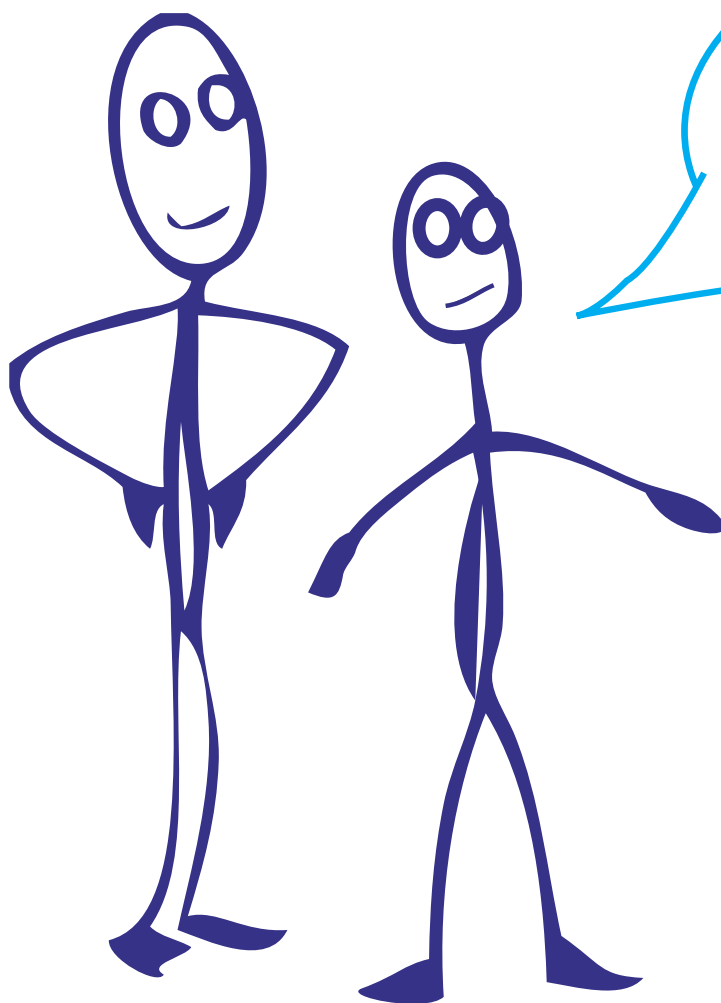


smile

mediation



*Welcome to
Smile's Annual Review
2012-13*

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Governance Report 2012/13

Welcome to our 2013 annual report. In it you'll find updates on how we're performing, how we use the money we get from contracts with partner agencies, what we're doing well and how we plan to get even better in the future.

The role of the Board is to set the strategic direction of the company, and ensure everything we do fits in with our business aims and objectives. We are committed to continuous improvement so we can respond to changes in our operating environment; the economy, austerity measures and welfare reform changes have all put a strain on our communities and customers. We've responded by strengthening our staff team, and showing how Smile Mediation can save commissioners money – mediation is a smarter way to resolve problems. There are opportunities ahead too; not least the changing commissioning arrangements in the health sector, where we will work with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and other health professionals to show that mediation has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to shape and produce this report. I hope you find it useful.



Ian Clark
Chair of Smile Mediation Board

Who's who at Smile – the Team:

Ian Clark – Director /Chair

Mark Everiss – Director/Treasurer (resigned 31/10/12)

Peter Kenyon – Director/Treasurer

Janet Whittaker – Director

Carol Pike – Director

Michael Dawson – Director (resigned 29/5/12)

Jean Thompson – Director

Karen Bailey – Director (appointed 27/11/12)

Karen Ainsworth – Manager & Company Secretary

Kim Henderson – Casework and Contract Co-ordinator

Ursula Miller – Caseworker

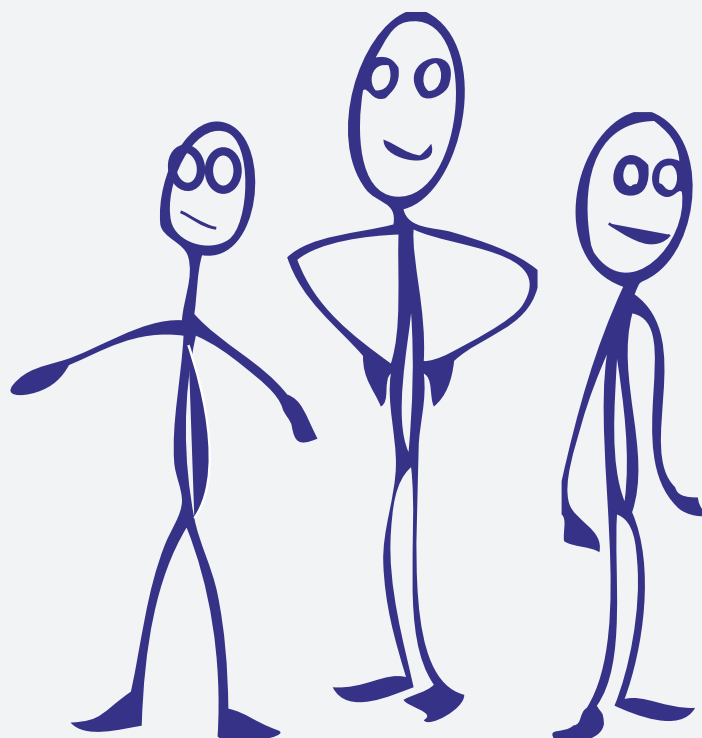
Jan Eardley – Administrative Officer (resigned 18/5/12)

Michaela Bannister – Business Administration Apprentice (appointed 3/9/12 and terminated 19/9/12)

Nicola Tustin – Caseworker/Administrative Assistant (appointed 22/10/12 and terminated 7/11/12)

Freya Morrison – Caseworker/Administrative Assistant (appointed 5/11/12)

Judith Taylor – Caseworker/Administrative Assistant (appointed 19/11/12)



Manager's Report 2012/13

Like most organisations at Smile we are busy getting on with the day to day operations and it can be easy to forget the significant milestones achieved throughout the year so I thought I'd provide readers with a whistle-stop tour of Smile's 2012/13 achievements.

April and May 2012 and another successful round of volunteer recruitment and training. All the mediators at Smile are volunteers and they attend a six day training course, complete an assessed case study plus practical mediation experience before they become fully fledged mediators.

'Since completing the initial training I have been impressed by Smile's commitment to the continuous professional development of its mediators. They offer a programme of regular updating and supervision which underlines the investment made by them and me in my mediation skills but also the need to continually reflect, question and develop those skills'.

June 2012 Smile receives a 'highly commended' in the Good Relations category from the Queens Jubilee Awards in Burnley.

September 2012 sees our first office-based volunteer. Developing a role for office volunteering will provide essential work experience and a good insight into mediation. People think they know what mediation is until they experience it first hand.

October 2012 and the Directors commission an external consultant from CANWe Solutions to help us work towards achieving level one PQASSO. This quality system, designed specifically for the voluntary and community sector in 1997 is used by thousands of organisations. Although Smile is a small charity we recognise that high quality professional services will improve the sustainability of the organisation. Our aim is to apply for accreditation in 2014.

November 2012, the same date as the first Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and Smile holds its first ever conference at Northbridge in Burnley. It is our intention to deliver an annual conference so that partners recognise that Smile Mediation is at the forefront of excellent mediation services across the North.

December 2012 and we are awarded £10,000 Awards for All lottery funding to deliver volunteer training, supervision and ongoing support. This money will be put to good use during the 2013 round of recruitment for new volunteers.



February and March 2013 and we are working with a website designer to upgrade and launch our new website to reflect the Smile brand and quality services on offer. We go live in April 2013.

All this whilst at the same delivering an operational service to more than four hundred people! The report contains more details about the service and I hope you enjoy reading the real life case studies dotted throughout.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the continued support and commitment of everyone who contributes to the success that is Smile Mediation. Thank you.

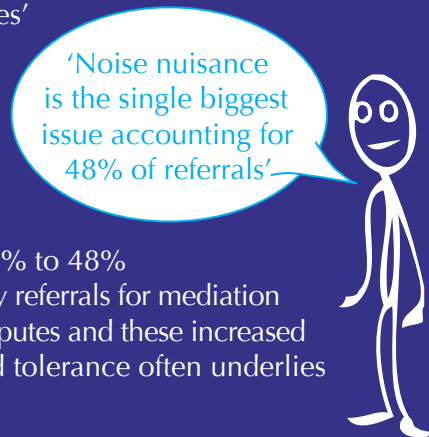
Karen Ainsworth

Karen Ainsworth
Mediation Services Manager

Community Mediation Service



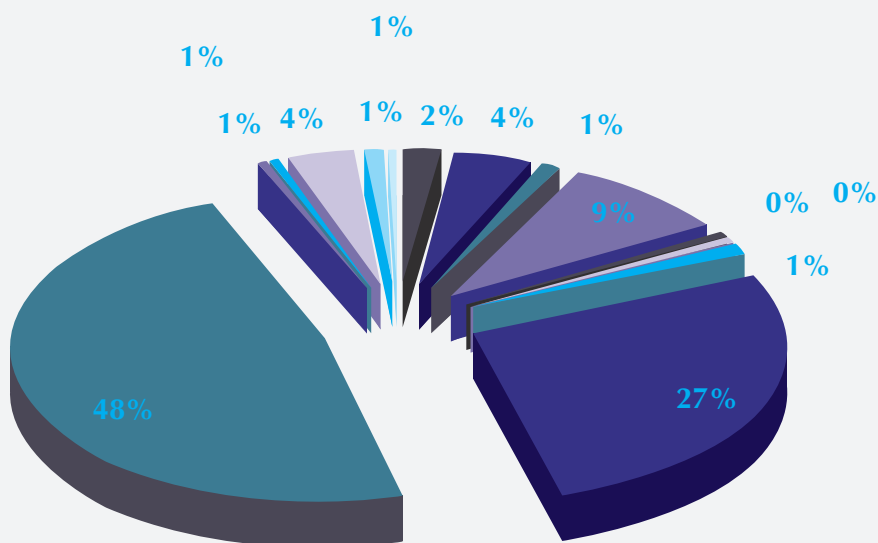
This year Smile received 181 referrals for community mediation, 6 family cases, 1 hate crime case and 1 workplace case. All referrals involve at least two people and many involve multiple 'parties' which means that we engage with more than 400 people each year. The majority of our referrals are made by Housing Associations and Local Authorities.



2012/13 saw an increase in noise related referrals compared with 2011/12 from 38% to 48% and it continues to be the main reason why referrals for mediation are made. A close second is neighbour disputes and these increased from 23% to 27%. Clash of lifestyles and tolerance often underlies the reason for disputes.

Main reason for referral:

- Boundary/Access dispute
- Children falling out
- Children/Ball games
- Communication breakdown
- Garden Nuisance
- Hate related incidents
- Misuse of communal areas
- Neighbour dispute
- Noise nuisance
- Other
- Pets/Animals
- Vehicle nuisance
- Verbal abuse
- Young Children



Failed appointments:

We've all seen the posters displayed in GP and hospital waiting rooms stating the number of failed appointments and the cost to the NHS. Whilst I won't pretend that the cost to Smile is anything like as much, proportionally the impact is significant. Whilst we do understand that people have genuine reasons for cancelling an appointment 43% of appointments were cancelled and had to be rearranged. In terms of administration this is the equivalent of another eighty referrals. Smile staff and volunteers work hard to prevent this by confirming all appointments by letter, telephone, and text message and e mail where possible.

Smile's Mediation Conference:

We wanted to raise awareness about the benefits of mediation and promote our services to a wide audience. With some excitement we planned our very first conference and only in the run up to the actual date did we start to worry about whether there would be enough people to make it worthwhile. Well, we needn't have worried as over sixty people attended and the feedback was really positive.

It was a day of two halves. The morning was dedicated to conflict management and the role of mediation in resolving disputes. The afternoon focussed on Hate Crime and the evaluation of Smile's Hate Crime Awareness Programme. Our panel of 'experts' included Dr Paul Iganski, Head of Applied Social science at Lancaster University, Mike Smith, Independent Government Advisor and Sergeant John Rigby, Eastern Division of Lancashire Constabulary.

Satisfaction Levels:

SERVICE STANDARDS	TARGET	ACTUAL
THE MEDIATORS:		
Did the mediators listen to your issues?	95%	94%
Did the mediators avoid taking sides?	100%	92%
How satisfied are you with the service?	95%	90%
THE PROCESS:		
Do you understand the other person's point of view?	75%	76%
Did you find the process useful?	75%	86%
Are you more able to approach the other party?	75%	84%
Did the process help to resolve some of the issues?	75%	81%
6 MONTHS AFTER MEDIATION:		
Cases remaining closed 6 months after involvement with Smile Mediation	75%	89%

Successful outcomes are important and Smile sets challenging performance measures to ensure our



whether or not the 'case' remains closed 6 months after the mediation intervention. Sometimes, it is enough for the people to discuss their situation with our mediators and this is why some cases do not proceed to a joint meeting.

This year, 38% of cases resulted in a joint or shuttle meeting, giving all those involved the opportunity to have their say and listen to the others person's point of view. We aim to achieve at least 75% agreements when people agree to meet face to face; in 2012/13 we exceeded this as 84% of people reached agreement.

Mediation Service Contracts

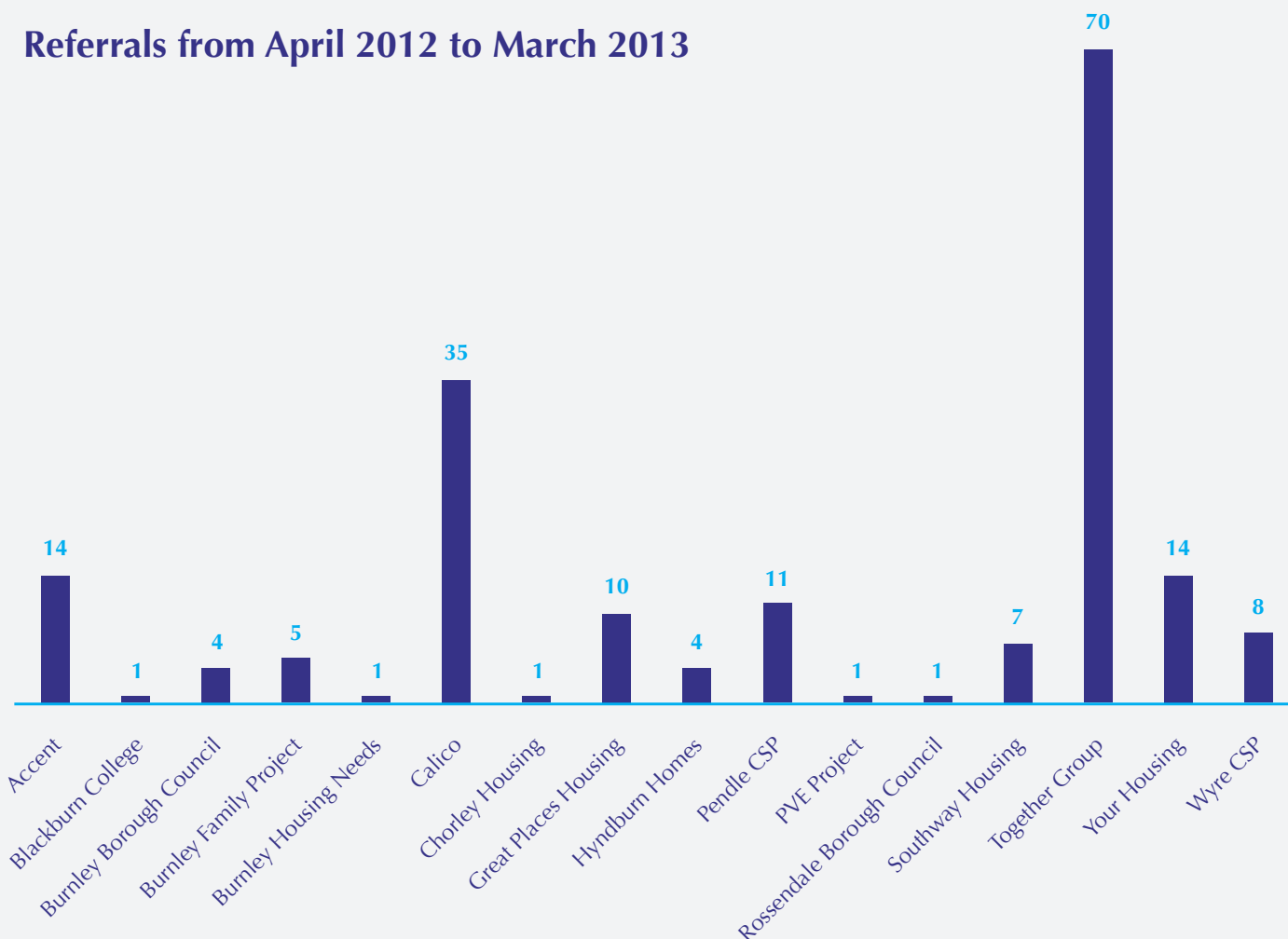
Quite rightly our partners want to see evidence that they are receiving a high quality service that is value for money. At Smile we do this through a range of methods including induction training so that the right cases are referred at the right time. Mediation is only one of many tools that can be used to resolve disputes, so knowing when to use it to best effect is essential.

'I now understand what situations mediation can be introduced'

'I have a better understanding of the processes involved in mediation'

'In future I will listen and not take sides'

Referrals from April 2012 to March 2013



Hate Crime Awareness Programme



This is probably the most disappointing element of our services in 2012/13. Despite the positive evidence from the evaluation carried out by Dr Paul Iganski, Head of Applied Social Science at Lancaster University, Smile has not been successful in accessing sustainable funding to continue to deliver the programme. Individual referrals are still being made via the Police and Community Safety partners and we are working together with strategic partners to explore appropriate ways of raising the profile of the programme. Hate crime and incidents remain a strategic priority at county level and it is widely acknowledged that traditional 'punishments' do not always address attitudes and challenge behaviour.

Case Study

A referral was received from a local College involving four male students who were acting in a racist and anti-social manner both inside and out of College.

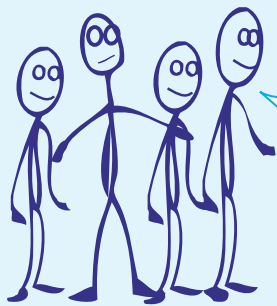


'I realise I might not be able to fulfil my career ambitions if I have a criminal record'

The students stole taxi signs from vehicles and when driving around town wound their window down and shouted racist abuse at people passing by. At one point the four young men started to throw ham at each other in the car and one of the students wound his window down as they drove past a mosque and hurled ham towards the building. Whilst in College students are prohibited from swearing so the four young men substitute words such as 'ya Jew' and 'Muslim' instead of using swear words.

Following their attendance and involvement in Smile's Hate Crime Awareness Programme three of the students acknowledged that their attitude and behaviour was inappropriate. They identified practical actions that would enable them to change their behaviour.

'This has come at the right time – I'm never going down that route again, I needed to change'



'I recognise that even though I didn't shout the abuse I was involved with the wider group and therefore I am responsible too'

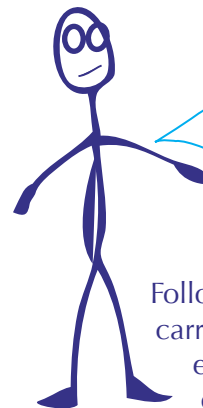
Only one of the four did not engage and subsequent attempts to deliver the final session revealed that he was fully supported by his parents who did not believe he had done anything wrong.

Our Mediators

We are fortunate at Smile Mediation to work with committed volunteers that deliver a professional high quality service. Many of our volunteers have been part of the Smile family for over 10 years, others move on after a couple of years due to a change in their circumstances. I am continuously amazed by the flexibility and loyalty of our whole team, both in terms of how they carry out mediation and also in their positive contribution to the development of our service. Our volunteers are valued and respected, they are the 'face' of Smile Mediation and without them we would not have a reputation for excellent service.

The Mediation Skills Training Course was delivered in May 2012 and whilst there were eleven people trained only five people went on to become volunteer mediators. This is disappointing as Smile invests heavily in training and supporting volunteers; however we do recognise that circumstances change and mediating 'for real' is not for everyone.

'the training was so good I would have paid for it; it gave me skills that I now use in all areas of my life'



'Seeing people gain a better understanding of the other person and agreeing how to move forward makes it all worthwhile'

Following the training, new mediators must carry out at least three cases alongside an experienced mediator as part of the ongoing assessment of skills that is required to comply with our standards of professional practice. Each year in November we hold a celebration supper for all our volunteers and present our newly trained mediators with their certificates.

Smile Mediation delivers a cost effective and value for money service. Volunteers can claim travel and other legitimate expenses but are not paid for the time they spend travelling, training, preparing and delivering mediation. Our standards of professional practice are very high in order to comply with the College of Mediators.

'On average 18 hours is spent on a mediation case'



Lottery Funding Secured

A real boost for Smile Mediation was the successful bid of an Award for All Lottery grant for £10,000 in December 2012. The grant was secured to support, supervise and train volunteers. Smile has twelve months to complete the project and evidence spending in line with the grant, so whilst some money was spent during



Jan to March preparing for the 2013 recruitment of volunteers, the remainder was spent from April to October 2013. Thank you to the Lottery for supporting Smile Mediation, it has made a big difference.

'I found the process quite daunting at times, however, when you see the benefits of people walking out of a joint mediation session, smiling and talking with one another, it lifts your spirit and you feel that you have done a good job, not only for ones-self, but for the people we are trying to help, our customers and for Smile'

'The training was superb; thorough, professional and most enjoyable. Anything that improves listening skills is good!'



Case Study:

This is a good example of how the mediation process can help to get to the underlying cause of the dispute – most of the referrals we receive have little to do with the presenting issue.

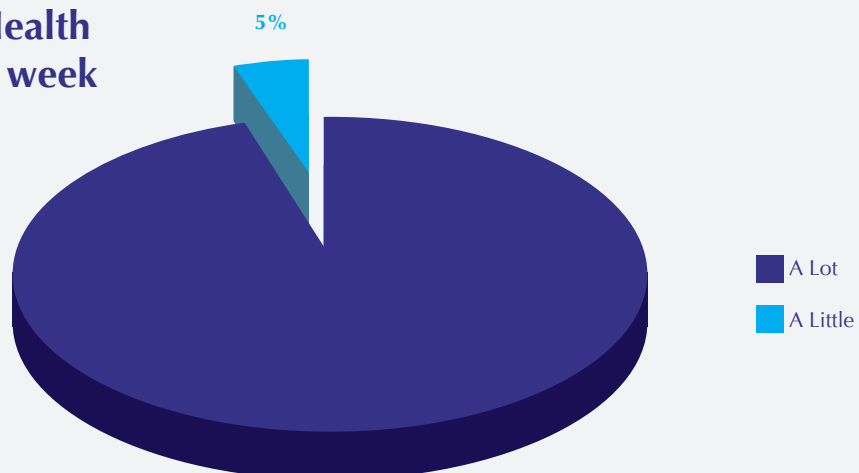
The incident was an alleged assault. Nicola claimed that Joanna assaulted her two children in the street. Joanna claimed that the children jumped on her, and attacked her in the street. Both were injured, but due to a lack of evidence the police couldn't take any further action. Mediation was suggested as a way to resolve the issues.

During the initial visits it was clear there was a difference of opinion regarding the assault. Both Nicola and Joanna also mentioned some issues they had been having regarding their respective children. When the children were falling out with each other, the parents were getting involved, and this was causing more tension. Nicola and Joanna had fallen out before the assault due to arguments regarding their children. They agreed to attend a joint meeting to see if they could resolve some of the issues.

The joint meeting went ahead, and an agreement was reached. They both agreed to put the past behind them, and move on with their lives. They also agreed that they would keep out of any arguments regarding the children falling out and let them sort it out for themselves. Nicola and Joanna apologised to each other for their actions, and left the meeting together.



Positive impact on Health and Wellbeing at six week follow up.



Financial Matters

Detailed statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st March 2013.

	2013	2012
	£	£
INCOME:		
Mediation Service Contracts	76,000	69,690
Big Lottery Fund Grant	10,000	-
Interest receivable	3	3
Sales and work done	11,710	18,689
Donations	-	60
Room hire	-	20
	97,713	88,462
EXPENDITURE:		
Costs of delivering services	925	2,200
Rents and rates	286	187
Salaries	56,988	55,123
Sessional Labour	334	8,264
Travelling expenses	2,625	1,093
Printing, postage and stationery	2,383	2,515
Repairs and maintenance	2,782	1,381
Advertising	-	208
Training and conference expenses	10,377	4,676
Accountancy	768	720
Legal and professional	4,541	325
Insurances	1,683	1,560
Telephone and fax	1,392	1,905
Subscriptions	902	829
Heat, light and power	1,358	1,158
Equipment depreciation	1,750	1,605
Sundry expenses	1,692	786
	90,786	84,535
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR:	6,927	3,927

We retained all our existing contracts in 2012/13 and through word of mouth secured one new partner. Once again the final accounts showed a surplus and although the amount was small, it reflects a huge achievement during a particularly challenging economic environment, not least because many of our contract partners were facing public sector cuts. It is testament to our high quality service and excellent outcomes and that we were able to demonstrate the real value of mediation as a preventative intervention, saving time and money for our partners.



Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank the following organisations and their staff for their support during 2012/13:

- Accent Foundation
- Ainsworth's Chartered Accountants
- Be Computing
- Big Lottery
- Blackburn College
- Blackburn Community Safety Partnership
- Burnley Borough Council
- Burnley Community Safety Partnership
- Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale CVS
- Calico
- CANWe Solutions CIC
- Chorley Community Housing
- College of Mediators
- Great Places
- Green Vale Homes
- Hyndburn Homes
- Hyndburn & Ribble Valley CVS
- Lancashire Constabulary (Eastern Division)
- Lancashire County Council
- Lancaster University
- Pendle Borough Council
- Pendle Community Safety Partnership
- Pennine Housing 2000
- Rossendale Borough Council
- Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group
- Southway Housing
- Twin Valley Homes
- Wyre Community Safety Partnership
- Young Lancashire
- Your Housing



Getting people to talk to one another again

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