

why...

we hear you

Annual Review

2016/2017

Providing emotional support to patients, families, friends and carers who have been touched by cancer or any other life threatening conditions



When you ask **why...** we hear you.

we hear you

01373 455 255 wehearyou.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1156001
Formerly Positive Action on Cancer

About **why...**

At **We Hear you** we understand that cancer and life threatening conditions can be overwhelming. It can leave you feeling numb, isolated and terrified and can seem too big to cope with. We provide a safe space where people can say the unsayable and ask the unanswerable.

When you ask **why...** we hear you.

Founder

Jill Miller

Staff

Melissa Hillier
Director

Heather Mora
Clinical Manager
(until June 2016)

Michael Tichelar
Clinical Manager
(June – Dec 2016)

Cath Wilkins
Clinical Manager
(from Feb 2017)

Gwen Rogerson
Senior Counsellor
(from Oct 2016)

Karen Duffton
Office Manager

Gemma Wilkes
Fundraiser

Ruth Knagg
Bid Writer

Helen Sprawson-White
Fundraising Assistant



Photo L-R:
Cath Wilkins, Lucy McMahon,
Ruth Knagg, Melissa Hillier,
Helen White, Gemma Wilkes
and Karen Duffton

Trustees

Anne Montague
Chair

Rachael Hulbert
Treasurer (from
November 2016)

Martin Walsh
Treasurer (resigned
October 2016)

Julia di Castiglione
(resigned September
2016)

Emily Denham

Jon McFarlane
(resigned September
2016)

Eleanor Tucker

Jamie Gallagher
(joined June 2016)

Peter Lennard
(October 2016)

Counselling team

Kate Bartlett
Rhonda Brandwick
Lisa Drake
Carol Ellis
Ruth Gait
Penny Old
Gwen Rogerson
Ros de Silva
Caroline Waite

Highlights of the year

- Two new counselling venues were added to the range of places we offer face to face counselling. Friends of Bradford on Avon community healthcare granted the funding to offer weekly sessions in their town starting in November 2016. The five year grant funding from Big Lottery enabled weekly sessions in Midsomer Norton to start up from March 2017.
- **WHY** secured multi-year grants from St John's Foundation and Macmillan; a new corporate partnership with Redrow Homes; continuing partnership with Marston Foods; a glamorous ball with an Oscars theme; and a full Mad March schedule of events from tiny to huge.
- All set at year end to move into Frome Town Hall, meaning that all our counselling venues are fully accessible to all.
- Total referrals rose 5% on last year to 373 this year and we offered a record number of counselling sessions: over 3,600.
- Online counselling is now offered to anyone who could benefit from that as an alternative option.
- The Frome office hosted its first university placement student. Shannon Cuthbertson spent the summer of 2016 on detailed research amongst adults who had used our service and published the results as part of her Masters qualification. Read some of the key findings on page 9.
- Our social enterprise, **The WHY Gallery**, re-opened in new premises in August 2016. See page 14.
- **WHY** was shortlisted as a finalist in two awards: The Somerset Business Awards and the Bath Life Awards.



Message from our Chair and our Director

2016/17 has been a year of consolidating our refreshed brand at **We Hear You** whilst continuing to expand the range of ways in which we offer our valuable service.

There is no sign of the increase in referrals to our service abating, so we were pleased to be able to add Bradford on Avon and Midsomer Norton this year to the list of venues at which we offer one to one counselling.

A three year grant funding contract with St Johns Foundation has enabled us to add two extra sessions per week in Bath and the great success of the online counselling pilot test last year led us to make the decision to offer online counselling as a regular ongoing part of our service to those who would benefit. It can be particularly helpful when a client is in a rural area with poor public transport connections, or when not feeling well enough to travel to counselling sessions in person.

Macmillan generously granted three years of funding to establish group counselling with three particular groups of people: carers; those living with and beyond cancer; and men affected by cancer. During this financial year, we undertook the groundwork to set up this new area of work and the first group began



Anne Montague
Chair



Melissa Hillier
Director

to meet in April 2017 so look out for more news on this in next year's review.

However, we know we are still only seeing a fraction of the people who need our help across Bath, Somerset and Wiltshire. Therefore our fundraising drive continues.

A huge thank you to our supporters who have enabled us to increase the counselling we provide this year. A further huge thanks to all those who have been willing to share their true stories and help other people to find and make use of our support.

As ever, we want to thank all our dedicated staff, counsellors and volunteers for helping to reach more people than ever this year.

**Anne Montague, Chair
and Melissa Hillier, Director**

Treasurer's Report

Our income increased to £263,711 (2016/17) from £245,872 (2015/16); this includes gross income from the newly launched shop (WHY Gallery) of £9,106. Our expenditure of £280,132 resulted in a deficit of -£16,421 for 2016/17. This included a deficit of £13,700 from the retail activity.

The smaller deficit on the charitable activities was due to pressures on community fundraising due to one-off crowd funding activities locally, coupled with planned costs associated with moving premises in March 2017 and rebranding materials.

In June 2016, WHY became an accredited Living Wage employer ensuring that employees as well as any contractors are paid above the Living Wage rather than the Government minimum (set by the Living Wage Commission at £8.45 per hour in this financial year).

Fundraising from the local community as well as corporate support delivered £97,388 (£116,558 2015/16) whilst income from trusts and foundations rose by over 53% compared to 2015/16 financial year at £126,466 (£82,851 2015/16). A significant increase in the funders agreeing to multi-year grant funding helps to put WHY on a more secure footing going into 2017/18. As the



new financial year began, we knew that £134,347 had already been secured towards the total needed for 2017/18 operational work.

There was a rise in our expenditure from £232,225 to £280,132.

We have carried forward a reserves fund of £90,005 to 2017/18, of which £66,255 has been ring-fenced.

We are aware that funding opportunities in the current environment are more difficult to obtain and as a charity made the decision this financial year to continue providing an increased level of support to patients and families as demand for our service continued to rise. We were also aware of confirmed income due in the forthcoming financial year (2017/18) and have been successful in securing further multi-year grants to help with the future sustainability of the service. In addition, we are continuing to invest in our retail activity in order to raise the profile of the Charity further and generate surpluses in the medium term.

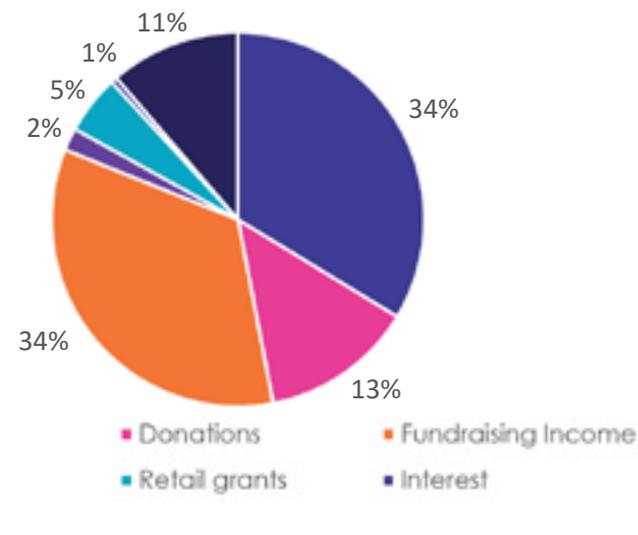
Peter Lennard, Treasurer

Statement of Financial Activities

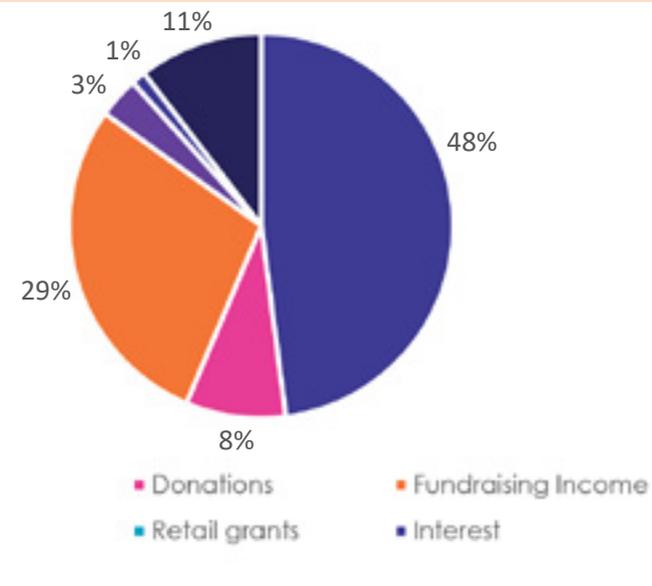
For the year ended 31 March 2017

Activity Classification	2017 £	2016 £
Incoming Resources		
Grants	126,466	82,851
Donations	22,195	32,654
Fundraising Income	75,193	83,904
Retail	9,106	4,777
Retail grants	-	12,560
Interest	3,163	1,304
Services	27,588	27,822
Total incoming resources	263,711	245,872
Less cost of generating funds		
Fundraising	72,925	55,738
Retail	22,806	16,114
Total cost of generating funds	95,731	71,852
Net resources available for charitable expenditure	167,980	174,020
Charitable Expenditure		
Counselling service	180,992	156,686
Governance costs	3,409	3,687
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources	(16,421)	13,647
Reserves		
Fund designated for contingencies	46,691	37,284
Other restricted funds	19,564	-
General fund	23,750	69,142
	£90,005	£106,246

2016



2017



The impact of our service

Around 10,000 people are diagnosed with cancer every year in the area where we work, and one in four die from the disease.

Once a patient hears the word “cancer” from a doctor treating them, they stop hearing the rest of the explanation. The same is true for many other life-threatening conditions. The uncertainty of the future can then be excruciating to live with. For the patient and also for the loved ones around them.

Whilst medical needs are dealt with extremely well by the NHS, emotional support is scarce. As one of our clients last year told us “under the NHS I was rather treated as a specimen rather than as a sensitive, thinking member of the same species as the medical practitioners.”

WHY is here to fill that gap, to offer the emotional support for everyone affected to find a way to face the uncertainties whatever may be coming next.

We measure the impact of our work using a clinically validated evaluation tool - the Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE) - and our own evaluation measures. The forms that are completed by clients give measurable scores and also personal quotes like this one:

“It was great to be totally honest and have someone to listen. Cancer happened to someone else, but of course it does NOT! Even with the most loving family and friends, one can feel so alone and scared.”

The scores for 2016-2017 record very high percentage improvements for our clients with an average 45% improvement.

2016 also saw our first in depth adult evaluation. This evaluation was undertaken by a Bath University Health Psychology student who spent her placement with **WHY**...



Delivering an adult cancer counselling service – an evaluation report.

WHY's first evaluation report gathered information from a range of clients who accessed our service over the summer of 2016.



Three key themes were identified with further actions and recommendations for the charity to consider. We were delighted to work with Bath University on this piece of work and support our first MSC student placement at **WHY**.

- 1. The impact of Cancer** - this theme identified the “ripple effect” of cancer and how it affects both patients and their supporters.
- 2. Impact of counselling** – this theme outlines how **WHY's** counselling has impacted those that took part in our study.
- 3. Best practice and learning** – this theme considers the beneficial features of the **WHY** counselling service and how this has enabled clients to get the most out of their sessions as well as identifying areas of development and learning for the charity.

Working with children and young adults

BBC Children in Need are currently funding all our counselling sessions with children and young people that we deliver in local schools and at our office in Frome.

Frome College Head Boy, Ben Manning, was brave enough to share his story on the latest appeal night explaining how he “felt like the world had been taken away from under his feet” when his father died of a rare form of cancer when Ben was just about to tackle his GCSE year at school. Only six months previously, they had a good outlook after a successful operation but the cancer returned and, tragically, Ben's dad passed away very quickly,

leaving the family devastated. Ben was able to meet our counsellor outside lessons in the College and he says:



“without that support, I wouldn't have been sat here today”.

Happily, Ben went on to do outstandingly well in both GCSEs and A Levels, and has proved to be an inspirational mentor to other students at the College facing tough times.

Supporting people living with and beyond cancer

All **We Hear You's** counsellors are experienced in supporting people affected by cancer and life threatening conditions. Sally Sandisford thinks that makes all the difference.



"About a year after the initial diagnosis ...I was really struggling. So I went to the doctor and was prescribed tablets but they're not great. There was a lot of emotion I needed to deal with and just having tablets that suppressed those emotions wasn't really the idea.

"My [WHY] counsellor didn't just sit there and say you've done amazing (as other counsellors had done) she asked about the relationships I had with people around me and my feelings about the cancer. It was much more understanding of how you have no control with cancer, there's nothing you can do.

It was just someone to talk things through with and to acknowledge how I was feeling, not giving me any solutions or telling me how I can make it better but just listening and acknowledging how I was feeling and delving into why I was feeling like that.

"It helped so much that the counsellors specialise in people who have cancer. My confidence has come back which is really good – that was after the counselling."

New additions to the service

New venues

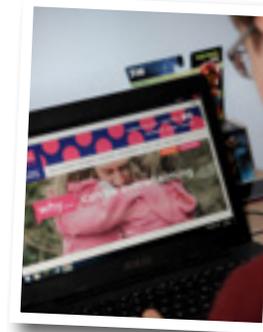
New locations for counselling in Bradford on Avon and Midsomer Norton started this year thanks to Bradford on Avon Community Healthcare and the Big Lottery respectively. Sessions at both filled up quickly.



Online Support

After a successful pilot of online counselling last year, **We Hear You** took the decision to offer an online option as part of the standard service. It continues to be very effective for people choosing it, especially for those people in a position of poor public transport options or who don't feel up to travelling to one of our venues. Online CORE results show a 49% improvement and the feedback we have had from clients has really shown the benefit of using this technology.

"I felt the need for counselling & living in a remote location, on-line was perfect"



"I had a small baby at the time of my diagnosis, so trying to get an appointment would have been very difficult"

Group Therapy

The newest service to be added is group counselling. This is an extended three year trial funded by Macmillan. The idea of groups is to bring together people facing similar circumstances and the first groups are supporting carers.

Next year groups supporting people living with and beyond cancer will be added. And in the third year, we aim to bring together men affected by cancer.

"This group has been my lifeline. I don't know what I would have done without it."

"It enabled me to talk / say things that I didn't feel able to say to my family / friends. This really helped with the healing process and allowed me to voice my deepest fears".

"By being in a group, I can now see my experiences in a new light. It has also made me face my problems and emotions when I was ignoring them."

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Fundraising and volunteering

The community have once again made an outstanding contribution, helping us to raise vital funds to support our services. This year an amazing £97,388 was raised through community fundraising and we are so grateful to have such dedicated supporters within the local community.

Challenge Events – far and wide

Our challenge events have proven to be popular once again. Along with our skydivers and runners this year we had our first overseas challengers. We had a team take on the iconic London to Paris cycle ride, ending the challenge with the opportunity to watch the final of the Tour De France.

In October two of our supporters undertook a trek across the Great Wall of China. Taking in the breath-taking scenery, whilst conquering over 1,000 steps up to the wall as part of the trek.

These incredible challenges emphasise the importance of community involvement and it is so inspiring to see the lengths people will go to, to pledge their support to **We Hear You.**



We have had great support from a variety of local businesses who have supported us in a number of ways. They have hosted dress down or up days, taken on skydives and other incredible challenges or worked in partnership with us by donating services or commission. These have included Redrow Homes South West, Marston Foods and Goodwills Local to name just a few. This support raised over £15,000 and we are so grateful to each and every one of them for the time and effort they have put into supporting us.

Our annual Mad March campaign was a huge success, raising more the £26,000. This extraordinary fundraising month saw local communities take part in coffee mornings, skydiving, raffles, boot camps, acoustic café, afternoon teas, half marathons and even a local nightclub revival night.



As always, we couldn't do what we do without our hardworking team of supporters and volunteers. Their commitment and motivation are fundamental to all our fundraising activities. Whether it's staffing cake bakes, selling raffle tickets, taking part in a bucket collection or talking to groups about our services, their support makes a huge difference and we couldn't reach as many people as we do without them.



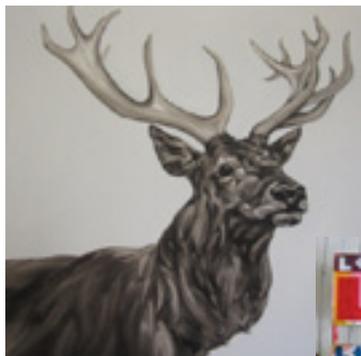
THE **why...** GALLERY

After a successful pilot test last year of a charity shop with a difference, we re-opened our social enterprise in Stony Street, Frome.

The shop is a showcase for local artists, providing them with an outlet for their creative work, and with all profits to be channelled to the counselling service that we provide.

Next time you need to buy a gift for a loved-one and you are in Frome or nearby, drop into **The WHY Gallery** first and you may find the perfect item. With prices from £2.50 to £1,000 there is something for all budgets!

gallery@wehearyou.org.uk
www.whygallery.org.uk



We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all those who have helped us over the last year to deliver our services and support. To all those families who have generously donated to **We Hear You** to remember a loved one, to individuals and companies who donated items for auction throughout the year and to all our volunteers for their support, dedication and hard work which is so vital to the charity's success.

The following funders have given grants, donations and sponsorship to support our work this year:



- Asda
- Barclays
- Bath Mums
- BBC Children in Need
- Big Lottery
- Brock Charitable Trust
- The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- February Foundation
- Friends of Bradford on Avon Community Healthcare
- Frome College
- Frome Community Lottery
- Frome Town Council
- Gracewell Homes
- Goodwills Local

- Macmillan Cancer Support
- Marston foods
- Mulberry
- Pencil Studios
- Pink Ribbon Foundation
- Redrow Homes
- Selwood Academy
- St James Place Foundation
- St James Trust
- St Johns Foundation
- Somerset Community Foundation
- Souter
- The Archangel
- The Artisan
- The Mason's Arms

Pro bono support

Several companies have provided us with services or resources for free this year, we thank the following for their support:

- Alison Ramsay Bookkeeping
- Bulk Solutions
- Compugraphic
- Hello Communications
- Malcolm Gordon FCA

- Netitude
- Orchardleigh
- Lancaster Parr
- Mitchel Law Limited
- Bianca Goss Photography

Who we support

- Patients
- Relatives
- Carers
- Friends and loved ones
- Young people
- Children
- Anyone bereaved by cancer or other life-threatening condition



Where we offer sessions

- Frome
- Bath (RUH and Southside)
- Bradford on Avon
- Midsomer Norton
- Trowbridge
- Warminster
- Street
- Yeovil
- Weston super Mare
- In various schools
- Online
- Group therapy

We rely entirely on voluntary donations from our clients, local businesses, individuals, community groups and grant making trusts.

If you would like to support our work or find out more about the emotional support we provide please do get in touch.

why...

we hear you

Cancer Counselling

We Hear You

First Floor
Frome Town Hall
Frome, BA11 1EB



t 01373 455255

e info@wehearyou.org.uk

w www.wehearyou.org.uk

Follow us on

