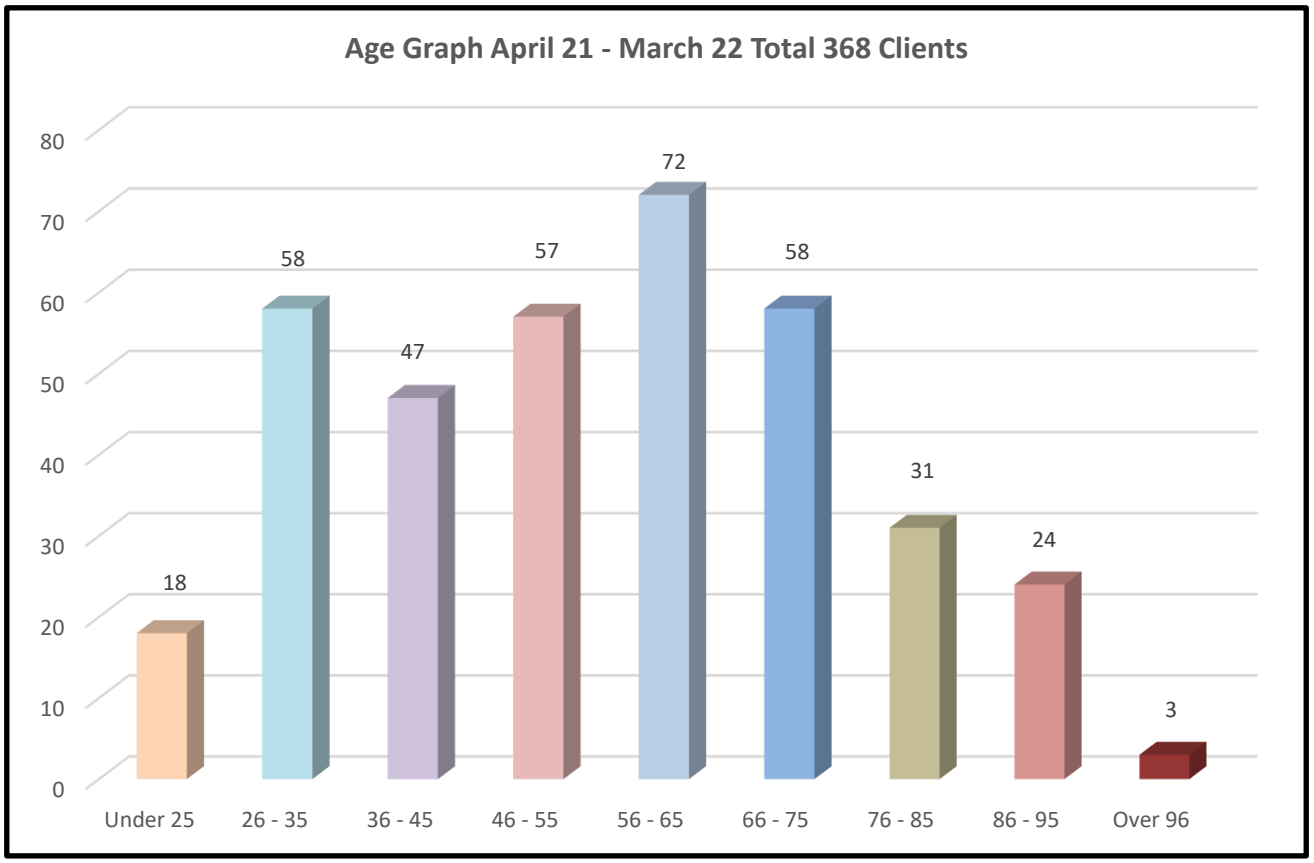



Clients often require many other services to put their life back on track, an average of 8 other services per client this year. Our Advocates are very skilled and persistent at getting other services to help their clients. The Below graph shows which areas clients need assistance from other services in more detail.






The above chart shows the area spread in which we have visited our clients this financial year.






Registered Charity Number 1187362

## 10,556 STAFF HOURS

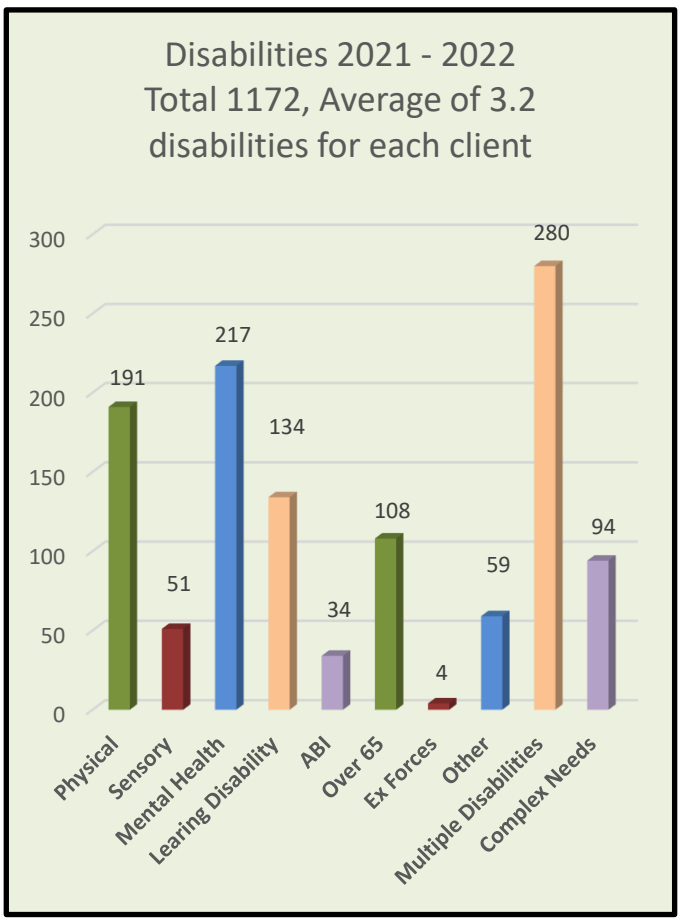


## SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## We have made 1859 individual visits to clients – 865 MORE than last year!



## Covering the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin




## WE SPENT £10.34

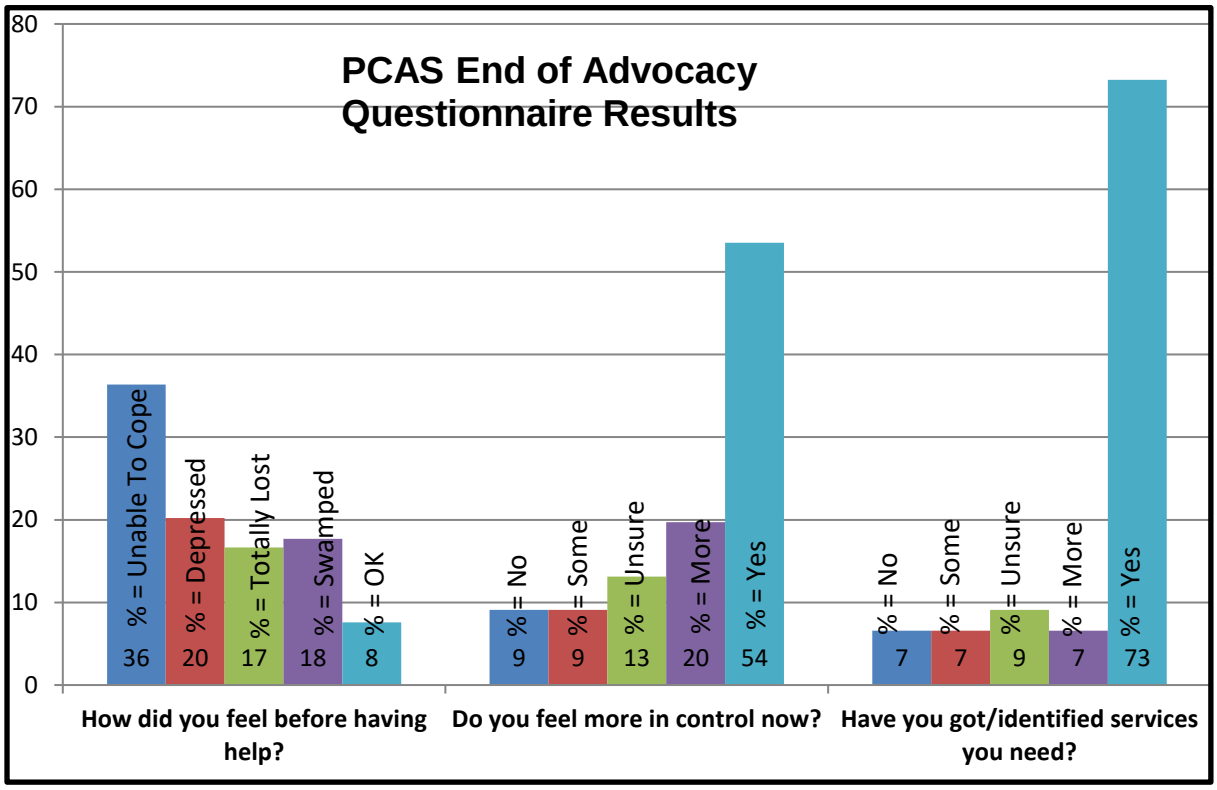
**(£0.67 less than last year)**



## PER PERSON PER WEEK IN SHOPSHIRE



Registered Charity Number 1187362


PCAS End of Advocacy Questionnaire Results
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
% = Unable To Cope
36
% = Depressed
20
% = Totally Lost
17
% = Swamped
18
% = OK
8
% = No
9
% = Some
9
% = Unsure
13
% = More
20
% = Yes
54
% = No
7
% = Some
7
% = Unsure
9
% = More
7
% = Yes
73
How did you feel before having help?
Do you feel more in control now?
Have you got/identified services you need?

## Social Media

**Within this last 12 months, we have increased our social media presence. We have employed Kim Gilmour on a rolling monthly basis to do this for us. Her report follows:**

I have really enjoyed supporting Shropshire PCAS over the last year. The charity had just set up social media profiles to complement the new website but there was no actual presence and this was felt to be a disadvantage when completing grant applications.

Increasingly both supporters and the general public expect charities to maintain multiple social media accounts. Funders are interested in having a mechanism to promote projects and funding and the public would question an organisations legitimacy if they can't be found online and on social media.

Whilst PCAS had a fairly new website which included all the essential elements such as Who we Are and What we Do as well as information about Supporting, Donating and Volunteering, the social media accounts were set up, but with the bare minimum of information.

I was approached by Trustee Simon Harris, a fellow member of the FSB to put together a marketing strategy starting in April 2021. The strategy was designed to raise awareness, reinforce the branding and core values, engage with funders, trustees, volunteers and the general public and drive traffic to the website. This involved managing the social media accounts, producing consistent content and doing a monthly blog to keep the website active (static sites get poor ratings when it comes to search engines).

The Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/ShropshirePCAS) was set up but had no information so using images, key words in the descriptions page I ensured the page looks engaging and can be easily found. Content in the form of posts and videos, case studies, appeals for donors etc. is posted 3 times a week. The page now has 100 followers (96 likes). Engagement varies but the average reach (how many times it appears in the news feed of followers) is around 50, which is good considering there are only 100 followers. Generally, reach is around 5% of followers. More data will be available when the page reaches 100 likes.

A Twitter account was already set up, which now has 140 followers, shortened versions of the Facebook posts are tweeted 3 times a week. In addition, the charity is supported by Shrewsbury Morris, with over 110,000 followers, who re-tweets or posts original tweets as part of a low-cost sponsorship deal. Again this is about raising awareness and reinforcing the branding and core values. With the additional support, posts are getting on average of 13 engagements per posts.

A LinkedIn Company Page was also set up from scratch which has 76 followers. Content is posted twice a week to the Company Page and once a week to Simon Harris's personal profile as a trustee. Staff members are good at sharing the content from the Company Page but there is little engagement from others. However, the page is showing up in searches (e.g. 70 in this current week), this means that the keywords are working. Organic reach is hard to measure as each post has to be analysed individually, however each post is getting some impressions (reach).

A Google Business Profile is another way that customers can find and review the charity. It can also be used as a social media platform and therefore key information was entered and one post a week is done on this platform to ensure the charity looks active.

Over the last 12 months there have been 9 blogs of news releases on the site which is helping with making the site more visible to search engines. Topics have ranged from announcements on funding to 'What is Independent Advocacy' to blogs about the charity's responds to the pandemic.

Kim Gilmour

Director, Connect Marketing

**We have engaged The Shrewsbury Morris Dancers on a rolling monthly basis to help us increase our following and raise awareness of PCAS. Their report follows:**

In April 2021, Shrewsbury Morris Dancers (SMD) were approached by Shropshire PCAS with a view to "partnering up" in order to help spread the word about PCAS, their organisation and their work in the local community, to be done via the SMD Twitter social media account. The SMD Twitter account is a very active, proactive and well followed account, currently (at time of writing) with over 110,000 followers all over Shropshire, the UK and the rest of the world. The PCAS Twitter account at the time of the approach was relatively small, having just started and the idea was to effectively allow SMD to "take over" the promotion of the PCAS account via regular, targeted tweets, use of apps to highlight the PCAS logo in different, eye catching ways and to promote the organisation as much as possible on a day to day basis.

Shropshire PCAS very kindly granted SMD a "sponsorship" of £40/month following a Board Meeting and discussion in order to conduct this publicity campaign. This arrangement is still currently in place as at 12 Apr 2022.

SMD do not physically control the PCAS Twitter feed and therefore cannot increase its following directly, but are in a position to widely spread knowledge and the associated needs of Shropshire PCAS via their own.

Since the beginning of this arrangement, the SMD Twitter account has included at least on a weekly basis (and most times even more frequently) specific, tailored messages about Shropshire PCAS, its activities, needs, information on donation and requests to local businesses to go into partnership with Shropshire PCAS. These are then forwarded on by the followers of the SMD account, thus reaching an even wider audience.

We believe that the profile of Shropshire PCAS has been greatly raised by the partnership arrangement with SMD and we sincerely hope that some of this enhanced publicity is translating into positive, tangible benefits to Shropshire PCAS.

We would be very pleased to continue helping Shropshire PCAS and wish to extend our sincerest thanks to all there, for their kind partnership. We hope that this arrangement may continue into the future.

Shrewsbury Morris Dancers

# Our dedicated Advocacy staff



Lynne Davis, Jackie Copson, Simon Arthur (Manager), Glenda Crawshaw (assistant Manager), Maura Atterbury, Wendy Timmis & Ann Shaw

## Another year at PCAS - Glenda Crawshaw, Assistant Manager

Another busy year at PCAS, with more disabled people than ever wanting to access our services. Mental health in general has deteriorated amongst our clients, the escalating costs of fuel, gas and electricity has started to take its toll on the community. Our clients are genuinely scared of how they are going to cope with their bills doubling in some cases. Of course, at PCAS, we are doing all we can to help and support, by accessing charities and big organisations to help fund their essential services, such as water, gas and electricity. Organisations such as The Big Difference Scheme, Severn Trent Water, Warm Home Discount Scheme, to name a few.
We have been back visiting our clients for quite a while now, and still we feel the impact of Covid, waiting lists and delays in most areas we work in. But hopefully, this will ease in the coming months.

On the plus side, it is nice to see some of our clients being able to get out and about again, meeting people and socialising, something that has been sorely missed over the past couple of years.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Another year at PCAS – Jackie Copson, Advocate

February 2022 saw the beginning of my fifth year working for PCAS and I enjoy my role and find it every bit as fulfilling as when I first started and it continues to be a privilege to work with my clients.

There is never a day when I get up and think – I don't really want to go to work today and that I think, is job satisfaction indeed.

I still work with some of the same clients as when I started with PCAS and strong, trusting bonds have been established.

I can think of two clients who once were in what could best be described as financial chaos but are now living with financial stability.

One client is almost completely financially independent now having set up and taught the client how to use telephone banking – just the kind of outcome that we want.
One of my other long term clients does try to do things independently but often things go wrong because of not following processes etc. (this was particularly the case when we were not able to carry out face to face meetings during Covid-19 pandemic) but the client knows I am always there to get things back on track.

Unfortunately, I have also seen some long term clients deteriorate in health and become even more dependent on advocacy support and some sadly have passed away.
We are now working in a new world of face coverings and lateral flow tests like many other workers but at least we can see our clients in person now and if there is one thing that we learned during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was that telephone contact was a very poor substitute to seeing people in person.

There are still some frustrations, particularly in reaching other services for clients by 'phone when we are with them, anyone who has tried to talk to someone in the DVLA will know what I mean! Things don't really feel 'normal' and we have to keep on being flexible and adapt to do the best for our clients whatever this year presents us with.

## Another year at PCAS – Maura Atterbury, Advocate

It has been very exciting since coming out of lock down and being able to arrange regular visits seeing our clients face to face on a more regular basis.

It is evident that there have been lots of changes and the way the clients have struggled through COVID19 so really reassuring that we are now back supporting them and making their life a little easier.

I feel the greatest impact on the clients has been isolation and their feelings of being deserted? And for me I also struggled with knowing that clients were not being supported in the usual way due to restrictions, However I can now see the change on their faces and their growing confidence when we meet to discuss the support they require.

Thoroughly enjoy being in the position of working for PCAS and ensuring we continue the good work with the general public



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Another year at PCAS – Wendy Timmis, Advocate

I have worked for Shropshire PCAS for the last 3 and a half years but is seems so much longer as time has gone so quickly. The clients that I meet are all unique with their own issues and this keeps my role varied, very busy, sometimes challenging but always rewarding. This job is completely different to previous jobs I have had but is a role where I can use my gained life experience to help people, especially for some, at very traumatic times in their lives.

During my time with PCAS we have had the Covid pandemic which did put a restriction on how I reached my clients but it meant I had to be more resourceful. Clients still expected a level of support but by keeping in contact by phone and helping point them in the right direction for other sources of relief, I helped them find a way through. PCAS `s dedication to maintaining the Advocacy service with mine and my client`s safety in mind was paramount. Liaison with other local services was problematic at times as they were more closed off but persistence was key to keeping going. Despite the challenges I was still able to assist clients with sorting legal issues, assessments with Social Workers, sorting help to complete forms and apply for replacement driving licences, bus passes etc.

Since coming out of lockdown it has got easier to assist my clients and has also opened up the world again to helping them. It has also made me appreciate how much society now relies on technology and that for some clients this is an extra hurdle to overcome. It makes me more determined to battle on on their behalf and why Advocacy is so important.

## Another year at PCAS – Lynne Davis, Advocate

The past year working with PCAS has been enjoyable, interesting, stressful at times and frustrating due to Covid restrictions and the effect these have had, and are still having, on being able to make contact with the Local Authority and many other organisations and be able to get a response within an acceptable amount of time to enable me to support my clients properly.

I am working with client groups I have had no previous experience of working with, in particular around Child Protection issues, Mental Health and people struggling with debt. It has been an eye-opener to realise how many people desperately need some support but fail to meet the strict criteria to get any assistance from the Local Authority and consequently without the support of organisations such as PCAS they are just left to flounder and their problems just get worse.

I have always felt that I can get support from my manager and colleagues if I am unsure about anything or just need a listening ear if something has arisen that I have found upsetting and I find our Team Meetings help a great deal as we can all support each other by sharing information and experiences. I really appreciate the fact that PCAS understands that the only way you can do your best for a client is to meet with them face to face and that they can keep the same advocate so that they do not have to deal with more than one person. The importance of this seems to have been lost within a lot of other organisations and I feel this has been detrimental to the services they provide.

## Another year at PCAS – Ann Shaw, Advocate

This year has again been a challenging one due to Covid restrictions. It seemed no sooner than we were back into the routine of working, we went into lockdown again. It is a relief now to have many restrictions lifted.

There have been highs and lows again this year. Three of my clients passed away suddenly within a three-week period. When you are supporting people living with different disabilities, this is to be expected. However, it is still upsetting to learn that someone you have had a close working relationship with has died.

There are those times when you feel as if you are making a massive difference in people's lives, especially for those who are dependent on benefits. I have been able to get huge refunds for people



Registered Charity Number 1187362

with dementia who have been paying council tax erroneously. I have been working with a client who has been in debt for some time. There was a query over his financial capacity, but he was deemed capable by Adult Social Services. The client and I set out a plan of action for making payments to his creditors every month. This has been in place for one year. He is still sticking to the plan and his debts are reducing accordingly.

My job is not always an easy one. Enabling clients to become self-sufficient may never become a reality for some. However, it is really rewarding to sign off on those clients who have managed to achieve this.

## Jackie Copson:

**Experience of clients with learning disability /difficulty involved in child protection and Family Court proceedings during the covid-19 pandemic.**

I currently have four clients on my caseload who have learning disability/difficulties and who are involved in child protection processes and court proceedings in respect of their children.

This is difficult and distressing at any time, but throw in the Covid-19 pandemic and the difficulties escalate enormously.

Almost overnight clients were expected to participate in statutory meetings and Court hearings remotely by Micro Soft Teams or by mobile phone, but here is the problem; many clients do not have the necessary devices or internet connection or the wherewithal to use such technology.

These clients were forced to join meetings by mobile phones, thus making them more isolated and remote from everyone else participating in the meeting, not being able to know or see who was speaking, making for greater confusion and lack of understanding for those with learning disability or difficulty.

At PCAS, we are fortunate in being able to meet our clients face to face in their homes and we know from experience that there is no substitute for face to face contact.

I have been able to help my clients participate in statutory child protection meetings and Court hearings by taking my lap top to their homes so that they can join meetings on the same level as other participants with my support.

All of a sudden they are almost literally ‘back in the room’ and able to participate in the meeting on a more equal standing.

Recently I supported a client to participate in a five-day court hearing via my laptop from her home, without my support she would have had to participate via her mobile phone.

Can you imagine participating in a meeting from 10.00 till 17.00 by mobile phone?
It seems unthinkable and yet it is expected.

Even the president of the Family division of the High Court, Sir Andrew McFarlane spoke out about how parents were being disadvantaged by this system and that was more than a year ago- but it is still happening because Covid-19 has not gone away.

I have to acknowledge the commitment of the Local Authority social workers in children’s services and their admin staff, Independent Reviewing Officers and other partners such as Solicitors who have ensured that I have received links to join meetings by email in order for me to be able to support my clients to the best of my ability.

The sad thing is, I don’t see change coming for our clients anytime soon.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Advocates Case Studies

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **1384** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **71** |
| **Disability** | **Mental Health and Physical disability, Communication Difficulties.** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **2 months of fortnightly meetings** |

**The issue**

The client was referred to PCAS by a clinical psychologist who was meeting with the client regularly and who identified multiple barriers to client's recovery.
This was compounded by communication difficulties and the possibility of the client presenting as angry which has led to services declining to support her in the past.
Client was becoming overwhelmed with dealing with her correspondence, filling out forms and finding information to access services and this was causing her great anxiety and combined with social isolation and having no one to support her she was feeling that she couldn't move forward with her life.
Client living alone and has no family.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

After meeting with the client and having developed a good rapport, it was clear that the client just needed someone to help her sort her correspondence and set up a filing system so she knew where her documents were and to complete some forms with her that she needed to do but couldn't face them, causing further anxiety.
It appeared that all paperwork posed a challenge to the client and she was struggling with understanding.
Client was thinking about settling her affairs in order and was needing information about making a simple will and making provision for her pets in the event of her death.

**The outcome**

Over two months of fortnightly visits, paperwork and correspondence was sorted in to a filing system so that client knew where to find it.
Registration forms for animal charity completed so that pets would be rehomed if she couldn't care for them.
A simple will template was discussed that client could write herself given that she has no bequests and no money or property to bequeath and only wished to address the clearance of her property and sale of some furniture (She had someone who could do this for her).
Client had worried for so long about addressing these issues and was grateful to have advocacy support and most importantly, someone to listen to her.

**The challenges and how they were met**

There were no real challenges, the client knew what she wanted to do and was just so grateful to have someone to help her to do it.
I use this case study to demonstrate that sometimes support with seemingly simple things can make a huge difference and Independent Advocates do not always have to be tackling complex issues for clients to make a difference to someone's life.

**Conclusion**

At my latest visit, I reviewed our work together to date with the client, she told me that she felt less anxious, less alone and that she definitely felt like she was now moving forward with her life and wasn't being held back.
She felt relief at having addressed issues that she needed to but hadn't known how to do herself.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **DC 1300** |
| **Gender** | **MALE** |
| **Age** | **75** |
| **Disability** | **SEVERELY SIGHT IMPAIRED** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **ONGOING** |
| **The issue** | |
| I support an elderly gentleman who is severely sight impaired due to a diabetic diagnosis. He is extremely independent, lives alone, with minimal care, and manages exceptionally well. He has recently had a bit of work completed on his property, which has prompted some `tidying up` of paperwork, some of which is years old. Due to his disability, this is something that is not achievable on his own, and needs support to read through the documents, to enable him to choose what to keep, what to discard. He wanted someone he could trust to sort through with him. Obviously, some of this paperwork is of a personal and private nature. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| I supported the client to sort through a huge amount of paperwork, lots of which he was able to discard, he found a few things that he thought had long gone. Some important documents were found, and subsequently filed away for future use. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| The outcome was that we have made a start on the issues, and he is very pleased that he has found some important documents, and also that he has been able to discard of lots of unwanted paperwork with confidence. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| The challenges were mostly to do with his disability. I sometimes had to describe objects that I found in amongst paperwork e.g. ornaments, diabetic paraphernalia, etc. – this could be quite tricky at times, but we made light of things to keep things upbeat, when we were both struggling to make each other understood. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| Lots has been done to resolve the paperwork issue, however, there is still an awful lot to sort through, so this case is ongoing | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **CL 1071** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **62** |
| **Disability** | **Severe physical disability** |
| **The issue** | |
| Client is a lady with severe physical disabilities that I have worked closely with for some time. Both my client, and her daughter, were concerned that she would not have enough money to pay for her funeral and her daughter in particular was becoming upset, as her mother had stipulated that she wanted to be buried rather that cremated which was more expensive and, as neither of them had any savings it was something that was a constant worry. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| As I had worked to get the cost of her telephone contract reduced and also got her accepted on The Big Difference Scheme to get her payments to Severn Trent reduced, we discussed that the money she was saving each month could be used to take out a suitable Life Insurance policy that would provide enough to pay for her funeral costs and take away the worry both her and her daughter had about how this would be paid for. | |
| **The outcome & Conclusion** | |
| After shopping around for the best deal, this is now in place and has taken away the worry and stress of how her funeral costs will be met. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **MC 1283** |
| **Gender** | **FEMALE** |
| **Age** | **55** |
| **Disability** | **MENTAL HEALTH** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **ONGOING** |
| **The issue** | |
| I support a lady with mental health diagnosis. She had also recently been diagnosed with a condition that affected her physically, and took some time to accept. In the meantime, she had not been able to deal with her bills. She had got into significant debt with utilities and Council Tax, she felt totally overwhelmed with it all. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| I sat down with her, prioritised her debts and suggested she contact CAB for help – which I said I could support with. I said I could phone some of the utility companies with her, to find out the current state of play with her bills, which we did. I wrote down what she owed to each company, and liaised with her via text and email and on a visit, when she was well enough to see me. This gave her the confidence to sort these debts out, and now has set up payment plans with them, and feels she is now back in control of her life. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| Although the debt issues are not completely resolved, there is now real clarity on what she owes, and to whom, which has given her the clarity she needed to start sorting out the debts, and now has set up payment plans with them, and feels she is now back in control of her debts. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| The client did not want to approach the CAB, she said that she had tried CAB previously, but did not find them useful, and chose not to approach them again. I said that I was happy to attend with her at CAB, but she was adamant that she would not work with them. So, we tried to ring Stepchange, but they were really difficult to make contact with, and eventually gave this up, as it was too stressful for my client, she was more comfortable with myself, and the way that we worked together. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| Lots has been done to resolve the debt issue, and most of this was done by the client, when the debts were identified, and made clear to her. This gave her the confidence to go through them, and is well on the way to become debt free. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **1289** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **50** |
| **Disability** | **Learning Disability** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Six months** |

## The issue

The client was being supported through child protection processes which mainly involved taking time to help client to read and understand lengthy documents in reference to her child before a Court hearing.
The Local Authority plan was for child to be removed from her care and placed with connected carers (family members). A Court hearing was to follow.
The client did not agree with the Local Authority plan and therefore the Court hearing would be a contested hearing.
A date for the hearing was set and it was to be a five-day hearing, because of Covid-19, the hearing was to be held remotely by Microsoft Teams.
The client was supported in meetings with a barrister and her solicitor in the lead up to the Court hearing.
The client's solicitor's office was not allowing clients to attend in person so joining the Court hearing from there was not an option and the expectation was that the client would join the hearing via her mobile phone.
So that expectation was that the client would attend a remote Court hearing from 09.00 – 17.00 for five consecutive days via a mobile phone.
Clearly this is not very easy for anyone, let alone someone with a learning disability who is also nervous and stressed about the whole process, not least the likely outcome and not really able to deal with the technical and technology involved.

## The steps taken to address the issue

Fortunately, the client did have internet connection so a plan was arranged for me to take my PCAS laptop to her home each day so that she could join the Court hearing.
A link to join was sent by the Court each day and the client participated that way.
Clearly these were long and intense days for the client, but I was able to request that the Judge allow the client to have regular breaks.

## The outcome

Judgement was expected to be given on day five but the Judge was ill and it took another two weeks for the client to receive the Judgement in writing, the client received this via her solicitor.
The Judgement was in agreement with the Local Authority recommendation and the child was moved to live with connected carers.

## The challenges and how they were met

Each day there was some anxiety that the internet connection might be disrupted as the client lived in a rural location and the client had to make child care arrangements for each day.
It was also necessary to help the client understand that other family members could not be in the home.
From an Advocate's point of view, it was not easy to be in someone's home for a lengthy period each day as well as trying to support the client and reassure her.
On day three of the Court hearing, the Judge decided that she wished to see the client in person so I accompanied the client to the Court (with all Covid-19 precautions in place) and the client gave evidence in person with all other parties joining the hearing remotely which was very stressful for the client.

## Conclusion

Although the outcome was deeply traumatic for the client, I believe that the advocacy support she received did make the process somewhat easier for the client and she did not have to navigate the process on her own for which she was very grateful.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **GS 1133** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **79** |
| **Disability** | **Physical disability, Dementia** |

**The issue**

Is an elderly gentleman with physical disabilities and a diagnosis of dementia? He resides in a nursing home and has no family or friends to visit or support him.
I visit to explain and file all his post and deal with any requests or queries he may have. This ensures he doesn't miss anything and stays on top of his bills, appointments and general welfare.
As I was about to leave after a visit he asked me where I was going next. When I told him I was going to Whitchurch he asked me if I would go to the antique centre there and get him a signed photograph of Christina Trevanion who was one of the owners of this business. She is a well- known TV personality and one of the presenters of Bargain Hunt. He explained that he thought she was lovely and always watched the programme and that he had asked some of the staff at the nursing home who lived in Whitchurch if they would try to get him a signed photo but none of them had done anything.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I emailed Trevanion and Dean, the antique business in question and they responded to say they had forwarded my email to The Bargain Hunt Team at the BBC who would do their best to help. A few days later I received signed photographs of all of the Bargain Hunt Team, including Christina Trevanion, plus a selection of Bargain Hunt keyrings and pens.

**The outcome & Conclusion**

When I gave these items to client at my next visit he was absolutely thrilled and is keeping them all in the drawer of his bedside cabinet. This demonstrated to me how by doing that little bit extra you can brighten up someone's life. All it took was one simple email!

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **KM 1149** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **67** |
| **Disability** | **Mental Health/Elderly** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **9 months approx.** |

**The issue**

Client was unable to set up a Direct Debit to pay her utility provider.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

- Identified that the Meter/Smart Meter was not compatible with meter fitted in property
- Contacted provider giving meter reading
- Numerous calls and promises
- Obtained managers name and emailed her direct, asking for support, identified timescale and informed manager that I would be taking this to the Ombudsman if not settled ASAP due to the stress this was causing the client

**The outcome**

- New meters fitted
- Obtained meter and serial no and forwarded in email to manager
- Direct Debit set up first payment due to 01-04-2022
- Good will gesture reducing monies owed by hundreds of pounds

**The challenges and how they were met**

- Time calling call centre and them not understanding what I was saying or being cut off after nearly an hour wait
- Failed promises
- Timescales

**Conclusion**

Client extremely happy that this issue has been addressed

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **VP 1141** |
| **Gender** | **Femail** |
| **Age** | **46** |
| **Disability** | **Learning Difficulties** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **3 months** |
| **The issue** | |
| Client has learning difficulties and had been living with her partner who was over pension age and had significant health issues. The couple were living on the partner`s pension age benefits. Sadly, the partner passed away and this meant that my client did not have any benefits apart from her own disability benefit. As she was under pension age she needed support to apply for support in her own right. Due to the Covid pandemic she was unable to attend a face to face meeting with Citizens Advice Bureau and needed support to make any telephone application. She did also not have use of online technology. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| I supported the client to access the telephone claim system to apply for Universal Credit which included housing benefit to pay her rent. As it was a clerical claim it took some liaising between the local job centre and Universal Credit dept. It required dropping off copies of required documents such as her Tenancy agreement, at the local job centre. I also helped her then apply by telephone for council tax support and also a reduction in her water bill by helping her apply for the Severn Trent Big difference scheme. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| Client is now in receipt of the correct benefits and able to pay for care support through her disability benefits. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| Client could not always concentrate when speaking with the relevant departments and she needed to give the correct information to verify her identity. I had to create a crib sheet of her personal information and prompt her to give the response they needed. Once this hurdle was overcome she could give her permission for them to speak to me on her behalf. As the claim was clerical and not online it took more time to process the application especially when the job centre cancelled planned telephone appointments without notice. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| Although the process to get my client`s affairs sorted was time consuming it had a positive result. Unfortunately ,the system for claiming benefits is primarily set up for online processing and with lack of access to funded support services like the CAB there are lots of clients like mine that find it hard or impossible to navigate the system without a great deal of support. | |



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **GR 1174** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **39** |
| **Disability** | **Learning Difficulties** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **12month** |
| **The issue** | |
| My client is a single mother with slight learning difficulties. She has three children. The youngest two are at primary school and both have learning disabilities. Her eldest child is at senior school and is classed as a young carer. My client is trying to parent but her son is testing the boundaries and trying to manipulate his mother. He is telling her that he wants to kill himself and self-harm. My client was under the support of Early Help but was signed off from Social services. His behaviour is having a detrimental effect on the behaviour of the younger children and this is coming out at school. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| Since last year I have been trying to get support for my client and her son through School, School nursing and her own psychologist has also tried to help. At last the junior school are aware of the situation and have helped by referring back to social services through Early Help. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| My client is awaiting them doing a review to see if she can get her son some help. Also his School have now done a referral for counselling that will hopefully come soon. This will allow me to continue with my support for client in other areas. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| My client has trust issues with Early Help as she feels they have only criticised her in the past instead of listening to her concerns about her Son`s mental health. By persuading her that they can help and asking for a different social worker and now having me there to make sure she is heard she has agreed to let them back in. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| My client is hopeful that some support for her son will help her whole family to be happy again and be able to do activities as a family safely. | |



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **PS 1163** |
| **Gender** | **F** |
| **Age** | **40** |
| **Disability** | **Epilepsy, Cognitive difficulties** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **3 years approx.** |

**The issue**

Due to very low attendance at school Child protection have become involved. 2 Children with attendance of below 45%.
Daughter is in secondary school – No disabilities or difficulties
Son in primary school - has widespread eczema and some undiagnosed traits (tics etc)

It would appear that both children decide when and if they are going to school and this fluctuates from day to day, week to week but very rarely do they attend for a full week.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

- Support client (mother) to engage in meetings, ensuring she has a full understanding of what is being expected of her as a mother, her responsibility to increase her children's school attendance, explaining minutes of meetings due to her cognitive impairment.
- Referring onto other agencies i.e., Assistive Technology for support with equipment to remind her of appointments, giving her more control of her life and a feeling of self-worth
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals to enable a holistic working

**The outcome**

- Completion of cognitive assessment
- Police provided a criminal history on latest partner
- Issued with memory minder, watch/alarm and phone which Telford & Wrekin ILC have given advise on how to enter appointments dates etc.,
- On the morning of meetings, I also send a text message as a reminder

**The challenges and how they were met**

- Due to memory issues I was concerned that the client had some cognitive impairment due to a history of seizures.

  An assessment was completed that identified this to be this case and a further in depth assessment has been requested

- Client's choice of partners. The impact this has on the children and welfare of the client.

  There has been quite a lot of police involvement, the client does not see this as a problem (this probably stems from her own upbringing) however the latest partner police issued a crime report that identified in excess of 55 incidents of which 35 convictions to include an array of unacceptable behaviours including domestic violence he is seen as a predator. I read through the report with the client explaining as we went along what it meant and ask if she was a child (i.e., her son/daughter how she would have felt)

- Despite asking at all Child Protection Review and case conferences that the minutes need to be forward to me in a timely manner to enable me to arrange a suitable appointment to go through these with the client this continues to be an issue

**Conclusion**

Due to the complexity of this case and the various escalated incidents the local authority have now issued the client with Pre Proceedings. This is to protect the children from any further harm but may well mean that the children are removed from the family home. Although the daughter now lives with her older sister she will also be part of any long term decision making.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a foundation model constitution for a CIO.

The charity did not become active until 1 June 2020, the date from which the CIO took over the activities, assets and commitments of its antecedent charity, Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy (registered charity number 1102986)

PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service) covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and is a registered charity (number 1187362)

PCAS supports any person aged 18 or over with ANY disability or multiple disabilities.

There is no charge to our clients for our service, which is something we feel very strongly about. Our clients are often the most vulnerable in society, many having multiple disabilities and who do not fit into the remit of other services.

## Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

Prospective trustees come from all walks of life. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please contact the PCAS office on 01691 658008. An informal chat about what we do is the first step, then you would fill in an application form if you are still interested. From there, you would meet a couple of Trustees, and the current board would then vote on your prospective application.

The Board of Trustees meet bi-monthly and at other times deemed necessary. Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no payment for their work/time. They are from a variety of backgrounds and bring varied skills and experience to the Board. We currently have 2 clients, people with disabilities themselves and those with a professional background. The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and meets the charitable outcomes. Day to day operational decisions are taken by the PCAS Manager and staff of the organisation, within the delegated authority conferred by the Board.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error, this has been done.

## Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning the activities for the year.

## Trustees

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chair** | Doreen Ellis |
| **Vice Chair** | Clare Harris |
| **Treasurer** | Peter Quinn |
| **Trustee** | Russell Jones |
| **Trustee** | Simon Harris |
| **Trustee** | Deborah Campbell |

## Staff - PCAS

| | |
|---|---|
| **PCAS Manager/Advocate** | Simon Arthur |
| **Assistant Manager/Shropshire Advocate** | Glenda Crawshaw |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Wendy Timmis |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Jackie Copson |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Lynne Davis |
| **T & W Advocate** | Ann Shaw |
| **T & W Advocate** | Maura Atterbury |
| **Evaluation Administrator** | Allisone Arthur |
| **Volunteer** | Paul Newman |

## Professional Advisors

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bank** | Unity Trust Bank |
| **Building Society** | The West Bromwich |
| **Independent Examiners** | AZETS<br>5-7 Beatrice Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 1QE<br>01691 661144 |

# Financial Review

## Reserves Policy

The free reserves of the charity were £52,316 at the year end and the Trustees consider this amount to be sufficient for their immediate operating requirements. Included in the £52,316 is £30,000 which has been designated for operating costs should funding cease to allow the charity to continue to function whilst further funding is applied for.

## Principal Funding Sources

The charity has been funded by various grants this year from:

The Henry Smith Charity
Private Donation
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
Select Healthcare
Severn Trent Community Fund
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
Independent Age
The Albert Hunt Trust
The Edward Gostling Foundation

The above funders and supporters are the backbone of our charity and without their generous funding we would not be able to provide the service we do.

## Future Developments

We continuously strive to develop our services in order to meet the need of our clients. Funding is always an issue. However, we endeavour to be proactive as we fight for the rights of our vulnerable client group.

On behalf of the board of trustees

……
Mrs D. Ellis
**Chair**
Dated:

# Our Contact Details :-

## PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service)

**Suite 1**

**The Willow Tree**

**Willow Street**

**Oswestry**

**SY11 1AJ**

**Telephone:** **01691 658008**

**Web Site:** **www.shropshirepcas.co.uk**

**Email:** simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk **(PCAS Manager)**

alli@shropshirepcas.co.uk **(Evaluation Administrator)**



Registered Charity Number 1187362

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
For the year ended 31st March 2022

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn. I understand that this has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I conform that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

J M Ollier FCA
Azets Audit Services Limited
5-7 Beatrice Street
Oswestry
SY11 1QU

Dated

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31st March 2022

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds £ | Restricted funds £ | Total 2022 £ | Total 2021 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Incoming resources from generated funds** | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | **3** | **429** | **-** | **429** | 4,017 |
| Charitable activities | **4** | **-** | **194,929** | **194,929** | 170,398 |
| Investments | | **250** | **-** | **250** | 192 |
| Other income | | **-** | **-** | **-** | 2,925 |
| Transfer of funds from antecedent | | **-** | **-** | **-** | 67,266 |
| **Total incoming resources** | | **679** | **194,929** | **195,608** | 244,798 |
| **Resources expended** | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | **5** | **4,275** | **173,987** | **178,262** | 152,048 |
| Other | **9** | **-** | **6,000** | **6,000** | 5,000 |
| **Total resources expended** | | **4,275** | **179,987** | **184,262** | 57,048 |
| **Net incoming resources before transfers** | | **(3,596)** | **14,942** | **11,346** | 87,750 |
| Gross transfers between funds | | **-** | **-** | **-** | - |
| **Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds** | | **(3,596)** | **14,942** | **11,346** | 87,750 |
| Fund balances at 1 April 2021 | | **55,912** | **31,838** | **87,750** | - |
| **Fund balances at 31 March 2022** | | **52,316** | **46,780** | **99,096** | 87,750 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy
Balance Sheet
At 31st March 2022

| | Notes | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | **2022 Total £** | 2021 Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **11** | 265 | **-** | **265** | 354 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Debtors | | **-** | **-** | **-** | - |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 52,051 | 141,201 | **193,252** | 226,946 |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **12** | **-** | (94,421) | **(94,421)** | (139,550) |
| **Net current assets** | | 52,316 | 46,780 | **99,096** | 87,396 |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | 52,316 | 46,780 | **99,096** | 87,750 |
| **Income funds** | | | | | |
| Restricted funds | **13** | | | **46,780** | 31,838 |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | **22,316** | 25,912 |
| Designated funds | | | | **30,000** | 30,000 |
| | | | | **99,096** | 87,750 |

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on

Mrs Doreen Ellis – Chair

## 1 Accounting policies

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy is controlled by its governing document, a constitution and constitutes a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cashflows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the accounts, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees' continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

**1.4 Incoming resources**

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known and the receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes.

**1.5 Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fixtures, fittings and equipment | 25% on a reducing balance |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**1.7 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Recoverable amount is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value in use. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset for which the estimates of future cash flows have not been adjusted.

If the recoverable amount of an asset is estimated to be less than the carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount. An impairment loss is recognised immediately in income/(expenditure) for the year, unless the relevant asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease.

Recognised impairment losses are reversed if, and only if, the reasons for the impairment loss have ceased to apply. Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount, but so that the increased carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in previous years. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised immediately, unless the relevant asset is carried in at a revalued amount, in which case the reversal of the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation increase.

**1.8 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, Other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially recognised at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**1.9 Employee benefits**

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

**1.10 Leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged to income on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

**1.11 Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds can only be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

**1.12 Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

**1.13 Deferred income**

Deferred income is released to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period that the income relates to.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

## 3 Donations and legacies

| | **2022** | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Donations and gifts | 429 | 4,017 |

## 4 Charitable activities

| | **2022** | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Services provided under grants | 194,929 | 167,415 |
| Services provided under contract | - | 2,983 |
| | 194,929 | 170,398 |
| Analysis by fund: | | |
| Unrestricted funds | - | 2,983 |
| Restricted funds | 194,929 | 167,415 |
| | 194,929 | 170,398 |

**5 Charitable activities**

| | **Counselling & Advocacy services** | **2022** | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **£** | £ |
| Staff costs | 160,026 | 160,026 | 139,163 |
| Depreciation and impairment | 89 | 89 | 210 |
| Rent | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,861 |
| Insurance | 644 | 644 | 451 |
| Telephone | 2,739 | 2,739 | 3,948 |
| Postage and stationery | 3,292 | 3,292 | 1,633 |
| Light and hear | 2,856 | 2,856 | - |
| Repairs and renewals | 3,458 | 3,458 | 76 |
| Subscriptions | - | - | 35 |
| Sundry | 158 | 158 | 671 |
| | 178,262 | 178,262 | 152,048 |

**6 Trustees**

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**Trustees' expenses**

During the year there were no expenses reimbursed to trustees (2021: £0).

**7 Employees**

| **Employment Costs** | **2022** | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Wages and salaries | 143,568 | 121,967 |
| | 143,568 | 121,967 |

## 8 Employees

*Continued…*

**Number of employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | **2022 Number** | 2021 Number |
|---|---|---|
| Advocacy work | **7** | 7 |
| Administration | **1** | 1 |
| | **8** | 8 |

There were no employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000.

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

## 9 Other expenses

| | **2022 £** | 2021 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Accountancy | 6,000 | 5,000 |
| | 6,000 | 5,000 |

## 10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

## 11 Tangible fixed assets

| | **Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £** |
|---|---|
| **Cost** | |
| At 1 April 2021 | 2,376 |
| At 31 March 2022 | 2,376 |
| **Depreciation** | |
| At 1 April 2021 | 2,022 |
| Depreciation charge for the year | 89 |
| At 31 March 2022 | 2,111 |
| **Carrying amount** | |
| At 31 March 2022 | 265 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 354 |

| 12 | **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **2022** | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **£** | £ |
| | Other creditors | - | 320 |
| | Accruals | 740 | 2,240 |
| | Deferred income | 93,681 | 136,990 |
| | | 94,421 | 139,550 |

All restricted funds for the year are to be used on the advocacy project.

**13 Movement in funds**

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes (all funds are held as cash):

| | | **Movement in funds** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Balance at 1 April 2021** | **Incoming resources** | **Resources Expended** | **Transfers between** | **Balance at 31 March 2022** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Garfield Weston | 6,052 | 15,000 | (11,026) | - | **10,026** |
| Lloyds | 1,151 | 15,681 | (17,766) | - | **(934)** |
| Independent | - | 13,602 | (13,562) | - | **40** |
| Henry Smith | 2,922 | 19,000 | (19,424) | - | **2,498** |
| Private Grant | 3,782 | 66,667 | (55,565) | - | **14,884** |
| Reaching Communities | - | 36,912 | (33,117) | - | **3,795** |
| Postcode Lottery | - | 9,667 | (11,236) | - | **(1,569)** |
| Trusthouse | - | 10,000 | (9,008) | - | **992** |
| Others | 17,931 | 8,400 | (9,283) | - | **17,048** |
| Restricted funds | 31,838 | 152,458 | (148,887) | - | **46,780** |

**14. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions in the year, nor in the year to 2021.

## Independent Examiners

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that AZETS be re-appointed as independent examiners for the ensuing year.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of our Registered Charity, as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and applications, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements; and

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Registered Charity and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Registered Charities Act of 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Registered Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Disclosure

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is not any relevant accounting information of which the charities examiners are unaware. Additionally, the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the Charity's examiners are aware of said information.

## This Annual Report was designed and compiled by Allisone Arthur

## Thank You to all our funders and donors

The National Lottery Community Fund (reaching Communities)

Private Donation

Nationwide Community Grants

The February Foundation

Arnold Clark Community Fund

Lloyds Bank Foundation

The Henry Smith Charity

Garfield Weston Foundation

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

Select Healthcare

Postcode Neighbourhood Trust

Independent Age

Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK

Neighbourly

Other Donations

**SHROPSHIRE PEER COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY SERVICE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187362

# Accounts

PCAS

Here when you need us

**Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service**

Registered Charity Number **1187362**

Advocacy QPM AWARD

# Annual report of the CIO for year ending 31 March 2021

**Generic Advocacy Service** helping people with any disability including multiple disabilities locally




**We are a free and independent service**

## INDEX


| | |
|---|---|
| What is Independent Advocacy? | 3 |
| Background to PCAS and what we do | 4 |
| Mission Statement and Aims | 4 |
| Benefits of Advocacy | 5 |
| Welcome from the Chair (Doreen Ellis) | 6 |
| Welcome from Clare Harris (Vice Chair) | 6 |
| Welcome from Peter Quinn (Treasurer) | 7 |
| Welcome from Simon Harris (Trustee) | 7 |
| Welcome from the Manager | 8 - 10 |
| Evaluation Administrator | 11 |
| Evaluation Statistics | 12 - 16 |
| Our Advocates – The Effect of Covid on myself & my Clients | 16 – 19 |
| Advocates Case Studies | 20 - 32 |
| Structure, Governance and Management | 33 |
| Trustees and Principal Officers | 34 |
| Financial Review | 35 |
| PCAS Contact details | 36 |
| Independent Examiner's Report | 37 |
| Financial Statements | 38 - 47 |
| Statement of Disclosure | 48 |
| Thanks to our Funders and Donors | 49 |

# WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

At some point in our lives, most of us will need an Advocate. You may need help to make a difficult phone call, need someone who can write a letter, or someone to attend with you at a difficult meeting.

In many cases, the Advocate is a friend or family member, for others, it may be a nurse or social worker. **But what if you don't have any of these people to help?** Or the problem relates in some way to your family, G.P, or social worker? This is where independent Advocacy can help, an Advocate will support you to speak up for yourself as they are ONLY there for you and have no ties to other agencies or people in your life. An Advocate helps you to get the information you need to make real choices about your circumstances, supporting you to put your choices to others.

**PCAS assists with:**

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discredited against or whom services find difficult to serve.
- Supporting disabled people at risk of losing their tenancy
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions.
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known.
- Care issues, accommodation, financial management and paperwork
- Supporting at meetings and long term support in order to stay living in their own homes for longer.
- PCAS can speak on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.
- PCAS helps people with Mental Health needs, something we have done for 26 years now.
- PCAS helps clients through Adult Safeguarding processes.
- Child Protection/child in need work.

It is important to recognise that an effective Advocate will use their knowledge, experience and skills to enable their client to have the best life possible. This might mean the Advocate telling the client about options that the client has never thought of themselves.

It is also an Advocates job to be realistic with their client, as not all things a client may want will be possible.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# BACKGROUND TO PCAS AND WHAT WE DO

PCAS Advocacy Service was started in 1995 by Shropshire Disability Consortium to provide a community based independent advocacy service for people with ANY disability over the age of 18 in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

PCAS was set up by disabled people who recognised a need for individuals to be supported to ensure their voice was heard. PCAS is committed to ensuring individuals are as involved as they can be in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to raise awareness of a person's rights and ensure they are safeguarded against in instances where people are unable to do so for themselves.

PCAS is a registered charity, to maintain its independence it is managed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of individuals who have an interest in and a commitment to the work PCAS does. The Board hold a strategic role, having responsibility to oversee effective governance by ensuring PCAS meets it legal and charitable obligations.

## *Our Mission Statement Is:*

***PCAS provides independent advocacy for adults with any disability, physical, sensory, learning or mental health. We aim to be the Service of Choice, to secure clients' rights, services, and to ensure they are listened to, empowered and treated with respect. We further aim to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of sexual orientation or ethnicity.***

## We Aim to:

Assist disabled persons primarily, but not exclusively, living or working within the Counties of Shropshire and Powys, through the provision of information and advocacy.

- Be recognised as the "Go to" service for Advocacy support
- Enable disabled people to make informed choices
- Promote independence and choice of disabled people through the provision of information
- Provide a service enabling the opportunity for people to take control of their own lives
- Challenge decisions made on behalf of people which they disagree with
- To listen to and engage with a client and actively involve them in any action PCAS assists with

We also have a set of priorities that we use to plan what we want to achieve every year.

This year we have continued to develop our service to meet the growing needs of local people who are requiring more long term assistance with their finances, enabling disabled people to stay living in their own homes for longer and those with Mental Health issues.

**PCAS Website** www.shropshirepcas.co.uk



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Benefits of Advocacy

The benefits of advocacy are far reaching.

- Advocacy gives a vulnerable disabled person a voice when they feel no one is listening to them.
- They have someone who is independent from all the statutory services and is not controlled by government pressures to save money.
- Someone who will listen to the client, find out what the problems are, work with the client to sort out the problems.
- Building a good rapport with the client builds their self-esteem and confidence and can alleviate depression and anxiety, thus improving their mental health and wellbeing.
- Advocacy gives a person a better quality of life through simple little things for instance, reading their post and explaining the contents to someone who is dyslexic means the world to them.
- When someone is being abused they are in a really bad place. Very often they do not realise they are being abused until someone points out that it is wrong for someone to take your money and leave you without enough to pay your bills or buy food. Once the client has gone through the safeguarding process and realises they can have a good quality of life with the money they have coming in we see a totally different person, one who is now enjoying life because they can get out and go for a coffee or go shopping themselves. They now have a good quality of life, and with the safety net of having an advocate who they have built up a good working relationship they know where to go if they need help in the future.
- Very often the clients we help have no one else to help them. This means that the advocate is someone they can talk to about the worries, fears or problems they are having. This is far reaching because our advocate can discuss these worries, fears and problems and if we cannot help we always find someone who can. This circle of support helps the client move forward with their life.

# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR



## Doreen Ellis

## PCAS Chair

What a strange year it has been for us all! No holidays for any of us this year. All dressed up with no-where to go! I hope that we are now on the home straight.

Nevertheless, it has been a busy year for PCAS. I helped Alli and Simon move into their new premises in December. It has certainly been a move for the better. It is even warm enough for them to work without their coats! My husband, Patrick helped with some DIY jobs, putting up pictures and shelving. Alli has been busy adding lots of final additions and the office space is now looking great.

Trustee meetings have continued via Zoom. Although due to technical issues (**mainly me!**) I have attended some in **sound only!** Hopefully, the next meeting will be in person.

Unfortunately, our planned 25th Celebration is cancelled due to the Pandemic. In these uncertain times, it seems almost impossible to arrange another date. Anyone who has paid for a ticket and wishes to have their money back will be reimbursed as soon as we are able to meet.

Like many people, I have been sorting out cupboards, gardening and painting fencing panels. All exciting stuff! Oh, and of course Netflix. What would we have done without that?

Here's to a much better 2021 and a free and happy summer!



## Clare Harris

## Vice Chair

As vice chair, it is my pleasure to support and help Doreen (our chair) in any way I can to keep this most vital organisation running. With the support of fellow trustees who have a wide variety of skills to bring to this charity, we have a united positive attitude, which hopefully will go on for a long time to come.

My thanks must also go with Doreen's to thanking the whole team we have, because without their hard work and support we would not have been able to successfully remain open for business for more than 25 years.



Registered Charity Number 1187362



## Peter Quinn – Treasurer

I am a former Mental Health Nurse and Mental Health Nurse Services Manager with over 21 years' service in the NHS, before I had to retire with chronic health and disability problems. I have served on a NHS Ethics Committee and as a Community Health Council Member. I have also volunteered as a Trustee with Bromley Mind and other Mental Health Charities. I retired to Shropshire in 2004.

I have been a Trustee of PCAS since 2014 as the Treasurer. I bring extensive experience of Mental Health Issues and have insight into what it's like to live with a disability.

My main priority as a Trustee is to oversee financial matters and funding, ensuring our funds are used to good effect and managed in an appropriate manner, as well as supporting our staff to ensure our service remains robust.



## Simon Harris - Trustee

Having been around PCAS in one form or another for the last 25+ years, either through family or becoming a trustee, it has been my great pleasure to help PCAS in any way I can. My primary role as a trustee is to look after the IT infrastructure, website and assist with branding and print when needed. 2021 sees the launch of PCAS into the world of social media, while it is a difficult journey, it is one I am happy to help to gain as much publicity as possible for this incredible charity.

The advocates, staff and volunteers at PCAS are all amazing people who give their all and constantly go beyond expectations, without them we would certainly not be where we are today, my heartfelt thanks go out to each and every one of them.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# WELCOME FROM THE MANAGER – Simon Arthur



This is the first year report from me in our new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status. Although we have changed our charitable status nothing else has changed. After 26 years we continue to do the same work as we were originally set up to do, namely helping the most vulnerable people with any disability to have a better quality of life.

Welcome to my report for the year 2020/21; Once again I will start by thanking the amazing team around me, workers and trustees who have put so much effort in this year, especially during what has been the biggest challenge to the world. Yes Coronavirus has tried to disrupt our society. New rules have come in, lockdowns in place, social isolation and peoples Mental Health has suffered greatly. Hopefully now the vaccine rollout is gathering pace we can all get back to some normality, although I think what we saw as normal will not be here for a few years yet.

As always we are so grateful to our funders who support our work and know what we achieve for the people we help. Thank you to: - Lloyds Bank Foundation, The Henry Smith Charity, Garfield Weston Foundation, Trusthouse Charitable Foundation, Select Healthcare, Severn Trent Community Fund, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Independent Age, The Albert Hunt Trust, The Edward Gostling Foundation and to our Private Donation funder and other donations received during this most difficult of years. Without all of your help we would not have been able to do the work we have this year. Thank you so very much.

The next 7 months leading up to the end of November 2021 is the most critical in our history, with most of our grant funding coming to an end. We need to secure funding of £180,000 just to be able to continue for another 12 months. We are looking at ways to become more sustainable in the years ahead, once we have survived our biggest challenge yet.

Over the last 26 years we have helped over 10,000 of the most vulnerable people in Shropshire and Telford. Through working with them and alongside them, ensuring they are listened too, they understand what they are being asked, helping through Child Protection, Adult Abuse, Social Care issues, helping with Mental Health needs, ensuring people with multiple disabilities and complex needs have the help and support they need to live a better quality of life.

This year has seen a big increase in referrals to help people going through Child Protection, Domestic Violence and Mental Health, another circumstance of Covid. Our waiting list has hit the highest number ever currently standing at 72 people waiting. When we tell referrers the timescale involved they ask us to put the person on the waiting list, as no one else does what we do.

There is very clearly a gap or lack of help out in the community for these complex time consuming issues. Coupled with our record over 26 years we are now the service of choice, because referrers know we help and we are there for the person for as long as it takes.

Helping clients to gain access to other services they need help from, is still the biggest challenge for our clients especially getting help they need with benefits. There is clearly a gap in the current services delivered in Shropshire and Telford.

As so many of the people we help and support cannot get to an office for an appointment, services do need to start thinking about addressing this. We will keep raising the issue through our networks, in the hope services think more about the most vulnerable and the effect on their benefits when no one is there to help fill in forms and do appeals and tribunals in a way that is so desperately needed.

During the pandemic we have had to change some of our working practices, to protect the vulnerable and people shielding. We moved to phoning our clients twice a week during the first lockdown, offering a listening ear, and helping with food and meal deliveries. We spoke to clients through windows where clients didn't have phones or struggled to use them. We tried to make sure we kept a watchful eye over our clients during this time. In August 2020 we started again picking up the pieces from the fallout of the first lockdown, but then the next lockdown came along. I think the second lockdown was so much harder for people than the first. Just when they thought things may be getting back to some normality they are put back into isolation and all that entails. Loneliness sets in, mental health suffers, and with so many statutory workers working from home, social care suffered. I lost count the number of times we have been contacted about vulnerable people needing help. I think these workers thought the voluntary sector will sort out the mess!!

Our workers are so passionate about helping and supporting their clients, but having to work remotely and through emails and phone calls with other services, sorting the issues out for our clients became so much more laboured.

This was a very difficult time for our dedicated workers, frustrating, worried about their clients, stressful, just some of the feelings our workers have encountered.

As constraints had to be bought in to protect our clients and workers from covid frustrations grew. We have managed this through keeping in contact with workers over good old Zoom and Microsoft Teams, doing supervision over the phone but nothing replaces face to face.

With so many other voluntary services virtually shutting down, the help available from other services was very limited, even now as we approach April 2021 many services are still dormant.

The clients we help need so much support from a huge range of other services in the community, especially Community Mental Health services, day services, meeting groups, doctors, carers, to name just a few but like so many others they are stretched to breaking point. They are referring clients to us to try and help, even though our waiting list this year has been the largest ever. This shows the ever growing need, going forward, and we can only hope that government supports and puts more funding into mental health services and community services, otherwise there will be

another pandemic to do with Mental Health, isolation and loneliness, and coping with the effects of it.

What we have found over the last 12 months is the enormous effect of the pandemic on our clients Mental Health. Their fears and anxieties have been exacerbated even further. People have lived in fear of going out even just to get food. It has clearly been a very difficult time for our clients. We will continue to offer as much help and support to our clients as they move forward, once covid restrictions start to be lifted. I do fear it will be many months if not years before people with disabilities come to terms with all the changes that have affected them during this pandemic.

Face to face contact with people is so very important. We have found this even more so over the last year. A phone call just does not help the person, they don't open up as much, we cannot see changes in their lifestyle, body language or facial expressions that show how the person is coping.

Our workers have found that since they have gradually started seeing clients more they found issues and problems that the client had not informed them about, meaning the advocate has had to start almost from the beginning. The pandemic has pushed so much help and support backwards. It will take some time for the country to recover. In the mean time we can only plod on and keep pushing for results to help our clients have a better quality of life.

During lockdown we once again went through the process of re-applying for our Advocacy Quality Performance Mark with NDTI. It was a strange experience having to do the majority digitally, but with hard work from all my amazing team we got through it and have been awarded the QPM for a further 3 years from June 2020.

In November 2020 we moved offices, one of the main reasons being the lack of any heating in our old office. We also wanted to be more accessible to our potential client base, so we moved into town (Oswestry) into a ground floor office suite, with heating and parking on site.

We have also started on the long journey of building our social media presence through Facebook, Twitter and Linked-in. This will help us going forward to raise the profile of PCAS, let more people know what Advocacy is and how we can help, it will hopefully also attract attention from possible funders, donations and sponsorship.

This change is so important for us, as we try and survive as a charity. Having negotiated the pandemic we do not want to be a victim of it. Looking at ways of becoming more sustainable over the coming years is a must. This will be so difficult for smaller charities like ours. We plough so much of the funding we secure into frontline help and support, helping vulnerable people feel they are being listened too and someone cares about them. Funders, fundraisers and sponsors need to refocus on community services like ours who know the people we help so well, know what really affects their day to day living and all the hurdles they have to get over just to have some sort of quality of life.

Simon Arthur



## Allisone Arthur

## Evaluation Administrator

I've been with PCAS since 2007. I originally came from Exeter in Devon, moving to Shropshire in 1988. I have a daughter, son-in-law and a 10-year-old grandson with Autism and Learning Disabilities who I look after most weekends whilst mum works. Whilst in lockdown my daughter was nursing Covid patients & teaching my grandson 5 days a week. I am immensely proud of her commitment & resilience.

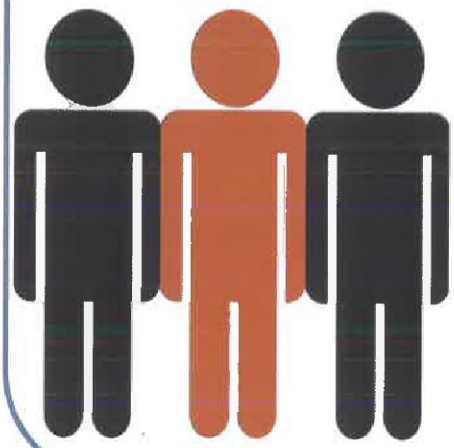
This has been a very difficult year for everyone & especially for a small charity like ours. Our manager has been hard pressed searching for funding to cover PPE & as other services closed or were not accessible to our clients, getting them the help they so badly needed became nigh on impossible. We are lucky to have a manager as dedicated to our charity as he is.

I totally enjoy the challenges brought by our small charity, there is always something new to aim for such as the need to encapsulate statistics in a new way for our funders. I love the variety and "free hand" of organising my own workload. We are a "Team" at PCAS, which includes the Manager, all the Advocates and the support from our invaluable Trustees. As a small team, we are all dedicated and enthusiastic.

I do all the evaluation encapsulation, from building bespoke databases, financial sheets and building graphs from feedback forms. I provide all the statistics for reporting to our funders, each, requiring information in a different format. I also deal with all the Advocates paperwork, inputting data, timesheets etc. This past year, I have looked at all our recording mechanisms and have streamlined where I can.

We have a new Web Site which better reflects the work we do. It is crisp and informative. We have a "Donate" button, which we hope will enable us to raise some much needed funds. Now for the first time, we have people with the skills badly needed and they are a true asset to our Charity. It is wonderful to have a website for all of us to be proud of.

I have designed and compiled this "AGM" report, so I hope you enjoy reading how busy we have been, and the benefits to those we help.

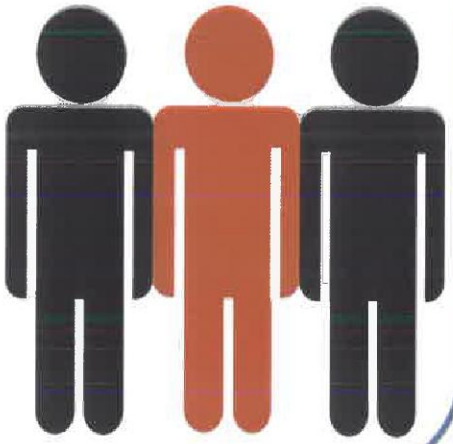


**IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR**

**2020 – 2021**

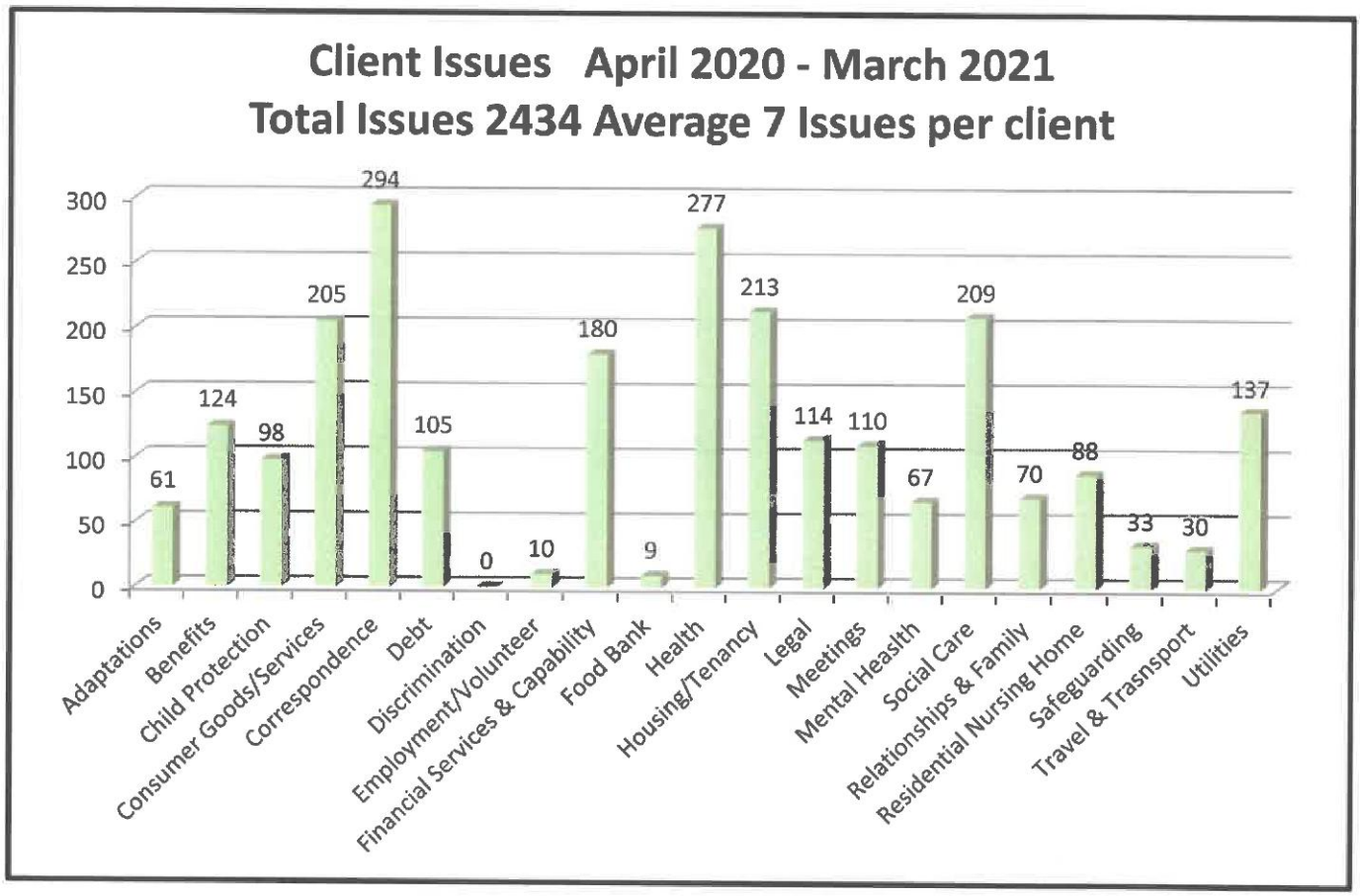
**PCAS HAS HELPED**

**352 PEOPLE**



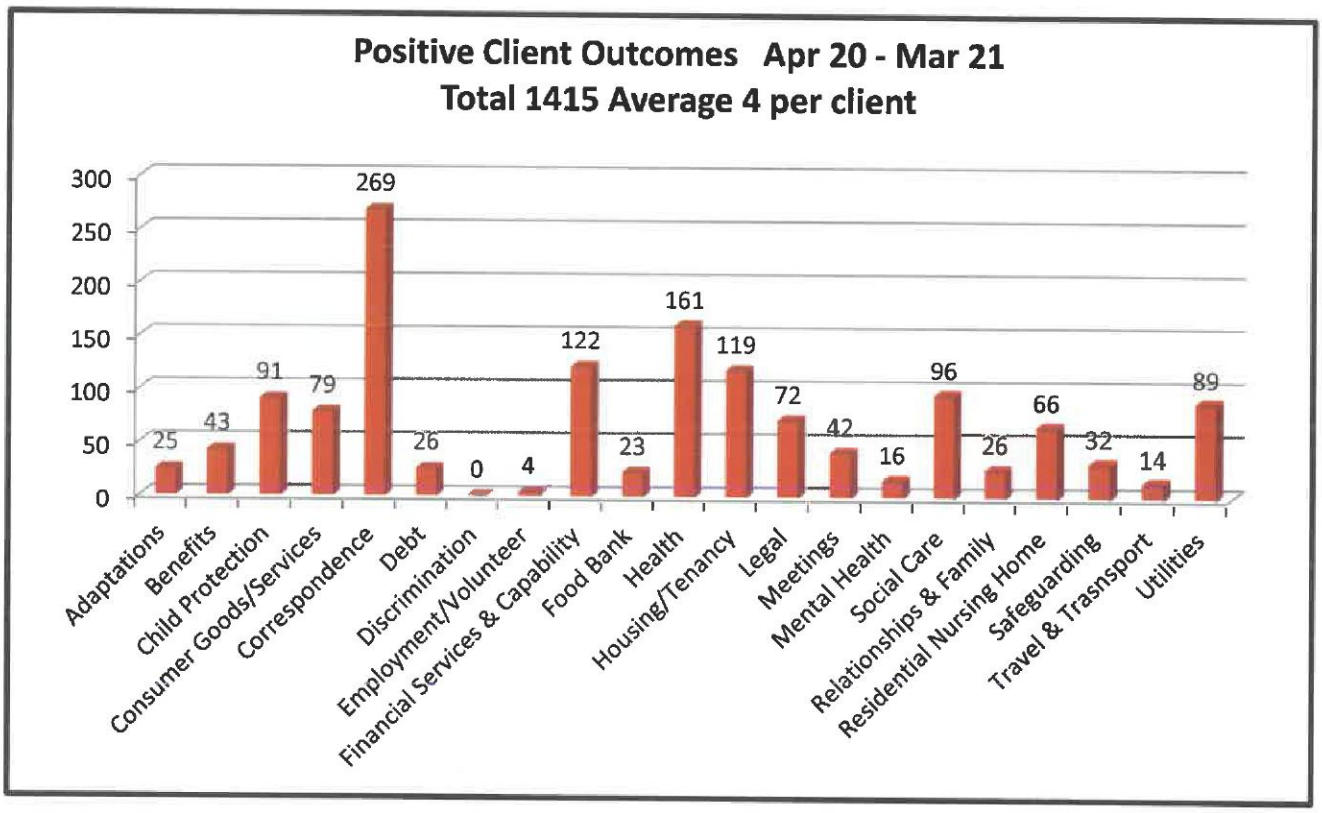
Over this 12 month period, PCAS has helped clients with a whopping 2434 client issues, slightly less than last year due to Covid 19 & not being able to visit clients as we normally would.

Dividing the amount of issues (2434) by the amount of clients helped (352) gives an average of each client having over 7 issues that clients have needed help with. That's without the 1466 other services we have accessed on client's behalf to assist them further.

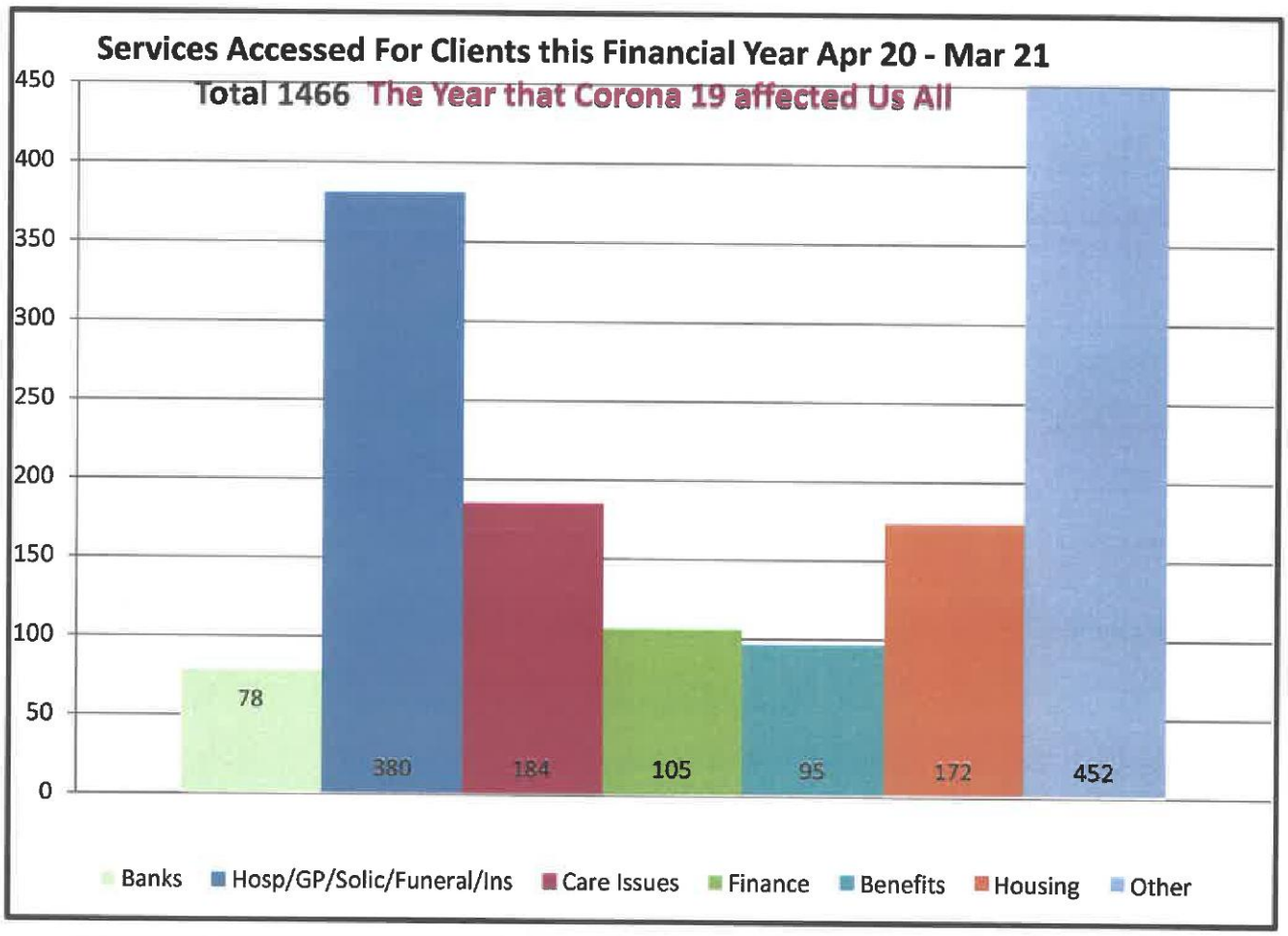


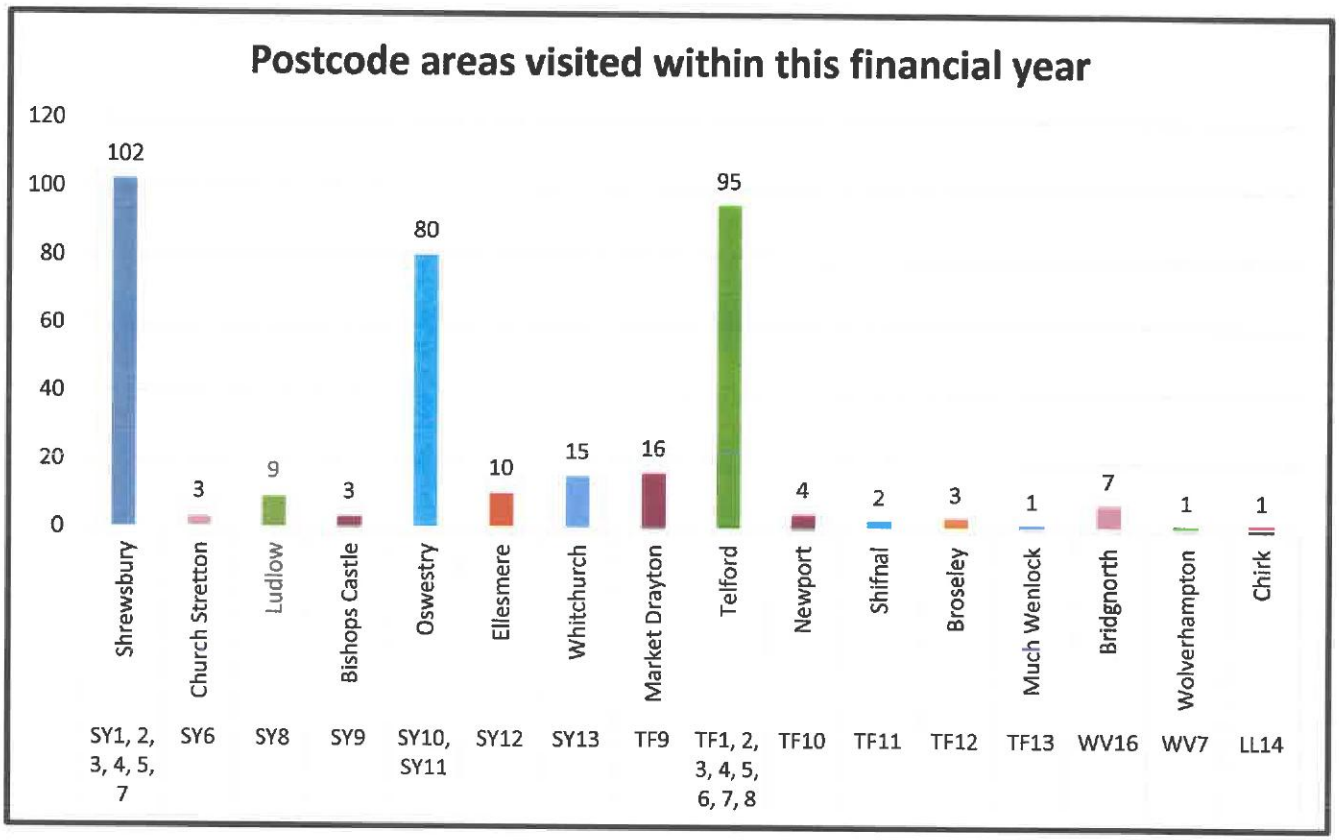



Registered Charity Number 1187362

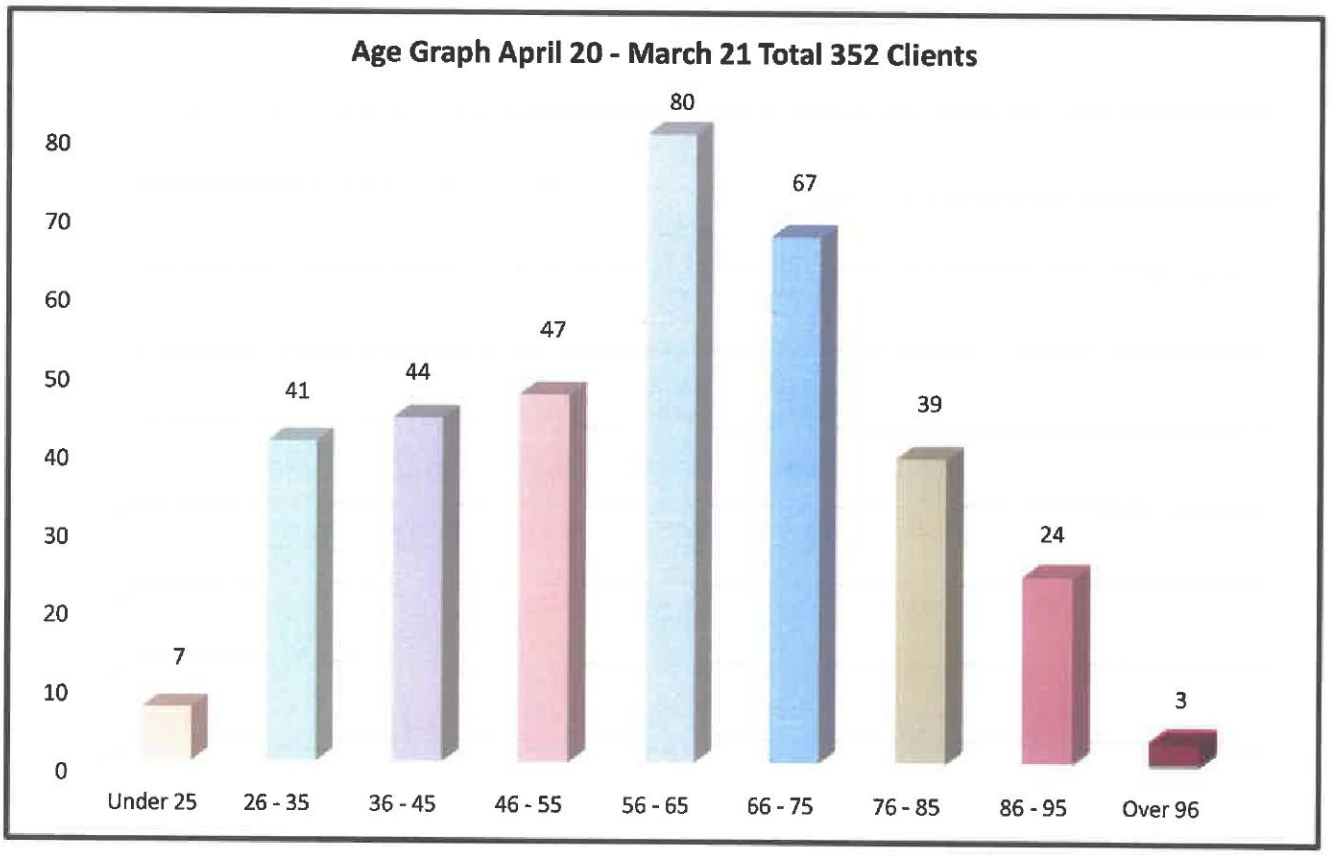



Clients often require many other services to put their life back on track, an average of 4 other services per client this year. Our Advocates are very skilled and persistent at getting other services to help their clients. The Below graph shows which areas clients need assistance from other services in more detail.






The above chart shows the areas in which we have visited our clients this financial year.



## 9,285 STAFF HOURS



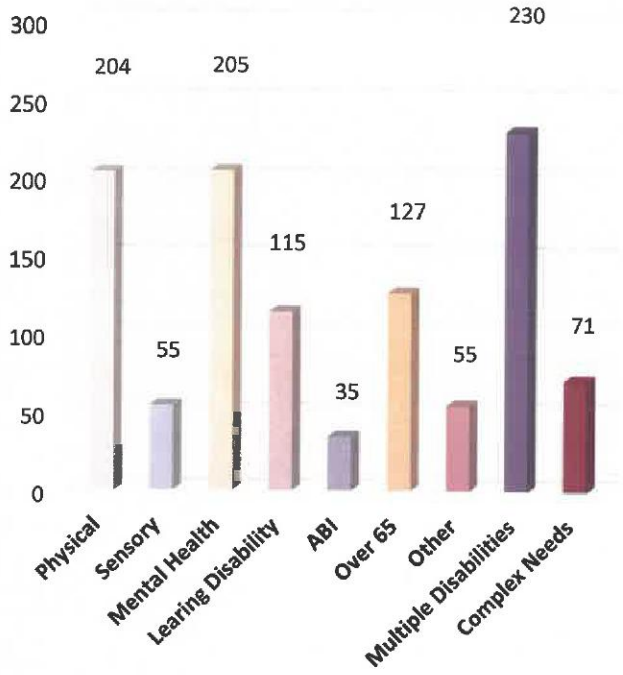
## SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## We have made 994 individual visits to clients – Remarkable as we've been in lockdown



## Covering the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

Disabilities 2020 - 2021
Total 1097, Average of 3.1 disabilities for each client




## WE SPENT £11.01

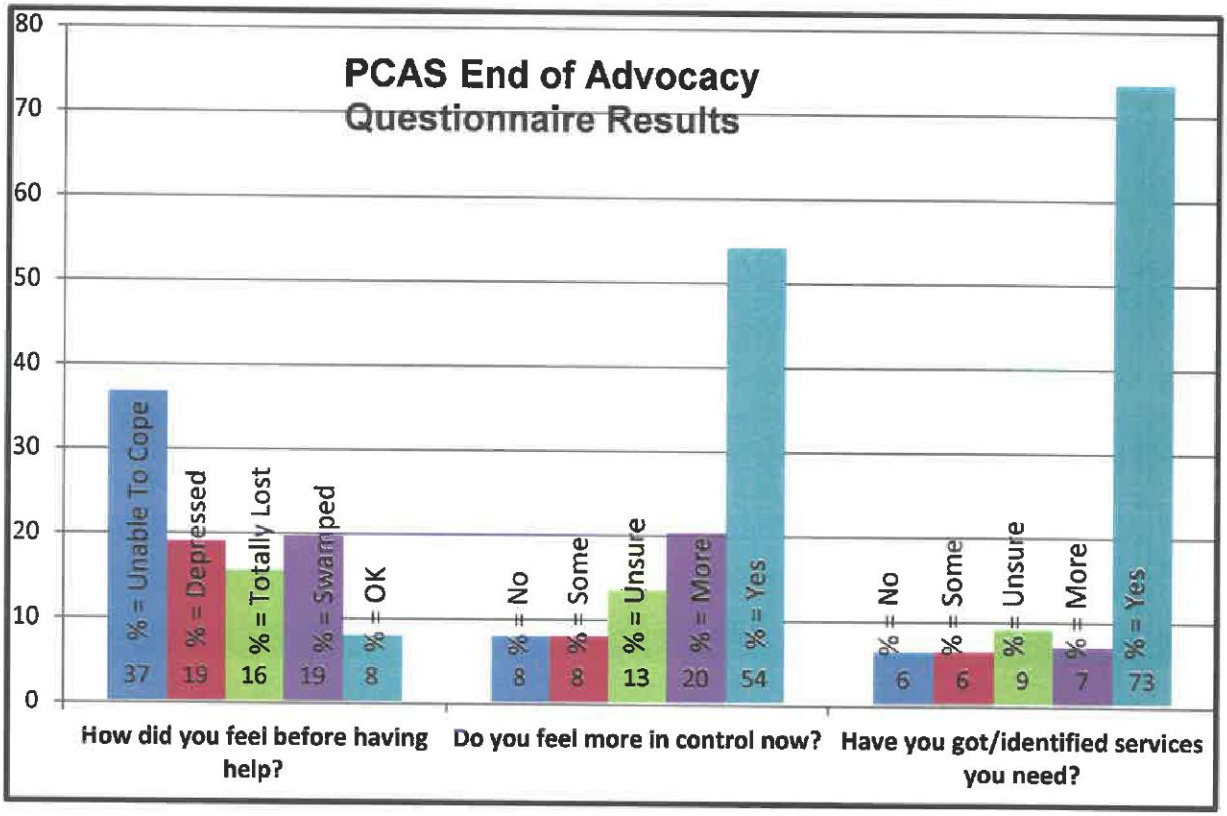
**(£1.56 more than last year)**



## PER PERSON PER WEEK IN SHOPSHIRE



Registered Charity Number 1187362




# Our dedicated Advocacy staff



Lynne Davis, Jackie Copson, Simon Arthur, Glenda Crawshaw, Maura Atterbury, Wendy Timmis & Ann Shaw



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients - Glenda Crawshaw, Assistant Manager

Well, what a strange time we are going through. We have never seen anything like this before, and hopefully never see it again.

It has been an extremely difficult time throughout Covid for both us as Advocates and more importantly, our clients. The thought of losing loved ones for us all has been unbearable at times, especially when we have close family members working for the NHS, putting themselves at risk as part of their job.

As Advocates, we have been trying to keep in touch with our clients, throughout Covid, as best we can, however, due to some client`s disabilities, this has proved difficult if not impossible for some – in these cases, other ways of ensuring they are still kept in touch with were attempted, such as sending messages with family or care agencies.

Clients who we have managed to keep in touch with, have asked that question of us "when are you coming back?", numerous times over the past twelve months, to which we had no clear answer. Reassurance given in bucket-loads that eventually things will get back to some normality in time. Numbers given out for crisis lines to mental health charities and anything we could think of to make things a little easier for our clients.

I think one of the most difficult issues it has raised for myself, is the obvious inequality that Covid has highlighted, such as clients who prefer face to face visits were not offered an alternative, or if they do, they offer `Zoom` or `MS Teams` meetings online, when clients don`t even have the technology to take part. Over aggressive companies taking clients to Court or involving debt collection agencies when our clients cannot pay their bills due to lack of our service.

We are all really looking forward to getting back to some normality, and seeing our clients again, admittedly with some trepidation, as we are not sure what problems we are going to have to sort, but with time, determination and patience, we will get our clients back on track and hopefully say goodbye to Covid.

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients – Jackie Copson, Advocate

A stranger year has never been known, but what could be considered to have been positive? During periods where restrictions meant no face to face visits and meetings, I have:

- Taken advantage of as many learning opportunities as possible, undertaking on-line learning courses and successfully completed the City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate in Independent Advocacy.
- Embraced technology to participate in remote meetings by Zoom and Microsoft Teams, thus upskilling myself and surprising myself! Also supported some clients to participate in those meetings.
- Maintained contact with clients as much as possible by 'phone and managed to still achieve outcomes and objectives for clients through good communication with other agencies and services involved in supporting clients.
- Thanks to Simon, Advocates had very timely access to Covid-19 vaccination.

What could be considered to have been not so positive?



Registered Charity Number 1187362

- Knowing that for many clients, telephone contact is no substitute whatsoever for face to face meetings.
- Feeling inadequate and frustrated at not being able to see clients face to face and so be able to progress work on issues affecting them.
- Sometimes taking the brunt of clients' frustration and distress during telephone calls.
- Hearing the frustration, distress and feelings of despair in colleagues from other services that we work alongside.

And during brief times when face to face meetings were possible .....

- Seeing clients so happy to see me again.
- Being able to tackle pressing issues for clients by working with them again and not remotely from them.
- Seeing colleagues at team meetings.
- Feeling a sense of achievement again, all with the challenge of trying to communicate wearing PPE, a mask and glasses steaming up!

2021 will be better.

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients – Maura Atterbury, Advocate

Throughout this last year although I fully understand the difficulties and why various decisions have been made, I have found it really frustrating that I have not been able to have that face-to-face contact with the clients I support.

The main reason for this is that I am fully aware that some of my client(s) only see me and without my support they have become anxious and there has most definitely been a significant impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Some clients are completely isolated and do not have care, family of friends to support them, therefore are totally alone without any support whatsoever.

Offering that friendly face and a chat whilst completing their paperwork or making phone calls for them makes all the difference to them and is very satisfying for me.

For some of my client(s) who have literacy difficulties/visual impairment I am aware that post/correspondence is going unanswered and although I have tried various ways of trying to understand what has been sent to them, I guess I will just need to address on my return to them when we are given the go ahead.

In some of these cases, I was aware due to their age etc., that they would have been notified of their entitlement to a COVID19 vaccine. I contacted the Onsite Scheme Manager and asked whether she could check whether the client had received a letter from the NHS – the answer was yes (but nothing had been done) I contacted the client to enquire as to whether she would like to vaccine to which she stated she had not received blood results and yes she would have the vaccine. I contacted her GP and the vaccine was administered 4 days later (home vaccine as client was 90 and physically unable go out). Another client I arranged his appointment jointly working with Wrekin Housing Group who will support him on 05-03-2021 at his GP surgery.

The impact COVID19 has had on me? Not having structure to my day and a routine to follow has been difficult knowing that my clients are not being supported in the usual way. I miss seeing my children and grand-children but try to remain positive knowing that to-date we as a family have been extremely fortunate not to have been severely affected by COVID19.

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients – Ann Shaw, Advocate

Those with learning disabilities have not really understood why I cannot visit and are unable to keep in touch by telephone. I have tried to maintain contact with the majority of clients, but there is only so much you can say without repeating yourself every week. The first question is always "When are you coming to see me?". I have supported clients as much as possible, making telephone calls on their behalf.

However, the regular issue is that you are not with the client and they cannot give authority for you to speak on their behalf. This has been the most difficult problem to overcome. This is particularly true of T&W Council and DWP. It has been so frustrating.

This year presented a case that has challenged me professionally, when a client was arrested for rape of his wife (who was also a client). The decision about who to support was one that has given me sleepless nights. However, with support from Simon, my manager, I believe I made the right decision to support the accused party, who had no other form of support.

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients – Wendy Timmis, Advocate

The effect of a pandemic on my clients and myself over the last 12 months has been mixed. For some clients who are normally confined to their own surroundings and have always had help in place, their lives remained unchanged somewhat with exception of carers or support staff wearing PPE or working slightly different shifts.

Some of my more able mobile clients had their access to shopping and days out curtailed and had to make do with limited contact with others with suspension of social groups they attended and relying on food deliveries. Their access to regular appointments for ongoing medical help was also suspended unless very urgent. This has impacted on their mental health.

In the first lockdown, when many services were suspended, decisions on benefits, care and housing were unavailable. This had an enormous impact on clients as they had no-one to turn to. Then, when things opened up more during the second and third lockdowns, client`s problems escalated but without the full access to support agencies like CAB, DWP Visiting, Age UK. These organisation`s face to face services were suspended which meant having to try and help client`s make contact by telephone or online platforms like "teams". Making a telephone call to my clients was difficult in that I knew I was not getting the whole picture of their situations. Many clients do not have access to the internet or know how to use it even if they did, so that was a huge challenge. It felt like I was trying to work without the full picture of my client`s lives.

As a service, we normally offer face to face contact in a client`s own home, I have found it difficult not being able to do this. Not being able to visit clients who are in care homes has also been difficult especially if they have dementia or memory problems. The relationship developed previously will have broken down and need rebuilding. You don't always gain the full picture of a client`s issue if you can`t read their letter or see the full extent of their problem in situ and are relying on the information from a phone call. It has meant asking clients more probing questions in some situations and seeking information from others. Some clients have been able to use technology to send me photos of their letters or emails which has been a great help.

Despite these problems there have been some good outcomes for clients and they remain grateful for my support and I have felt good to be able to help them even if only in small ways. Like everyone else I am glad to still be here to do my job and thankful for the support of PCAS to keep me safe.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## The Effect of Covid on myself & my clients – Lynne Davis, Advocate

During lockdown it has been very difficult to support my clients in the way I would want to and to a standard I feel they deserve. Keeping in regular contact with them by phone has brought it home to me just how important face to face visits are to all of them. Without exception, they are all finding lockdown difficult, as the various issues they have, cannot be dealt with anywhere near as quickly or efficiently due to professionals not visiting, many services being temporarily put on hold and clients feeling lonely and isolated.

Even the most straightforward support such as opening and explaining post to clients cannot take place, and important correspondence is not dealt with as promptly as it should be. Also, situations and issues will be missed, as clients will often not mention them on the phone and will only open up during a visit or I will pick up on something when I visit that they need support with which is impossible to do during a phone call.

Clients have expressed feelings of loneliness and isolation and also frustration that they have been unable to access planned support of various sorts that cannot go ahead at the moment due to lockdown.

On a personal level I have found lockdown difficult from a work point of view as I am so limited in the contact I can have with clients. I have also missed face to face contact with my colleagues. It has highlighted to me how important Team Meetings and supervision actually are for the support available from everyone. Although this is available by phone or email this cannot replace face to face contact.

See you soon!



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## Advocates Case Studies

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **LD 1224** |
| **Gender** | **FEMALE** |
| **Age** | **40** |
| **Disability** | **STROKE, APHASIA** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **ONGOING** |
| **The issue** | |
| CLIENT HAD A STROKE AT AGE OF 39, HAD 4 CHILDREN. THE ELDEST CHILD APPLIED FOR A SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER FOR THEIR SIBLINGS, WHICH MY CLIENT STRONGLY OBJECTED TO. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| BUILT UP TRUST WITH MY CLIENT, ASKED THEM WHAT THEY WANTED SUPPORT WITH, HOW TO ACCESS A SOLICITOR – THIS PROVED VERY DIFFICULT, AS SHE DID NOT QUALIFY FOR LEGAL AID, HOWEVER, I PERSEVERED, AND SUGGESTED SHE APPLY UNDER `EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES` - WHICH WAS APPROVED. SUPPORTED CLIENT THROUGH THE COURT PROCESS, CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS, READING AND UNDERSTANDING CORRESPONDENCE, SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL WELLBEING THROUGHOUT THE CASE. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| CLIENT LOST THE CASE IN COURT, ELDEST SIBLING GRANTED SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER, HOWEVER, VISITATION RIGHTS WERE ORDERED BY JUDGE. CLIENT VERY DISAPPOINTED AND UPSET. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| CHALLENGES WERE MANY – CLIENT HAS SIGNIFICANT COMMUNICATION ISSUES POST STROKE, HAS APHASIA, WHICH IS A CONDITION THAT CAN RESULT FROM ANY SORT OF BRAIN INJURY. IT CAN AFFECT SPEAKING, UNDERSTANDING, READING AND WRITING. SHE FOUND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO READ COMPLEX SENTENCES AND OFTEN MIXED UP MEANINGS.<br>IT WAS IMPERITIVE TO USE COMMUNICATION THAT WAS INDIVIDUAL TO THE CLIENT, AS DIRECTED BY THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST INVOLVED.<br>CLIENT`S LOW MOOD WAS ALSO A CHALLENGE, POST-STROKE CLIENT WAS VERY EMOTIONAL, WHICH CAN BE COMMON, THIS WAS CLOSELY MONITORED BY HER TEAM AT CAREHOME. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| STILL ONGOING, CLIENT IS IMMINENTLY MOVING FROM CARE HOME BACK INTO INDEPENDENT LIVING, WHICH WE HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR OVER 18 MONTHS. CLIENT IS EXTREMELY EXCITED TO START OVER AGAIN IN A SUITABLE PROPERTY, HOPING TO HAVE HER CHILDREN OVER TO VISIT REGULARLY, WHOM SHE HAS MISSED TERRIBLY. AS AN ADVOCATE, THIS HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT CASE, AS WE DID NOT GET THE DESIRED OUTCOME, HOWEVER, WE TRIED OUR BEST, AND WILL GO FORWARD NOW WITH SUPPORTING MY CLIENT IN HER NEW HOME. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **KP 1305** |
| **Gender** | **MALE** |
| **Age** | **32** |
| **Disability** | **BRAIN INJURY AND LD** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **ONGOING** |
| **The issue** | |
| CLIENT WANTED TO CHALLENGE SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER MADE BY HIS SON`S GRANDPARENTS FOR HIS SON | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| BUILT UP TRUST WITH MY CLIENT. RECOGNISED A SUITABLE WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH CLIENT. HE HAS A LEARNING DISABILITY AND ADHD AND HAS A MANIC COMMUNICATION STYLE.<br>CLIENT CLEARLY NEEDED SPECIALIST ADVICE FROM A SOLICITOR, SUPPORTED TO LOOK FOR A SUITABLE SOLICITOR WHO COULD PROVIDE LEGAL AID FOR THE CASE. UNFORTUNATELY, HE DID NOT QUALIFY FOR LEGAL AID, EVEN UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.<br>FOUND A FREE SERVICE TO ACCESS LEGAL ADVICE. SUPPORTED CLIENT TO ENSURE HE REPLIED TO COURT IN APPROPRIATE WAY, WITH CORRECT REFERENCE NUMBERS, DATES ETC. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| STILL ONGOING, COURT CASE ADJOURNED 3 TIMES | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| CHALLENGES WERE WORKING WITH CLIENT WHO NEEDED LEGAL ADVICE, BUT DID NOT QUALIFY, ISSUE AROUND COMMUNICATION ISSUES, KEEPING CLIENT`S TEMPER UNDER CONTROL, KNOWING WHEN TO GIVE CLIENT A BREAK, KEEPING CLIENT ON TRACK WITH THE CASE, REMINDING CLIENT THAT I WAS ON HIS SIDE, INABILITY TO VISIT DURING COVID UNLESS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL – TRYING TO SPEAK ON PHONE INSTEAD, WHICH WAS NOT THE PREFERRED COMMUNICATION METHOD. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| NONE AS YET, ONGOING | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **RC 548/16** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **62** |
| **Disability** | **Parkinson's, Bi-polar Disorder, Dyslexia** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **4 months – still ongoing** |

**The issue**

My client was accused of rape by his wife. He was arrested and bailed with conditions not to approach her or go to the area of the address she lived at. After his release, he was allocated a social worker who found him a temporary room in a hostel. Due to his medical conditions, this was not appropriate for his needs.
I worked with Social Services to get him the equipment he required to allow him to be comfortable at the hostel. We also arranged for a care package to help the client with his daily medication. The client had no clothes or food, few toiletries and his bank account had been frozen. This was because his wife had also accused him of fraud and had made a report to Action Fraud.
I was able to retrieve essential clothing and toiletries from his previous address and together we visited his bank to try and release funds. They agreed to this.

I started the process of getting my client rehoused. Fortunately, a bungalow was available. Then his wife was also allocated another property and moved out of the marital home. Talks began between Wrekin Housing Trust, myself and the client's solicitor to vary the bail conditions and to confirm that my client posed no risk to anyone in the area. This request to return home was accepted.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

After his arrest, the police would not allow me to see my client. It was a few days before I was able to track him down through Social Services. Physically and mentally he was very low. Occupational Therapy were able to provide items such as a shower chair, adjustable table and a mechanism to raise his pillows.
We arranged for a temporary care package to be put in place to help with his medication. I supported him access his clothes, toiletries and his bank account. I helped him put in applications to Homes Direct and Wrekin Housing Group for suitable more permanent accommodation. I have also supported him to access the CMHT and his other medical specialists via telephone calls. His medication has been adjusted and he has been provided with an electronic pill dispenser to help him schedule and take his pills.

On the occasions when he has been required to answer bail at the police station, I have supported him to ensure that he understand the process. He has now been released pending investigations.
He was offered a bungalow by Wrekin Housing Trust, but as his wife had moved out of the marital home, he asked to return there. After some work with WHT and the police this was agreed. He is now back in his old home, where no care is required and is coming to terms with life as it is now.

**The outcome**

The client is back in his own home, with all the adjustments he needs. His mental health is improving, but he is realistic about what might happen if the case comes to court. He knows that I will be able to support him to help him navigate any future process.

**The challenges and how they were met**

Before the events leading to my client's arrest, I was working with both him and his wife. After the accusations, I was unable to support both. Given that his wife was getting support from the police and many other agencies, together with close family and friends, I made the decision to work with the husband. It was particularly difficult coming to that conclusion.

My client has almost had to start from scratch again, setting up utilities etc. in his sole name. This has now all been completed. He is still accessing CMHT and I support him during these lengthy phone calls.

**Conclusion**

At the moment, the police have released my client pending investigations and are not in a position to charge my client with anything. His life is back more or less on an even keel. We are waiting to hear what will happen.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **CC** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **31 years** |
| **Disability** | **Learning Disability** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Work ongoing** |
| **The issue** | |
| Client was referred to PCAS for support with issues in her life that were being affected by her learning disability (accessing local services, management of finances, understanding correspondence etc.)<br>During this time the focus changed to support for the client with a child protection processes regarding two children under 5 years of age and an unborn baby, the two children were placed on a child protection plan and there were separate proceedings for the unborn baby. In due course, the Local Authority issued a letter before proceedings. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| The first and most important step was to explain to the client the gravity of the situation and to help the client to access legal advice and representation, I contacted a firm of Solicitors on her behalf, who I believed would be best placed to advise and represent her and an appointment was duly organised.<br>The Local Authority was recommending to the Family Court that the children be removed from the client's care and following the first Family Court hearing, the two children were removed to a foster placement.<br>The new born baby was also removed to a foster placement soon after birth.<br>The ongoing work was focused on supporting my client at legal meetings and child protection meetings, to help her to participate as fully as possible and to ensure that her views and thoughts were known and recorded.<br>It was also necessary for me to make a challenge on the client's behalf under the Human Rights Act, about one decision made by the Local Authority. The challenge was upheld and the Local Authority had to change the stance that was being taken over one aspect of the interaction between client and her newborn baby. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| The client is currently awaiting the outcome of final resolution Family Court hearings which are scheduled to be heard in the coming months.<br>My work continues in helping client to prepare for and participate in meetings, understand the purpose of the meetings and then afterwards to understand what has been said and of course, to make sure her views are heard. Work also includes liaison with client's legal team and children's services. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| The main challenge was helping the client to understand complex information and then to retain that information, this required giving the same information many times and finding ways to rephrase information to help client understand.<br>Covid-19 restrictions have had and continue to have a huge impact, with meetings being held remotely and client having to adapt which was very difficult for her though she engaged really well and participated in all meetings. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| This case is ongoing and therefore support for the client is ongoing | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **FR 1033** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **84** |
| **Disability** | **Dementia** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **February 2020 to Sept 2020** |
| **The issue** | |
| My client who had the onset of dementia, was starting to suffer other health issues and had taken a few falls in his own home. He had care calls a few times per day plus help from neighbours and a good friend but the falls were a cause for concern and he needed treatment for an infection.<br>About this time, his family members whom he had been estranged from arrived to see him and tried to take over his affairs, wanting to know all about his finances and asking for the deeds of his property. They also wanted to set up themselves as his Power of Attorney. My client had not seen these family members for some years and had told his neighbour that he had told them to stay away years before. This was of concern to me as I knew my client had capital and owned his property. The family members were also making accusations that my client had been defrauded by his friend but I knew this was not the case as I had been brought in by Shropshire Council Safeguarding team to help my client keep track of his bills and paperwork. | |
| **The steps taken to address the issue** | |
| My client was taken to hospital to sort out his leg infection but just before this I met with the client and his Community social worker to ask him if he wanted his family involved in his finances and he said no. I contacted the safeguarding team to advise them of the situation and potential for possible financial abuse. My client was allocated a safeguarding social worker to look into the matter and gather information and take statements from my client, the care company, his neighbours, his friend and his social worker. He also met with my client to determine his capacity to understand and manage his own financial affairs. | |
| **The outcome** | |
| The safeguarding social worker determined that my client did not have the capacity to understand and manage his own financial affairs. Despite, protestations from his family members, the social worker was able to inform their solicitor that power of attorney action could not go ahead without my client having psychological evaluation . He also confirmed on evidence of my client`s previous wishes that the best course of action for my client was for the Shropshire Council Client Property Team to apply to be Deputy for my Clients affairs going forward. My client had been resident in a nursing home following discharge from hospital and is making good progress. | |
| **The challenges and how they were met** | |
| The accusations from my client`s family were quite nasty and were distressing for my client too. He is quite strong willed despite his dementia and had chosen to live in his own home as he wanted. They had just arrived on the scene and were trying to take over his affairs, despite having made no effort for several years to see or help him. Ironically, when my client was going to be admitted to hospital, his heating had stopped working, due to an electrical power surge fault in the local area. The power company had agreed to fix my client`s heating for free as they had accepted liability however the family cancelled the action without consulting my client. This was just at the start of the first Covid lockdown period so as my client has remained in hospital and nursing care it still remains unresolved until the Deputyship is approved. | |
| **Conclusion** | |
| My client still has his assets and finances and is being cared for safely without fear of financial deprivation. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **AM 1024** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **77** |
| **Disability** | **Multiple Sclerosis/ Alcohol addiction** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **March 2020 to Dec 2020** |

**The issue**

Client lives in supported living accommodation since being diagnosed with MS following a hospital admission. Client lives on his pensions and has 5 care visits per day. The local council finance team were putting him under pressure to claim all appropriate benefits. When he initially moved in the warden of the accommodation project tried to help client claim Attendance Allowance but this was turned down. After 6 months I supported client to have another go at claiming. I got him a new application form to apply but I needed, then, to find him some support to make the claim.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

As this coincided with the start of the first Covid lockdown I was unable to go and see my client or help him get an appointment at the nearest CAB office. Also Benefit Visiting Officers were not going out to visit face to face.

I therefore waited till the lockdown was lifted. I was then able to visit my client and arranged to help him complete the application whilst having the support of the Benefit Adviser on the telephone that my client and I could hear by putting my phone on loudspeaker. My client cannot write because of his MS but he could understand and answer the questions with support from the Benefit officer. I could transcribe his answers to his form and send it off for him.

**The outcome**

The client was awarded higher rate attendance allowance which means he has to make a contribution to his care to the local council but it means he gets more associated benefits such as council tax support, pension credit and housing benefits. This means he is better off overall.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The lack of face to face support from other agencies such as CAB and the Benefits Agency has been very difficult and puts pressure on myself and my colleagues as we try to find alternative solutions.

By having the benefit officer available on the end of the phone was better than my client having to wait even longer.

**Conclusion**

Client now has all appropriate financial support in place to meet his needs. He just needs support from me to action his post from time to time and any issues that crop up.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **CA 1050, PA 1049 (Partners/Parents)** |
| **Gender** | **Female Male** |
| **Age** | **39 30** |
| **Disability** | **Literacy difficulties, ADHD** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Approx. 3 Months** |

**The issue**

Clients son requires additional 1:1 support at school due to educational needs/behaviours. Assessed as being approximately 4 years educationally behind his peers. Prior to COVID19 family were known & supported, monitored by Child Protection/Safeguarding Team this ended in Dec 2020 leaving a piece of work supporting Mum and Dad who have literacy difficulties in completing a EHC Needs Assessment form to enable ongoing support for their son going into Year 5.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Contact the SENCO Officer at the child's school and arrange for EHC Form to be emailed to me to complete with parents.

Arrange with parents when was best to contact them to discuss, suggested that they have a pen and paper to hand and when I go through the questions they could write them down (with prompts) and given time to think about the questions. I arranged to contact them back the following day to go through what their answers were. I also provided them with the Local Authority Educational website that provides pictorial information on the questions/answers that some people had previously given.

**The outcome**

Contact clients the following day as arranged and we discussed what information they wanted me to document. Throughout our conversation we discussed various scenarios (enabling them to understand the questions)
Example first question: -

- Please provide a description of your child – Response initially given he has light brown hair and is approx.? tall, blue eyes etc., etc.,

I explained that the information required would be: -

Explanation –What does (?) enjoy
Who is important to him
What are his strengths and weaknesses? (what does he find easy and what does he find difficult)
Does he have friends and mix easily
Can he complete personal care or does he require assistance/encouragement?
Behaviour at home and general wellbeing i.e. is he healthy and happy

I needed to explain various words throughout the document as it was evident that the parents did not fully understand what they meant.
Words like Aspirations, Achievements.
The form was completed and emailed to SENCO Officer to be passed for consideration by the Local Educational Department.

**The challenges and how they were met**

- Difficulty contacting Parents – left various voicemails explaining urgency for them to contact me
- Writing in the parent's words without changing into my own words

**Conclusion**

EHC Needs Assessment submitted 25-02-2021. Case to remain open until outcome has been received.



Registered Charity Number 1187362

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **NC 1142** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **37** |
| **Disability** | **Downs Syndrome** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **18 Months** |

**The issue**

Client currently has a tenancy based in Telford – this provision is for people with care and support needs and aimed at the Learning Disability client group. As part of the tenancy you sign to accept the onsite care and support.
Some concerns as to the level of care/support provided, capability issues of staff, no support plan adhered to, mouldy food being left in oven and fridge, not supporting or adhering to food intolerances and dietary needs, total care hours not being provided and no structure.
More recently client was admitted and had a weeklong stay in hospital after contracting COVID19 despite information being provided by the client's mother on the high risk of people with Downs Syndrome being more susceptible to catching COVID19.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Numerous meetings carried out over the period of time of my involvement with a few changes in Social Workers, Team leaders and senior support staff resulting in me sending my concerns via email to the social worker asking that she forward to T & W commissioning I also raised concerns around other residents that may not feel able to speak out or have support to do this? – response -commissioning did not feel it was a commissioning issue. The client was becoming increasing anxious as he was not receiving his hours. When I checked the records in between being in and out of lockdown it was apparent that his support plan was not being adhered to. I discussions this with the client and his mother it was agreed that his mother would lodge a formal complaint against the provider, I also supported with this complaint.
In the meantime, since clients discharge from hospital he has remained living at her mother's until these issues or alternative accommodation has been arranged.

**The outcome**

Meeting via Microsoft Teams to discuss the main areas of concern and from this the provider will complete their investigations and a meeting will be arranged at a later date.

**The challenges and how they were met**

- Explaining to the client that what's happening to him i.e., not having correct hours of support etc., was not their fault
- Offer client reassurance to enable him to be more vocal and if he feels something is not right or care/attitude of carers is not right to let someone know
- Providing Social Services with constant emails and telephone calls raising concern to ensure they took appropriate action.
- Client wishes to have his own space but until these issues are addressed or alternative accommodation is found – we are unsure how long this will take.

**Conclusion**

Formal complaint lodged with provider. Zoom meeting completed to discuss issues. Provider to investigate and a further meeting to be held to discuss outcome. Service Delivery manager and commissioning are also on board from the local authority as they acknowledged they have more than one funded resident at this particular establishment.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **RC 1089** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **84** |
| **Disability** | **Mental Health & Physical disabilities** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Approximately 7 months ( affected by Covid-19) & some aspects of work are ongoing.** |

**The issue**

Client residing in residential home, the place was organised in first instance by ICS Social Worker and client was self-funding her accommodation & care.
It became apparent when looking at client's bank statements with her that she was rapidly running out of funds and she would not be able to sustain the self- funding.
Client strongly wishing to remain living at current residential home.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Discussed with client & explained that now was the time to be asking for assistance from the Local Authority to help with her care costs and that this would mean the involvement of Adult Social care social workers and finance teams, client agreed.

- Notified First Point of Contact to alert Adult Social care.
- Completed financial assessment form re client's finances to be sent to Local Authority (had to include here a property that client believed was entirely owned by her).
- Supported client with meetings with social workers to discuss her wishes & options, client opted to enter in to a deferred payment option to cover her care and accommodation using the property which she believed she owned, property is currently unoccupied).
- Supported client to set up home insurance for the empty property which is a condition of the deferred payment arrangement.
- Notified by Social worker dealing with client's case that this as all now in the hands of Local Authority Legal Team & Financial Team to progress, client happy with this arrangement.
- In the meantime, funding secured for client to remain living at residential home per her wishes.

**The outcome**

Some months later, the client was notified in writing that she owed a large sum of money to the Local Authority for her care, this was a shock to the client and information about this was passed to me by the Home manager. Further investigation by me revealed that Local Authority was not able to proceed with plans to go ahead with deferred payment because of issues with the property i.e. lack of absolute proof that client owns the property. This will require intervention of a solicitor and in depth discussion with the client to ensure that she understands and is fully aware of what is happening, but apparently no one from adult social care or Local Authority is willing to do this.
Arrangements made with home manager to have telephone conversation with client to explain everything to her and to help her pay care contributions in the meantime while waiting to seek legal advice. This was arranged & had to be postponed because client unwell.

**The challenges and how they were met**

- Changes in social workers added to delays
- Covid-19 restrictions caused communication difficulties, this was overcome by one face to face meeting in PPE & outside when restrictions lifted in summer and then by having telephone conversations with client, where client was supported by home manager because of hearing impairment.

**Conclusion**

This is ongoing and is now dependent on client's health and the ability of myself as Independent Advocate to visit the care home to see the client face to face to ensure she is fully aware of the situation and to support her in moving forward with addressing the issues

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **AW 1251** |
| **Gender** | **Male** |
| **Age** | **41** |
| **Disability** | **Mental Health Issues** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **Outcome not yet achieved** |

**The issue**

Client had a very traumatic childhood, was a crack cocaine & heroin addict. He still uses cannabis & feels proud that he's managed to come off hard drugs. Has severe anger management issues & requested help from the Mental Health Team but refuses to join in group work saying he needs one to one sessions. His request is due to intolerance of other people & listening to their issues is not good for him. He is also very un-PC in his terminology of others & swears a lot. This gets him into trouble & he's been banned from the local bus which causes problems as he lives in a rural area. He's also been banned from several supermarkets.

He's trying very hard to carry out improvements to his flat & is good working with his hands. This is restricted by limited finances & more severely by pain he suffers from an old injury to his arm & hand. He thinks doctor has made a referral for further investigation into this issue. He would, in the future like to look at finding employment but it would have to be a job working outside & using his hands. He used to be a chef but does not wish to go back to this kind of job as he feels it would be too stressful.

He's come off his medication as it was affecting his stomach and making it difficult to eat & says he feels better for doing this. He gets very frustrated when he is told he is not co-operating with Mental Health Team suggestions & feels he is not being listened to.

He does not like people at all & hates anyone coming into his home. He has isolated himself a lot from society as he feels being around people will just get him into trouble & is happy in his own home.

He has some debts which he has only just opened up to me about & has been in contact with Citizens Advice.

Client feels he is very 'damaged' & nobody has offered him any support from when he was discharged from care as a teenager up until now.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

It has taken a while to build up client's trust & he is more responsive on some visits than others. I have liaised with his Social Worker and her colleague from NHS who will chase up GP to check client has been referred regarding problems with his arm and hand. I have given client details of new scheme from Enable & spoken to SW who is going to make a referral to them directly. I have, on client's behalf, stressed that he cannot work in group sessions and had it confirmed that his anger management issues will be dealt with on a one to one basis but there is a waiting list for this support. As this client can cook I have encouraged him to do 'batch cooking' so that if he is not having a good day there is always a meal ready for him to access. I have encouraged him with the improvements he is carrying out to his flat as this seems to improve his mental health when he achieves success. I have now offered support with sorting out his debts.

**The outcome**

Client is moving forward but it will be a slow road & he may have setbacks. He has deleted all his phone contacts for people who can supply him with drugs and ended a lot of 'friendships' with people involved in that world & realizes he does not want to go back to that way of life.

After being the black sheep of the family he now does have some contact with them but this is mainly by text messages and occasional phone calls.

**The challenges and how they were met**

The challenges are ongoing but building up a relationship with this client has been critical. He says he is happy working with me & contacts me to support him at meetings with his SW. He needs a service that can work with him over a long period of time. Challenges have been to look deeper than the initial impression he gives of being an aggressive, un-co-operative person & to actually listen to what he wants from life and help him to achieve this.

**Conclusion**

With the right support to live life the way he wants to (which by his own admission would be fairly isolated), I feel this client's mental health could improve dramatically and in the future he could find some sort of employment that would suit him, building his self-esteem.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **MJ - 1268** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **89** |
| **Disability** | **Dementia and frail following a fall** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **8 Months** |

**The issue**

This client has one daughter from whom she's estranged. Daughter moved her mother into a warden controlled apartment & she has not seen her since & refuses to speak to her mother on the phone. Referral came from SCC allocated Social Worker. It stated that client had dementia but had capacity to manage her finances. She owed SCC several thousand pounds due to non- payment of invoices for care through an agency. Client had been deemed self-funding. Social Worker had helped client to set up Direct Debits to pay her rent and council tax. Referral was to support client to pay this debt.

On visiting client, it was very obvious that she had no understanding of her finances at all & she informed me she used to have lots of money in a second bank account but had no idea where that money had gone as she had lost the bank card for this account. On looking at her bank statements she was overdrawn on her current account and had just over £25,000 in her second account but could not access it without a card.

Actions of SW in setting up DD for client but not checking any of her other finances caused financial chaos. She was not receiving Attendance Allowance & after two months of funding her own care she would have fallen below the self-funding limit & qualified for care to be paid in full by SCC. Care agency used her bank card to do shopping for her & this had been declined so the carer had paid for the shopping on her behalf.

Client had no idea of any of these issues and thought her care was free anyway.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

I contacted newly appointed SW to say she needed to reassess client urgently and make a referral to Client Property. It was also arranged that she got food from Food Bank as she was unable to access money in her second bank account. I visited her again and suggested we contact her bank & get the large amount in her 2nd bank account transferred into her current account & close the 2nd bank account. This would alleviate her immediate financial difficulties & enable her to pay for daily living expenses. She thought this would be a good idea so we phoned the bank & got this done.

I also spoke to SW and Client Property to point out that the £12,600 pounds they were chasing her for in unpaid care invoices was totally incorrect and that when they took control of her finances they needed to start again from March 2020 when they first put care in place.

**The outcome**

SC Client Property now applying to Court to take over her finances & are applying for Attendance Allowance to maximise her income. I will remain her advocate to ensure her voice is heard regarding how her care is managed, she is listened to regarding where she would like to live (she hates the flat she lives in), being able to attend lunch club or Day Centre and having her hair done, all when Covid restrictions are eased.

**The challenges and how they were met**

It was very difficult trying to provide support to this client without upsetting her as she is in complete denial regarding her dementia. I had to be very careful how I phrased things when speaking with her.

I speak with the Care Agency on a regular basis for updates on any issues that are distressing client until I can visit her again. They are very helpful.

Working with Social Workers who have no idea as to how the financial system around care provision works is challenging as you are giving them information that they should already know.

**Conclusion**

Financial issues are now sorted as Client Property are managing them. Advocate still required to ensure client's issues are taken into consideration and she can access social activities which she is really missing due to Covid restrictions.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Initials & number** | **CG 1005** |
| **Gender** | **Female** |
| **Age** | **80** |
| **Disability** | **Alzheimer's** |
| **Length of time from identifying issue to outcome** | **3 years** |

**The issue**

Client lived alone in her own home. It was clear that she was losing capacity quickly. Working with her doctor and Adult Social Services, a place was found for her in a local Care Home. Her immediate family wanted nothing to do with her or her financial affairs. She had a solicitor, who was also unwilling to take on appointee-ship. Her case was made more difficult due to an impending Polish court case. She was being pursued from invoices that needed to be paid on a flat that she part-owned in Poland. All paperwork was being received in Polish.

It was essential that a means be found to allow the client access to her money and to oversee the sale of her home, which was needed to pay her care bills.

**The steps taken to address the issue**

Originally, I had attempted to contact the client's son and daughter to ask them to accept responsibility for their mother. The son declined and put this in writing to the solicitor. The daughter refused to answer any of my or the solicitor's communications. After 18months, the solicitor confirmed that they would not be taking on appointee-ship for my client.

This left one option which was to ask Shropshire Council Client Property Services to take over the client's financial affairs. It took a whole year of badgering the Council and several on site meetings at the client's bungalow, which was falling into disrepair due to damp. Finally in January this year, I received confirmation that they have now accepted my client and they have also taken on the Polish court case.

**The outcome**

The client has someone to look after her finances. She does not have the capacity or capability to do this herself.

**The challenges and how they were met**

Dealing with the client's family was extremely frustrating, and the solicitor was also obstructive. It was necessary to contact them on weekly basis to badger them until I finally got some form of response. Working with Client Property Services was always going to be protracted issue. Constant pressure was required, which eventually led to them accepting responsibility for my client.

**Conclusion**

The client is safe in her residential home and her finances are being looked after professionally

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a foundation model constitution for a CIO.

The charity did not become active until 1 June 2020, the date from which the CIO took over the activities, assets and commitments of its antecedent charity, Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy (registered charity number 1102986).

PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service) covers the whole of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and is a registered charity (number 1187362)

PCAS supports any person aged 18 or over with ANY disability or multiple disabilities.

There is no charge to our clients for our service, which is something we feel very strongly about. Our clients are often the most vulnerable in society, many having multiple disabilities and who do not fit into the remit of other services.

## Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

Prospective trustees come from all walks of life. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please contact the PCAS office on 01691 658008. An informal chat about what we do is the first step, then you would fill in an application form if you are still interested. From there, you would meet a couple of Trustees, and the current board would then vote on your prospective application.

The Board of Trustees meet bi-monthly and at other times deemed necessary. Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no payment for their work/time. They are from a variety of backgrounds and bring varied skills and experience to the Board. We currently have 2 clients, people with disabilities themselves and those with a professional background. The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and meets the charitable outcomes. Day to day operational decisions are taken by the PCAS Manager and staff of the organisation, within the delegated authority conferred by the Board.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error, this has been done.

## Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning the activities for the year.

## Trustees

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chair** | Doreen Ellis |
| **Vice Chair** | Clare Harris |
| **Treasurer** | Peter Quinn |
| **Trustee** | Judith Webster |
| **Trustee** | Russell Jones |
| **Trustee** | Simon Harris |
| **Trustee** | Deborah Campbell |

## Staff - PCAS

| | |
|---|---|
| **PCAS Manager/Advocate** | Simon Arthur |
| **Assistant Manager/Shropshire Advocate** | Glenda Crawshaw |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Wendy Timmis |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Jackie Copson |
| **Shropshire Advocate** | Lynne Davis |
| **T & W Advocate** | Ann Shaw |
| **T & W Advocate** | Maura Atterbury |
| **Evaluation Administrator** | Allisone Arthur |
| **Volunteer** | Paul Newman |

## Professional Advisors

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bank** | Unity Trust Bank |
| **Building Society** | The West Bromwich |
| **Independent Examiners** | AZETS Audit Services Limited<br>5-7 Beatrice Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 1QE<br>01691 661144 |

# Financial Review

## Reserves Policy

The free reserves of the charity were £55,558 at the year end and the Trustees consider this amount to be sufficient for their immediate operating requirements. Included in the £55,558 is £30,000 which has been designated for operating costs should funding cease to allow the charity to continue to function whilst further funding is applied for.

## Principal Funding Sources

The charity has been funded by various grants this year from:

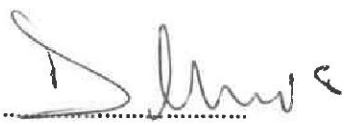
The Henry Smith Charity
Private Donation
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
Select Healthcare
Severn Trent Community Fund
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
Independent Age
The Albert Hunt Trust
The Edward Gostling Foundation

The above funders and supporters are the backbone of our charity and without their generous funding we would not be able to provide the service we do.

## Future Developments

We continuously strive to develop our services in order to meet the need of our clients. Funding is always an issue. However, we endeavour to be proactive as we fight for the rights of our vulnerable client group.

On behalf of the board of trustees



Mrs D. Ellis
**Chair**
Dated: 8th June 2021



Registered Charity Number 1187362

# Our Contact Details:-

## PCAS (Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service)

**Suite 1**

**The Willow Tree**

**Willow Street**

**Oswestry**

**SY11 1AJ**

**Telephone:** **01691 658008**

**Web Site:** **www.shropshirepcas.co.uk**

**Email:** simon@shropshirepcas.co.uk **(PCAS Manager)**

alli@shropshirepcas.co.uk **(Evaluation Administrator)**



Registered Charity Number 1187362

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service
For the year ended 31st March 2021

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.
I understand that this has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with GAAP effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

J M Ollier FCA
Azets Audit Services Limited
5-7 Beatrice Street
Oswestry
SY11 1QE

Dated: 8th June 2021

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31st March 2021

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds £ | Restricted funds £ | Total 2021 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Donations and legacies | 3 | 4,017 | - | 4,017 |
| Charitable activities | 4 | 2,150 | 168,248 | 170,398 |
| Investments | | 192 | | 192 |
| Other income | 5 | 2,925 | | 2,925 |
| Transfer of funds from antecedent | 6 | 52,891 | 14,375 | 67,266 |
| **Total incoming resources** | | 62,175 | 182,623 | 244,798 |
| **Resources expended** | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 7 | 6,263 | 145,785 | 152,048 |
| Other | 10 | - | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| **Total resources expended** | | 6,263 | 150,785 | 157,048 |
| **Net incoming resources before transfers** | | 55,912 | 31,838 | 87,750 |
| Gross transfers between funds | | - | - | |
| **Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds** | | 55,912 | 31,838 | 87,750 |
| **Fund balances at 31 March 2021** | | 55,912 | 31,838 | 87,750 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy Service
Balance Sheet
At 31st March 2021

| | Notes | Unrestricted £ | Restricted £ | 2021 Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **12** | 354 | - | **354** |
| **Current assets** | | | | |
| Debtors | | - | - | - |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 55,558 | 171,388 | **226,946** |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **13** | - | (139,550) | **(139,550)** |
| **Net current assets** | | 55,558 | 31,838 | **87,396** |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | 55,912 | 31,838 | **87,750** |
| **Income funds** | | | | |
| Restricted funds | **14** | | | **31,838** |
| Designated funds | | | | **30,000** |
| Unrestricted funds | | | | **25,912** |
| | | | | **87,750** |

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on 8th June 2021

Mrs Doreen Ellis – Chair



Registered Charity Number 1187362

## 1 Accounting policies

Shropshire Peer Counselling & Advocacy is controlled by its governing document, a foundation model constitution for a CIO.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard appliable in the UK and republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cashflows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the accounts, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees' continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

**1.4 Incoming resources**

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known and the receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes.

**1.5 Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fixtures, fittings and equipment | 25% on a reducing balance |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

**1.7 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Recoverable amount is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value in use. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset for which the estimates of future cash flows have not been adjusted.

If the recoverable amount of an asset is estimated to be less than the carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount. An impairment loss is recognised immediately in income/(expenditure) for the year, unless the relevant asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease.

Recognised impairment losses are reversed if, and only if, the reasons for the impairment loss have ceased to apply. Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount, but so that the increased carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in previous years. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised immediately, unless the relevant asset is carried in at a revalued amount, in which case the reversal of the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation increase.

**1.8 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, Other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially recognised at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**1.9 Employee benefits**

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

**1.10 Leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged to income on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

**1.11 Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds can only be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

**1.12 Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

**1.13 Deferred income**

Deferred income is released to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period that the income relates to.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

## 3 Donations and legacies

| | 2021 |
|---|---|
| | £ |
| Donations and gifts | 4,017 |

## 4 Charitable activities

| | 2021 |
|---|---|
| | £ |
| Services provided under grants | 167,415 |
| Services provided under contract | 2,983 |
| | 170,398 |
| Analysis by fund: | |
| Unrestricted funds | 2,150 |
| Restricted funds | 168,248 |
| | 170,398 |

## 5 Other Income

| | 2021 |
|---|---|
| Job Retention Scheme | 2,925 |

## 6 Transfer of funds from antecedent

| | 2021 |
|---|---|
| Fixed assets at net book value | 565 |
| Cash | 182,447 |
| Current liabilities | (115,746) |
| | 67,266 |

## 7 Charitable activities

| | Counselling & Advocacy Services 2021 £ |
|---|---|
| Staff costs | 139,163 |
| Depreciation and impairment | 210 |
| Rent | 5,861 |
| Insurance | 451 |
| Telephone | 3,948 |
| Postage and stationery | 1,633 |
| Sundry | 671 |
| Repairs and renewals | 76 |
| Subscriptions | 35 |
| | 152,048 |
| Analysis by fund | |
| Unrestricted | 6,263 |
| Restricted | 145,785 |
| | 152,048 |

## 8 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**Trustees' expenses**

During the year there were no expenses reimbursed to trustees.

## 9 Employees

**Employment Costs**

| | 2021 £ |
|---|---|
| Wages and salaries | 117,029 |
| Social security | 4,938 |
| | 121,967 |

## 9 Employees

*Continued...*

**Number of employees**
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | 2021 Number |
|---|---|
| Advocacy work | 7 |
| Administration | 1 |
| | 8 |

There were no employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000.

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

## 10 Other expenses

| | 2021 £ |
|---|---|
| Accountancy | 5,000 |
| | 5,000 |

## 11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

## 12 Tangible fixed assets

| | Fixtures, fittings & Equipment £ |
|---|---|
| **Cost** | |
| At 31 May 2020 | - |
| Additions | 564 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 564 |
| **Depreciation** | |
| At 31 May 2020 | - |
| Depreciation charge for the year | 210 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 354 |
| **Carrying amount** | |
| At 31 March 2021 | 354 |
| At 31 May 2020 | - |

## 13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

| | 2021 |
|---|---|
| | £ |
| Other creditors | 320 |
| Accruals | 2,240 |
| Deferred income | 136,990 |
| | 139,550 |

## 14 Movement in funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

| | Movement in funds | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Transfer from antecedent | Incoming resources | Resources Expended | Transfers between | Balance at 31 March 2021 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Garfield Weston | 1,157 | 12,500 | (7,605) | - | **6,052** |
| Lloyds | 1,044 | 20,165 | (20,058) | - | **1,151** |
| Shropshire | 12,109 | - | (-) | - | **12,109** |
| Henry Smith | 2,186 | 23,750 | (23,014) | - | **2,922** |
| Private grant | (2,890) | 83,333 | (76,661) | - | **3,782** |
| Others | 769 | 28,500 | (23,447) | - | **5,822** |
| Restricted funds | 14,375 | 168,248 | (150,785) | - | **31,838** |

All restricted funds for the year are to be used on the advocacy project.

## 15 Designated fund

Funds held in the designated fund are held to ensure that the charity has an amount of money available to it should funding cease to enable it to continue operating for a short period whilst further funds are sought.

## 16 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions for the year.

## 17 Charity reconstruction

During the year, the Trustees of Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service (Charity registration 1102986) dissolved the charity and transferred the funds and activities of the charity to Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service CIO (Charity registration 1187362). The transfer of assets and activity occurred on 31 May 2020.

## Independent Examiners

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that AZETS Audit Services Limited be re-appointed as independent examiners for the ensuing year.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of our Registered Charity, as at the Balance Sheet date and of its incoming resources and applications, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements; and

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Registered Charity and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Registered Charities Act of 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Registered Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement of Disclosure

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is not any relevant accounting information of which the charities examiners are unaware. Additionally the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the Charity's examiners are aware of said information.

## This Annual Report was designed and compiled by Allisone Arthur

## Thank You to all our funders and donors

Private Donation

Lloyds Bank Foundation

The Henry Smith Charity

Garfield Weston Foundation

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

Select Healthcare

Severn Trent Community fund

Postcode Neighbourhood Trust

Independent Age

The Albert Hunt Trust

The Edward Gostling Foundation

Other Donations