



SWWOP

SHEFFIELD WORKING WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES PROJECT LTD

Annual Report 2007-2008

SWWOP Ltd is a small voluntary sector project, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, and was established in 1992. The project provides a specialist outreach service to an extremely socially isolated and vulnerable group of women – street sex workers.

Our aim is to support our clients to look after themselves, access mainstream services and lead normal lives. A successful outcome for our clients is being able to make informed choices about their lives. This will vary for individuals – for some it may be gaining housing, for others keeping a baby or leaving a violent partner. A first step for most is dealing with their drug dependency and any underlying mental health issues. A small proportion are supported to exit street prostitution altogether. For many of our clients, survival itself is a successful outcome given the dangers inherent in street sex work and drug addiction.

A contribution to the provision of healthcare is fundamentally at the core of our work, and is carried out during

four outreach sessions per week by signposting and providing streetbased intervention services in relation to substance misuse, mental health, social health and pregnancy.

We strive to provide a service to all women working as street sex workers in Sheffield and we are committed to supporting and empowering this vulnerable group. This does not include the promotion, control or reduction of prostitution as a goal; we see our role as emphasising the positives of women's characters, i.e. the strength and resourcefulness they possess that enables them to do their jobs. This approach also includes highlighting the positives in their lives generally.

Recovery & Exit Support Team: SWWOP provides fast-tracking to substance misuse treatment and alcohol cessation to any woman wishing to make life style changes and exit street sex work. This is backed up by the provision of multi-agency ongoing intensive support to each individual exit client and access to SWWOP's regular activities and complimentary therapy days.



Our 15th anniversary celebrations

SWWOP Ltd

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Reg Charity No. 1109759

Company Reg. No. 5413661

When I wrote the Chair's report for last year's Annual Report, there was a question mark over whether SWWOP would still be here in a year's time. Well, as you can see, we are and we plan to be around a fair bit longer yet! After putting us and our sister voluntary and community sector services through numerous hoops, the PCT confirmed our funding on a recurrent basis last October, and Sheffield First Safer Communities Partnership provided match funding for that for 2008/2009.

This has allowed us to get on with our work over the last year, with less anxiety about funding for the immediate future. Highlights of the last year include:

- Contributing to the City Council led multi agency review of work in the city on Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution, which led to a report to the Safer Communities Partnership.
- The development, led by Sheffield Drug and Alcohol Action Team, of a new Street Prostitution to Drug Treatment Multi Agency Protocol and Pathway, in which SWWOP plays a pivotal role.
- Further improvements to the van courtesy of Turning Point, and starting of a late night session.
- More agencies requesting and receiving training from SWWOP, which we have also used to generate much needed income.
- Another highly successful speed dating event at the end of the year. This is becoming a key event in the Sheffield calendar - be there, or be square (a phrase which, no doubt, shows my age!)

Sali and Angie have worked hard this year on updating our Business Plan, so that we can use it to support bids for new funding to allow us to expand our services and increase staff capacity. Priorities for the coming year include:

- Doing further work to identify and meet the specific needs of our exit clients, at different stages on their journeys, so that we cater to those who are just starting to exit, as well as those who are further on.
- Introducing assertive outreach with exit clients, including home visits.
- Building our links with adult learning providers and introducing more learning and development opportunities into the work with exit clients who are stable.
- Exploring the possibility of getting some Housing Advice sessions for our women.
- Improving internal communication, particularly with outreach staff and volunteers.
- Prioritising staff training, particularly in relation to working with drug users.

As ever, my thanks go to Sali and the rest of the staff team, including our outreach workers and volunteers, for all their hard work and commitment over the year. Thanks also to my fellow Management Committee members, including the newcomers, Eve and Andrew, who now feel more like old hands!

Emma Rattenbury, Chair



Sheffield First
Safer Communities PARTNERSHIP

Sheffield
City Council



SWWOP would like to thank the following for their support in kind and in funding:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ⇒ Building Safer Communities | ⇒ Voluntary Action, Sheffield |
| ⇒ Sheffield Primary Care Trusts | ⇒ The Archer Project |
| ⇒ Sheffield City Council | ⇒ Diva |
| ⇒ NUCA | ⇒ Our Staff Committee and volunteers |
| ⇒ Genitourinary Medicine | ⇒ Burngreave New Deal |
| ⇒ Central Fire Station | ⇒ J Platt |
| ⇒ Guernsey House | ⇒ Women's Print |
| ⇒ St Stephens Church | |

Here's what's happening within SWWOP

Over the last year SWWOP has been proactive in delivering training and information sessions to various agencies and in supporting women to exit. This has come about through a mixture of:

- the development of a Pathway and Protocol (see below) aimed at intensifying the support offered to street sex workers
- the very high proportion of women increasing their use of not only Class A drugs but a combination of drugs and alcohol
- the policing of prostitution

The training has been very well received and while generating a small extra income for SWWOP it has also generated more clients wanting support to exit as many more agencies come to know about us and refer clients onto us. The Exit workers now attend court on Weds & Thurs each week, ready to offer support to any of the women facing charges of loitering or other crimes they might have committed. In fact two hundred and twenty-five appointments were kept over the last twelve months and issues discussed included: benefits, housing advice, drug-treatment and support to attend appointments with other agencies.

New partnerships include Chocolate Box (a faith group providing outreach) and A4E (Action for employment). As our clients become more stable and need less intensive support, we refer them to Chocolate Box as they hold a drop-in on a Monday evening and have more time and flexibility to take the women out i.e. outings to the pictures or for meals. This frees SWWOP to concentrate on new clients and trying to engage the really chaotic hard to reach clients.

Regular meetings now take place with the city centre ambassadors, outreach faith Groups, community police

and Police working 'the beat'. These meetings are very useful in sharing information and understanding the remit of the various groups. A sharing of information protocol is being developed and safe email is in the process of being set up.

SWWOP and Turning Point attended the CROP (Coalition for the Removal Of Pimping) conference in Leeds and the UKNSWP (United Kingdom Network of Sex Work Projects) conference in Manchester. Both were very well attended and the UKNSWP launched their very large but very informative Project Sex Workers Tool Kit. The kit covers everything from rules re outreach work to support for women exiting.

SWWOP also celebrated 15yrs working with street sex workers and gave out certificates to very long standing members of SWWOP. Sheila Waite (Management Committee member, Sali's supervisor & Former Chair of SWWOP) left us for pastures new. Our thanks to her for all the work she undertook and best of luck with any new ventures she undertakes.

The Christmas Exit party was a tremendous success. Clients had made their own Christmas cakes including icing them at the monthly drop-in.

Big thanks go to Turning Point for the funding and fitting of a new drugs cupboard. It looks wonderful on the van and enables us to stock a very wide range of drug paraphernalia. We also understand what all the items are used for thanks to Sarah Cotton's drug training.

SWWOP were lucky enough to receive a £5000k grant to provide an outreach post for one year from Burngreave New deal in October taking away the anxiety we had due to a shortfall in funds.

All in all another good year, as Emma (Chair) stated, we were unsure about SWWOP's prospects for this



Network event.



Sheila Waite receiving a certificate in recognition of her long standing support of swwop.

year due to the PCT review. But we weathered the storm and will carry on our commitment to our client group.

From Street Prostitution into Drug Treatment Multi-Agency Protocol & Pathway

The Sheffield Street Prostitution Forum (a small group comprising of representatives from local voluntary, community and public organisations) was disbanded in the autumn of 2007. Previously this group had quarterly meetings to discuss issues regarding Prostitution in Sheffield.

Since the Forum was disbanded, SWWOP, DAAT (Drug & Alcohol Action Team) and South Yorkshire Police formed the Drugs & Prostitution Task Group to specifically develop shared protocols between us as we all thought this was a valuable and essential piece of work. This protocol is intertwined with the substance misuse and long term, holistic support needs of women and the anti-social behaviour strategy of South Yorkshire Police.

The protocol and pathway is limited to women over the age of 18 years working as street prostitutes within Sheffield city centre. All stakeholders are in agreement with the following

Objectives of this shared protocol and the subsequent pathway which aims to:

- ✓ Deliver a robust, staged approach to the policing of street offences.
- ✓ Increase the number of prostitutes taking up specialist 1:1 substance misuse support.
- ✓ Increase the number of women entering and being retained in effective substance misuse treatment
- ✓ Increase the number of referrals to SWWOP,
- ✓ Reduce the number of complaints from residents and businesses relating to street sex work.



15th Anniversary celebrations

While the Prostitution and Drug Task Group acknowledge that some might favour the decriminalisation of those involved in prostitution, they nevertheless recognise the need to address the nuisance that is associated with a street sex market. A prostitution-specific offence provides the opportunity to tailor the penalty to meet the needs of those involved in prostitution and to address directly the factors that keep them tied to the streets. The cycle of prostitution/arrest/

prostitution, underpinned by serious drug misuse, is self-sustaining. It is vital that we should find a way to take every opportunity to divert women in prostitution into services that are able to tackle the issues which keep them tied to the streets and offer effective routes out.

There are five stages to the Protocol and pathway and these cover:

1. **voluntary referral**
2. **Civil measures (Acceptable Behaviour Contracts)**
3. **pre-court diversion**
4. **following charge**
5. **Prosecution**

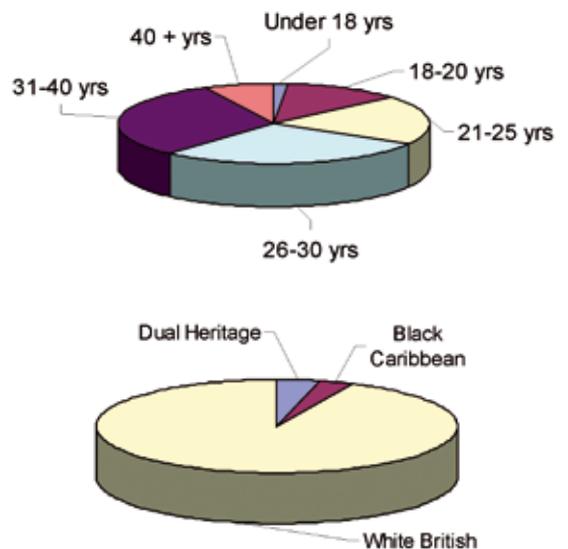
For a fuller explanation of the Protocol and Pathway, please log onto www.swwop.org

SWWOP are working proactively with the various faith groups providing outreach support to sex workers and the city centre ambassadors, to enable and equip them with the knowledge and skills to make appropriate referrals to our agency. Once referred to SWWOP this can lead to referral to a range of services and provide long term personal support to follow a route out of prostitution.

The Prostitution & Drugs Task Group meets on a regular basis, to review the objectives, monitor effectiveness and performance and to identify barriers for the client group and for partners.

194 women contacted the outreach van making a total of 1460 visits; an average of 30 visits per week.

The age and ethnicity of our outreach



The focus of the work this year has followed on from the new initiatives of the previous year. We have been supporting the women in building on the new confidence and skills they have developed and this has taken many different forms such as engaging with other agencies, addressing their sometimes chaotic lifestyles and making more positive choices for themselves and their families.

The mother and baby group has been a huge success with outings to the baby splash, and Easter party and a Christmas celebration as well as the usual meetings, chat and information sharing. The women have said that this group proved to be really valuable to them, enabling them to share hopes, fears, joys and experiences with both workers and their peers. One woman said she wanted to “thank everyone for all the help and support for myself and my daughter”.

The Therapy days have continued to be a positive part of the project with other agencies holding surgeries during this time. GU Medicine ran an information and testing session and A4E also provided an information session which the women who attended found a very useful service, with one of them recently starting a return to work course. We get an average of 6 women attending each Therapy day and the feedback is very positive especially about the massage therapy.

Women frequently drop in to the office for support with benefits and housing issues, usually at a crisis point and they have also said that they find this support invaluable. This initial contact helps to build relationships with the women and as their confidence grows they continue to engage with us around other issues such as their substance misuse and health.

One extremely well received event was the Emergency Life Support training. This looked at issues around overdose and provided a comprehensive first aid session outlining what to look for, and how to deal with potential and actual overdoses. All the women who participated said they now felt more confident dealing with this situation if it should arise.

We have seen many changes in the way we work both at SWWOP and in our partnerships with other agencies. We are sure that these developments will continue and hopefully enable us to carry on providing the women with the flexible and innovative service that is SWWOP!

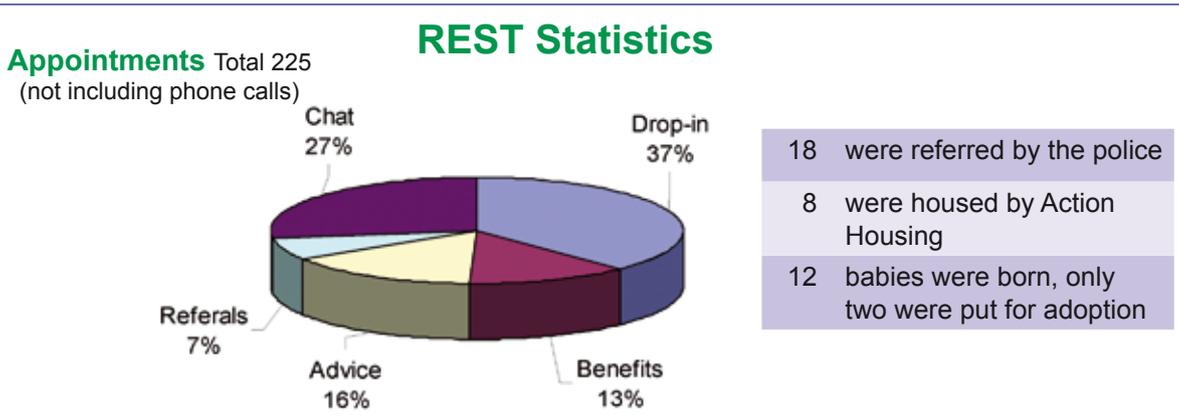
Shelley Powell & AnnMarie House,
Exit Support Workers

Personal Musing

It's now been just over a year that I have been a part of the SWWOP Management Committee and it's been a year of needing to learn rapidly, get my head around the services on offer to the women and work out what I can do to be part of a great team. I have been struck by how much all the Staff care about providing a responsive service offering a range of support and how committed they are to help support women to make changes in their lives. This service works well because those providing it are professional yet passionate about what they do and I believe that all the people involved work hard and never lose sight of the needs of the women who use the service. I think that this is also reflected in the diverse range of people who make up the Committee who are also committed to enabling the provision of an excellent service and use their connections with a range of agencies to keep the work SWWOP does on everyone's agenda.

In short then I am glad that I have been able to contribute a little to SWWOP and I hope that despite the ongoing worry about the annual lack of allocated funds and the inherent problems that arise from tight financial constraints, this excellent service continues to grow and develop. SWWOP has persisted in developing a multi agency, integrated approach to support working women, tackling health and housing issues and enabling women to exit street sex work in Sheffield. I think it's a great team to be part of and I look forward to the next years developments with hopefully more knowledge on my part and who knows, maybe we can secure a regular funding!

Eve Hagan (Trustee)



GUM

Over the last 12 months staff from the Department of Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital has worked two sessions per month on the outreach van with SWWOP. During these sessions we offer individual sexual health advice and information, discuss Hepatitis B vaccination and can arrange appointments at clinic as required. In addition GUM have aimed to attend the monthly Therapy Days, based at the SWWOP offices to provide an outreach screening service. During these times we have offered screening for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and other vaginal conditions e.g. thrush (self-taken swabs); HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis B and C (oral swabs). Hepatitis B vaccination can also be administered as needed.

However, due to changes in staffing levels at GUM we have been unable to undertake outreach work with SWWOP as frequently as in previous years which has had an effect on the service we offer. Having had the opportunity to work much more frequently on the outreach van, I have found that from the women's point of view they appear much more comfortable with a familiar face and appreciate the fact that as a worker, you are up to date with their current situation and issues. As a worker, I have found that it is much easier to engage with the women when I have been able to see them on a regular basis, and also I have felt in a better position to more accurately assess the positive or negative changes that are happening in their lives (and to then consider the most appropriate support that might be required).

We are hopeful that in the near future we may be able to increase the frequency of our services, and in particular, are hoping that when the Health Bus (for mobile sexual health screening) is up and running, we will be able to provide a more comprehensive and accessible service appropriate to the needs of the women we are seeing.

Katie Bain and Helen Keegan
Dept of GUM
Royal Hallamshire Hospital



Helen & Katie

Turning Point

Crack Cocaine is transforming drug use in the UK. Since 2001, crack use has been more widespread than heroin use. Worryingly it is predicted that there are twice as many crack users than heroin users amongst vulnerable groups (Home Office, 2005) Crack use is certainly widespread amongst street sex workers and poses a significant challenge to the support we offer to the women. It is estimated that 95% of street sex workers use crack cocaine, often in conjunction with heroin as well as in isolation. Crack is a smokeable form of powder cocaine – it can also be prepared for injection.

Creating strong psychological dependence the nature of the drug itself makes its use compulsive and difficult to control. Street sex working women often lead chaotic lives. Crack cocaine use exacerbates this. When women are looking to enter drug treatment we can offer them something tangible to substitute their heroin use – methadone being the most common and popular choice. Crack however is more difficult. In our experience women rarely see their crack use as problematic. They see it more as a choice or a treat. For the women that only use crack they find it frustrating that they feel that 'we' can't help them... or offer them anything in the form of substitute prescribing. Talking therapies, practical support and complimentary therapies however can and do successfully support them in quitting the drug. The challenge is selling that concept. Especially given that they often do not see this drug as a problem. Prolonged use of crack put women in high risk situations and plays a significant risk to their physical, mental and sexual health. In response to this increasing challenge in the forth coming year I plan to improve the service that we offer for crack use and look forward to celebrating its successes in next years annual report.

PS Into the fourth year... and I'm still here. But I do actually now feel that I know most of the women out their. Except for the new ones of course! There is always plenty of work for us to do!!

Sarah Cotton (Turning Point Drugs Worker for female sex workers)



The drug cabinet provided by Turning Point for our van

Dear SWWOP

I have had a lot to do with SWWOP for a number of years now and I can still remember very clearly how different my life was back then compared to what it is like now. I remember feeling really unsure about what type of welcome I'd receive and had no need for concern as I was made to feel really comfortable from the start.

I met Sali first and Sarah later on the van as I was working the streets and using drugs really heavily. I'd got nowhere to live so I'd been staying here, there and everywhere and some places were just unbearable so I got involved with SWWOP and they asked what help did I need and got straight on to working with me and dealing with my problems. It wasn't long before they'd got me a place with Action Housing which led on to me having a nice little flat which I still have now. I was so grateful for that help but I never imagined what help I'd be needing next as I unexpectedly got pregnant and I had a big choice to make - was I going to carry on using drugs and working the streets to pay for them or really get my act together and work hard so I could keep my baby with me. I was really scared as people I knew from the street world told me all kinds of negative stories about having my baby taken away and I could so easily have just accepted that and thought I'd lost the battle before even trying - but all the staff at SWWOP were so great and helped to keep me feeling positive which also kept me clean from drugs and off the streets. I know I had to work hard but I also know that all the staff at SWWOP helped me in a big way and I dread to think where I'd have been today without them as we see so many old acquaintances gone for good and that could so easily have been me.

Instead I'm clean and free from drugs and I have my nice little flat. I'm building bridges with both my family and my children, I'm even a nana now and have a beautiful grandson. Most of all I've got a beautiful little girl who's just turned one year old now and she gives me so much to get up for in the morning, and I know I have all the women from SWWOP to thank for their kindness, patience and hard-work.

I still have a lot to do with SWWOP both myself and my daughter, and not just when I've got a problem, as we really enjoy going to the drop-ins and mum's and baby group days. I get so much out of the activities and just to be able to have a relaxing couple of hours, a chat and to re-charge the batteries.

I want to thank Sali, AnneMarie, Sarah and Shelley for everything they've done to help me and to keeping myself feeling strong on the days I cannot do it on my own, and to everyone else who is involved in keeping SWWOP open to the women who desperately need that help and just someone to believe in them which helps more than you'll ever know.

Once again thank you so, so much.
All my love Donna

Darcy's 1st Christmas



Management Reflections

I have been a member of SWWOP's management committee as a volunteer for the past four years. For the last 18 months I have also been line manager for Sali, as project manager. This has been a good role for me to take on, as I am honing my rather rusty management skills and it is also a significant change from my day job as Policy Development Coordinator with Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board. I enjoy working closely with Sali, the other SWWOP workers and the rest of the Management Committee, to ensure that SWWOP runs as smoothly as possible and that the women with whom we work receive the best possible service.

As well as providing supervision for Sali, and for the other workers in her absence, I work with her to address issues that the daily life of SWWOP may produce. This may range from parking problems with the outreach van, to funding issues or concerns regarding a vulnerable client. Working in this role, with Sali and with SWWOP, is a good challenge for me. It makes me think on my feet and focuses my attention on certain problems, some of which are completely new to me.

As well as attending regular Management Committee meetings, I also am part of the on-call rota for the outreach van. This is to provide workers with support should any situations arise when they need advice, and also as a check to ensure that they return safely at the end of each shift. All of the Management Committee, along with other volunteers, provides cover for the van.

SWWOP's Management Committee is a strong, supportive group consisting of professionals from a range of multi-agency backgrounds, with whom I very much enjoy working. If you think you would like to join us, please contact Sali Harwood or Emma Rattenbury.

Angie Heal (Trustee)

Great news, the Primary Care Trusts said yes. After months of agonising we finally heard the outcome of the review by the health commission. SWWOP along with many other projects will receive health funding and new contracts are signed and in place.

The effect on our organisation if we had lost this funding would have been dire. Basically the service would have to have ended as the managers post, outreach workers, admin post as well as office & outreach running costs are paid for by the PCT's. The second stage of the project 'Recovery & Exit Support Team' would also have suffered badly as this important second stage works because of the trust SWWOP builds with the women during outreach sessions.

But the worry is over for now. Though we still don't have any reserves and even though funding is in place for the next year, our costs are slowly rising. Rent is on the increase, fuel bills are higher and let's not discuss the price of van fuel. The PCT funding rises each year with the cost of inflation, but Safer Communities funding stays the same. With no reserves it is always a struggle to keep up with rising costs.

Any way thanks to Burngreave New Deal who awarded us £5000, much needed to keep our outreach service at maximum capacity, thank-you Mr Platt who has set up a direct debit donation of £75 per month, it is very much appreciated, and thank-you to St Stephens Church for your very welcome donation of £400. Thanks also to Sheffield City Council for £1500 in support of the Networking event.

As always thanks to all the staff, committee and volunteers.

Nira Sritharan, Treasurer

SHEFFIELD WORKING WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES PROJECT

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2008

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2008 £	Total funds 2007 £
Incoming resources	1				
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants and donations	2	525	113,000	113,525	117,905
Activities for generating funds:					
Other receipts		374	–	374	200
Interest receivable		240	–	240	278
Total Incoming resources		1,139	113,000	114,139	118,383
Resources Expended					
Charitable activities					
Wages	5	3,775	74,602	78,377	75,149
Payroll service		–	841	841	693
Travel, training & conference		–	2,612	2,612	2,283
Premises		224	9,660	9,884	8,522
Office repairs, renewals and maintenance		–	144	144	321
Volunteer expenses and training		–	214	214	1,474
Insurance		–	721	721	768
Networking events		–	1,386	1,386	1,793
Telephone, mobile & internet		–	3,165	3,165	4,588
Vehicle maintenance/tax/insurance		–	2,605	2,605	3,659
Equipment		–	1,030	1,030	12,796
Printing, postage and stationery		591	699	1,290	1,692
Publications & subscriptions		–	310	310	237
Publicity		–	929	929	2,123
Outreach		–	735	735	1,120
Exit support		–	3,073	3,073	2,910
Health items		1,000	5,199	6,199	6,717
Other expenditure		306	–	306	342
Governance costs		–	–	–	–
Accountancy and independent examination		350	–	350	423
AGM		–	449	449	363
Total resources expended		6,247	108,373	114,620	127,971
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources		(5,108)	4,627	(481)	(9,588)
Total funds brought forward		5,452	–	5,452	15,040
Total funds carried forward		344	4,627	4,971	5,452

Notes to the accounts

1 Accounting Policies

(a) General

These Accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in March 2005 (SORP 2005).

(b) Donations and fund accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charitable objects.

(c) Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis.

2 Grants and donations

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
Burngreave New Deal – Small Grants	–	5,000	5,000
Sheffield PCT	–	56,500	56,500
Building Safer Communities Funding	–	50,000	50,000
Sheffield City Council – Small Grants	–	1,500	1,500
Donations	525	–	525
	525	113,000	113,525

3 Restricted Funds

	Opening balance at 01/04/07	Incoming resources	Closing Outstanding expenditure at 31/03/08	balance
Burngreave New Deal – Small Grants	–	5,000	(1,755)	3,245
Sheffield PCT	–	56,500	(56,500)	–
Building Safer Communities Funding	–	50,000	(50,000)	–
Sheffield City Council – Small Grants	–	1,500	(118)	1,382
	–	113,000	108,373	4,627

4 Accruals

These are expenses that have been incurred but have not been billed or paid for during the accounting period. They are in respect of:

	£
Independent Examination	350

5 Staff costs and trustees remuneration

	£
Gross salaries	68,504
Employers national insurance	4,829
Pension	5,044
	78,377

An equivalent of three full-time employee were employed during the year. No remuneration was paid to any trustees during the period.