

Annual Report from the Chair of Tor Support 2020-2021

I think the heads of most organisations will be starting their annual report with a statement along the lines that the past 18 months have been unprecedented in the history of their organisation and as Chair of Tor Support I can say that is definitely the case for us.

At the beginning of the financial year 2020-2021 we had just gone into the first national lockdown and by the end of the year we were in the middle of the third lockdown. This has obviously had huge implications for the delivery of a service which up till then was exclusively face to face.

With a huge amount of good will and hard work on the part of the whole team we rose to the challenges and have continued to provide a first class service to our vulnerable clients. Within a very few weeks of the first lockdown our counsellors had done the required training to enable them to provide safe, confidential on-line counselling. This was supported by the admin team and our IT trustee who set up the training and put in the infra-structure to enable this. The children and young people themselves have also been very adaptable and have coped very well with this change in the delivery of the service and feedback from them remains very positive

The team of co-ordinators Debbie Andrews and Helen Seaton Burn and administrator Mel Pike put in a huge amount of time and effort to get the team ready for this change of provision and also to set the organisation up for a covid secure return to more face to face appointments in periods between lockdowns. I can't thank them enough for all their hard work and dedication.

The counsellors have really risen to the challenge and their commitment and flexibility has ensured that children and young people have been able to continue to access counselling. The team is now very flexible with a combination of employed counsellors, volunteers and independent external providers many of whom gained much valuable experience working with Tor Support.

Our salaried counsellors are Rachel Hirsch and Karen Hedges. Rachel brings her considerable skills in dealing with clients with multiple and complex problems. She has started to train in Eye Movement and De-sensitising Therapy (EMDR) a powerful technique for helping people who are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and once she has finished the training she will be one of the only people in Devon qualified to provide this treatment to children and young people. Karen has previously volunteered for Tor Support and worked as an independent contractor and joined the team to specialise in counselling for primary aged children

We have had a large number of volunteers giving their service to the team over the past year, these include Carey Ehrenberg who continues her very many years of volunteering for us, Devette Short, Sonia Lee, Gayle Leando, Nicola Collinson, Antonella Depetro, Naomi Parslow, Nikki Ellis Beth Kaye, Emma White and Julia Pearsall. Many of the volunteers are in their final year of training and go on to become independent practitioners when they have completed their training. We are very grateful for their service and are pleased to welcome them back as external independent providers (EIPs). The use of EIPs allows the flexibility to provide more sessions when the waiting list grows. Antonella Depetro, Nikki Ellis, Emma White moved from volunteering to EIP status in the past year, joining Jackie Skinner who has been providing this service for sometime

Clinical supervision of the counsellors has been provided by Debbie Cobbledick who is an external provider and also in house by Debbie Andrews. We are very grateful for the clinical support they have given to the counsellors.

Over the last few years Tor support has grown both in terms of the numbers of clients seen but also in numbers of staff and counsellors and for that reason we have created a new post of Service Manager to oversee the delivery of the service. We were happy to welcome Kate Jarman to that position in March 2021.

There has also been movement within the trustee group. Karen Nolan has been our treasurer since the beginning of Tor Support and has decided to stand down from that role but happily remain as a trustee where her knowledge of the charitable sector will continue to be invaluable. On behalf of everyone in Tor support I would like to thank her for service and expertise over so many years. Tony Barker has very kindly stepped into the position of trustee treasurer and we are pleased to welcome him to the team. Simon Hill, our IT trustee has stepped down as trustee. Over the past few years he has been a huge support to the team, setting up a database, modernising our systems and more recently enabling the provision of on-line counselling. We are very thankful for his help and wish him well with his future projects. We were very lucky to be able to recruit a replacement IT trustee very quickly and we are happy to welcome Merv Scott to the team.

The rest of the trustee team have continued to work hard. Laura Grant, HR trustee, was invaluable in the recruitment of our new service manager. Thank you also to Theresa Weaver Vice-Chair and Sam Williams, secretary. Sophie Goodwin Hughes and Helene Cox have worked very hard raising funds for Tor Support in a period of great uncertainty. We are very grateful to our funders who have helped us enormously in the past 12 months and enabled us to provide training and a continuing service.

Our thanks go to our generous donors. Okehampton United Charities have continued to donate to us through thick and thin and we are extremely grateful for their support. We are also very thankful to our other local donors - Okehampton Town Council and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council.

The Covid relief grants from Devon County Council, Devon Community Foundation and Awards for All have been invaluable over this very challenging year as have the grants from the Newby Trust and Farringdon School Trust. The grant from the Police and Crime Commission has enabled us to continue our work with victims of crime and sexual abuse. We would also like to thank the Seamoor Lottery, Waitrose Okehampton, Belstone Tearooms, the friends of Bridestowe Primary School and all the people who have donated through our just giving page

Thank you to Thomas Westcott, Accountants for auditing Tor Support Accounts.

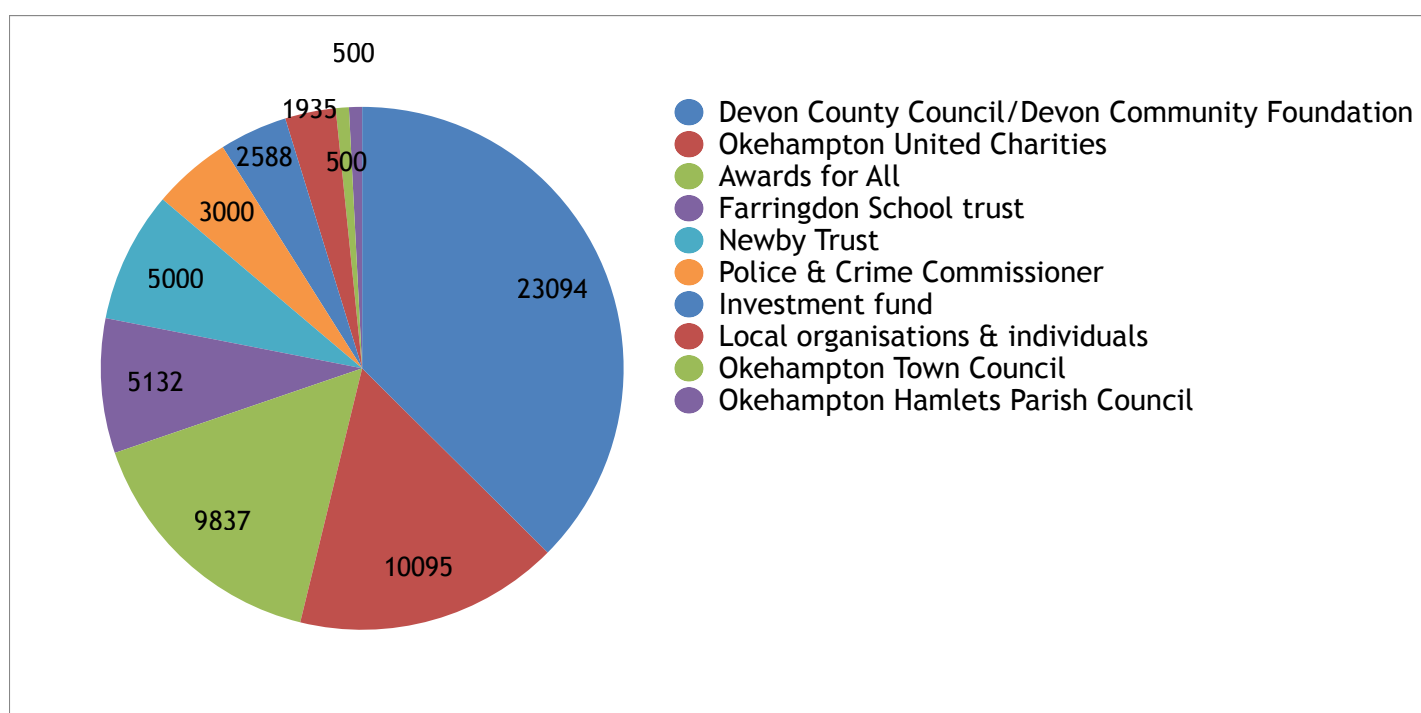
Looking to the future our priority remains ensuring the continuing viability of the charity and its important work in supporting the children and young people of our community in an increasingly uncertain funding environment. We however are optimistic that we can continue to maintain and hopefully expand our service to meet the increasing need for this important work.

Kathryn Vile
Chair of Trustees

Financial report from the Treasurer

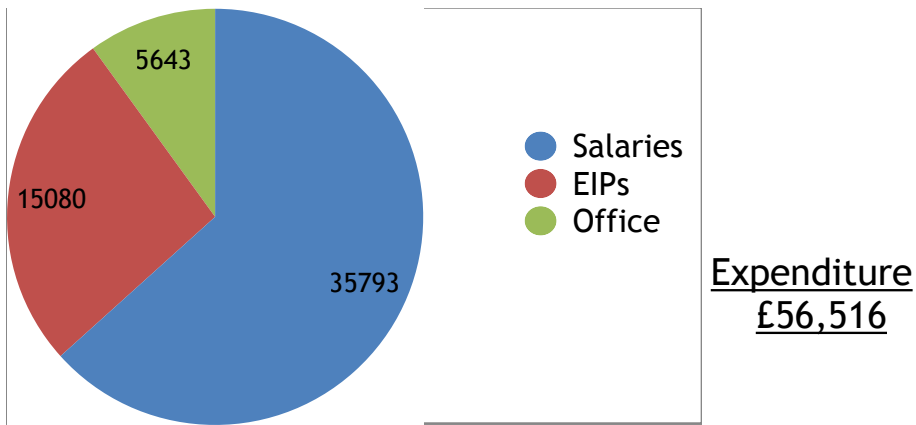
Grant aid received in response to bids made to individual funds remains our major source of income. In the year to the end of March 2021 we are pleased to report that our income from such major funders meant that we were able to provide our full range of counselling activity. In particular, Okehampton United Charities, Okehampton Town Council, Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner, the National Lottery in the guise of Awards for All, the Newby Trust and the Farringdon School Trust were all most generous in their support of our work. The large number of local funders that feature in this list is, we believe, a reflection of the appreciation in the locality of the work in which we are engaged which is, essentially, focused on the community of Okehampton and the surrounding area.

Other donations from local organisations and individuals amounted to £1,935 and an increase in the value of our investment fund and interest income from it amounted to a further £2,588. However, this report does need to acknowledge the extraordinary consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and our sincere thanks are due to the substantial injection of funding from Devon County Council and Devon Community Foundation to our work made as a reaction to this. All together, this meant our total income for the year to the end of March 2021 amounted to £61,681. With this high level of financial support, we were able to continue to provide as full a programme of counselling activity as is possible within the means of our salaried staff supplemented by a considerable input from our External Independent Providers (EIPs).



Income £61,681

Expenditure for the year amounted to a total of £56,516. It is unsurprising but reassuring that 90% of this related to our core, counselling activities being salary and supervision payments to our staff to payments to EIPs for the delivery of counselling sessions. The remaining 10% covered a large range of administrative and other enabling costs.



Our total assets at the end of the year amounted to £97,856 of which £52,190 is held in our investment fund. The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when deciding on the appropriateness of activity. The financial records for Tor Support Services have been subject to external examination by Thomas Westcott (Chartered Accountants) and are deemed to be a true and fair reflection of the finances. A full copy of their report and our detailed accounts can be found on our website at www.torsupportservices.org.uk.

Tony Barker
Treasurer Trustee

Report from Tor Support Service Coordinator

What a year! As reported last year we had a quick turnaround from face-to-face counselling to online sessions using Microsoft Teams. Huge thanks to Simon Hill the IT trustee, he was so very patient with us.

From April all counselling and administration was conducted from home. Initially a lot of clients said they would have preferred to meet face to face, however every available appointment was filled and we were able to respond to clients very quickly, providing a service that in pre-pandemic times was impossible to achieve.

Many, many thanks go to our staff and volunteers who rose magnificently to work out of their comfort zones online, setting themselves up with equipment, neutral backgrounds, secure spaces and getting familiar with virtual paperwork.

Clients also rose to the challenge and sourced the technology to access Teams as well as a safe space where they wouldn't be overheard or interrupted during counselling. We sought permissions and agreements over what to do if we became worried about a client. Karen learnt new ways to be creative with the primary aged clients she works with, asking them to bring toys and drawing stuff to online sessions.

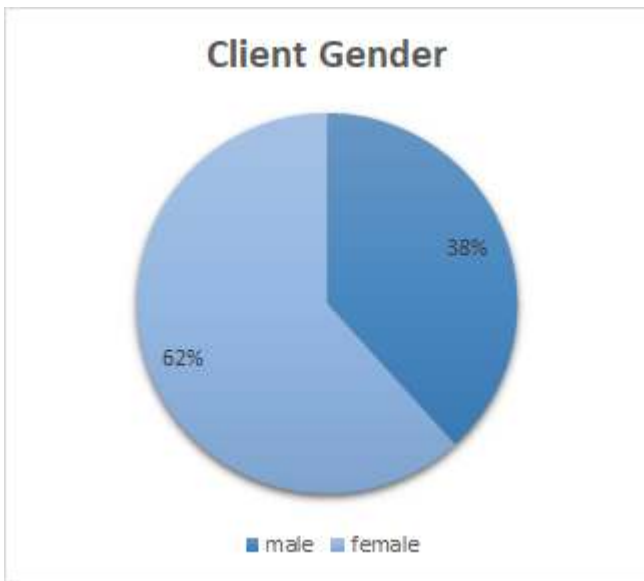
Gradually, and through the selflessness of office staff, Tor Support opened its doors to those students in college to come in and meet their counsellors virtually from the counselling rooms. Many thanks to the trustees and our funders for responding so quickly by funding the laptops for each room as well as protective shielding and lots of hand gel and cleaning equipment.

Since September 2020 we have delivered a blended approach of online and face to face counselling. The number of face-to-face sessions we could offer was limited by the suitability of our rooms in terms of social distancing and ventilation without compromising confidentiality. We have three rooms, one of which is simply too small to meet students in safely, the other being borderline in terms of space. Thanks go to Okehampton College who allowed us to use the large former pre-school room, plenty of space and ventilation. No room went unused and we made full use of the smaller rooms to offer online counselling and the two larger rooms for face to face enabling us to increase the number of clients seen. Another huge benefit of online working has been for students isolating at home, being able to carry on meeting their counsellor provided they had the right resources and a safe space to do so.

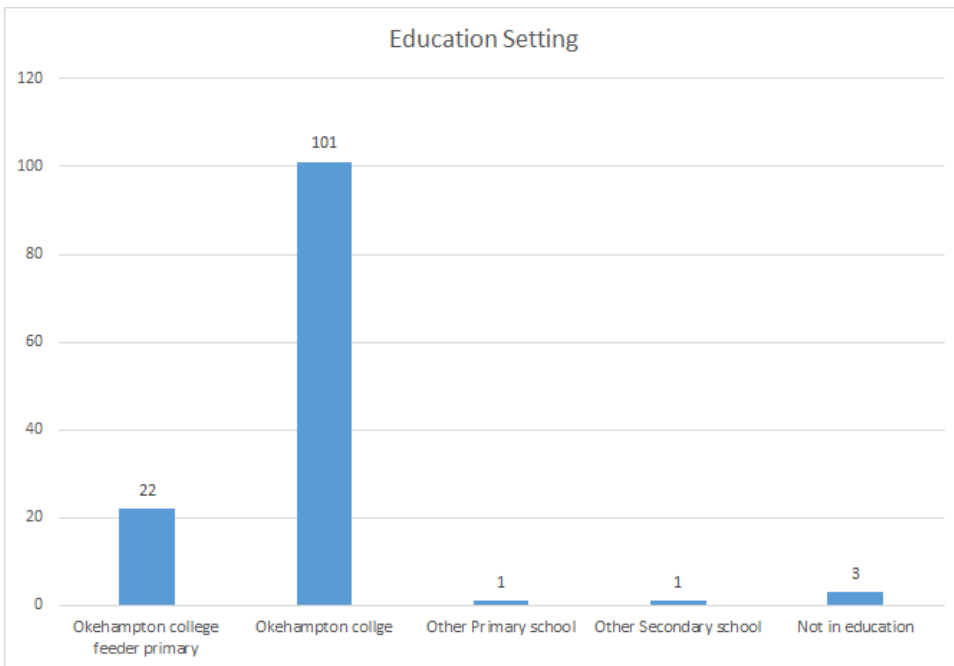
We interviewed 3 volunteers online, recruited them, DBS'd them, inducted them and got them working online. Welcome to Sonia, Deevette and Gayle. It was strange meeting them in person later in the year! Naomi a volunteer moved on and wish her all the best in her counselling career.

Over the last financial year there were 134 referrals, 128 of which were accepted by clients, the rest were declined as no longer needed for now. We provided 1,100 sessions over the year, an average of 28 sessions, 28 clients, a week delivered by up to 13 counsellors.

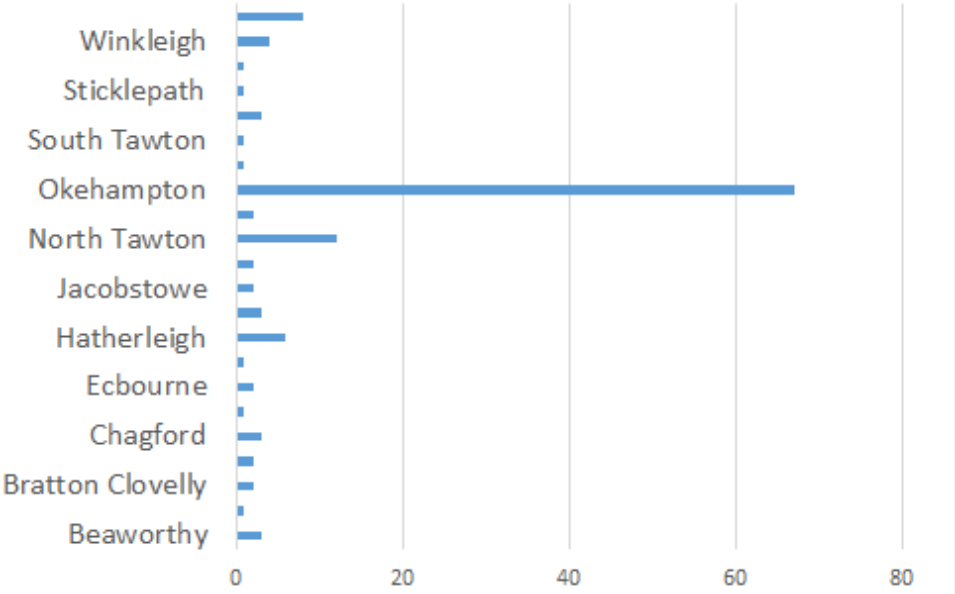
Some interesting statistics below.



79 females, 49 males

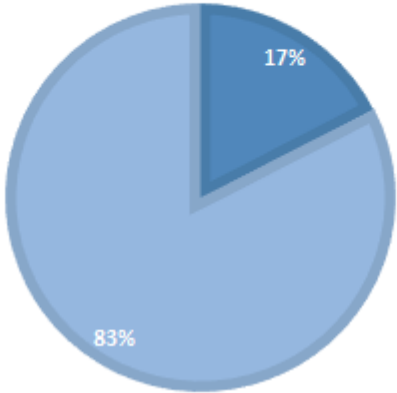


Home Location of Clients



AGE RANGE

■ 5 - 10 yrs ■ 11 - 25 yrs



22 primary, 104 secondary and 18+

Accounts: Thomas Westcott

Banking: National Westminster

Our Staff:

Debbie Andrews
Helen Seaton-Burn
Mel Pike
Kate Jarman
Rachel Hirsch
Karen Hedges

Our Volunteers:

Carey Ehrenberg
Antonella Depetro
Naomi Parslow
Nikki Ellis
Beth Kaye
Emma White
Julia Pearsall
Devette Short
Sonia Lee
Gayle Leando
Nicola Collinson

Our Trustees:

Kathryn Vile – Chair
Theresa Weaver – Vice Chair
Antony Barker Treasurer
Sam Williams – Secretary
Karen Nolan
Simon Hill – IT (Left November 2020)
Mervin Scott-IT (Joined January 2021)
Helene Cox – Fundraising
Sophie Goodwin-Hughes – Fundraising
Laura Grant – Human Resources

