

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEE 1996/97

Report of the Chair

Welcome to the 1996/97 annual report. This is the first time that a report from the Chair of the organisation has been produced and I feel that it would be useful to start with some background information as to why the Management Committee (MC) chose to alter its structure and appoint a Chair who would hold office from one AGM to the next.

Over the past year the MC has been reviewing its structure and how it operates, particularly around issues of providing more support to staff. Since SCIL was established we have operated on the basis that every MC member chaired meetings on a rota system. This was identified as a weakness since there was not a recognisable Chair of the organisation. Clearly this caused not only confusion to staff but also to outside bodies who were unsure at any time who to contact.

Furthermore we wanted to be more pro-active in the way we were helpful to staff and part of this process involved allocating two MC members to oversee particular projects and aspects of the work we perform.

As an organisation which has experienced substantial growth over the past few years it is good to have a look at our structures and check that they are still appropriate as the organisation develops.

We are grateful for the financial support from:

Southampton City Council



Hampshire County Council

National Lottery Charities Board

Southampton & SW Hampshire Health Authority

Marks & Spencer PLC

A great shock was experienced by everyone this year on learning of the death of Albert Kushlick. He had been a mainstay of the organisation since its founding nearly thirteen years ago. Albert had a great sense of life and was extremely supportive to fellow MC members and staff. Like Simon Brisenden who did so much to get SCIL established we hope that Albert will not be forgotten. One way in which his name will endure is by naming our meeting room the 'Albert Kushlick Room'. A plaque will soon be made and fitted to the door.

We have learnt that there may be another way to remember Albert. He has left a legacy to SCIL, though we do not yet know whether there are any stipulations attached. Part of Albert's work and interest was working with people with learning difficulties. SCIL is an organisation which endeavours to embrace all disabled people though we recognise that we need to do more to encourage people with learning difficulties to be involved. To this end we hope to use Albert's legacy to instigate a project in this area. Further details will be announced later.

Gill Whitworth

Management Committee

Membership and Attendance

Membership

At the last AGM Gordon Bright was required to resign and was subsequently re-elected. Ebe Hassan, William Maguire and Gill Whitworth were co-opted at the following Management Committee meeting and are eligible for election at this year's AGM. As reported Albert Kushlick died during the year and his contribution to the MC will be greatly missed. Derek Spacagna resigned and we would like to thank him for his efforts in forwarding the aims and objectives of SCIL.

This means that the remaining Management Committee members are Gordon Bright, Doreen Butland, Paul Kobryn and Byron Oliver. One third are required to resign at this year's AGM. Therefore Paul Kobryn and Byron Oliver have done so though both are eligible for re-election.

New nominations for the MC have been received and will be voted upon at the AGM. Any vacancies may be filled at a later date by co-opting people. If you would like to be considered for co-option to the MC please let us know.

Attendance at Management Committee Meetings

Name	Number of Meetings	Attended	Apologies
Gordon Bright	12	8	4
Doreen Butland	12	5	4
Ebe Hassan	12	1	5
Paul Kobryn	12	7	1
Albert Kushlick	8	6	2
William Maguire	12	9	1
Byron Oliver	12	11	1
Derek Spacagna	9	6	3
Gill Whitworth	12	10	1

Fundraising and Membership

Fundraising

We are now half way through our grant from National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) and will soon have to start looking for another source of funding to take over when it runs out in eighteen months time. Sadly the City Council has issued a general warning that it will be unable to take over commitments from the National Lottery. On a more positive note we gained a second grant from the NLCB to run our Disability Equality Training Register. Again this grant is for three years and includes an amount to cover

National Lottery approves grant of £33750 for DET

the holding of a trainer training course. The sum is £33750. Our SOCS support project received further funding from Southampton City Council up to 31 March 1998 and from Hampshire County Council to 30 September 1998. The City Council also guaranteed two further years support to the Independent Living Support Scheme. This means that it will continue to at least 31 March 1999.

Membership

Current membership at 30 November 1997 is 67 of which all are fully paid up. This nearly replicates the trend of the previous year showing an almost 29% increase. An analysis of the 63 equal opportunity forms that were returned to us reveals the statistical information shown below.

CLASS	Working 27	Middle 23	Upper 1	No Response 12
GENDER	Male 23	Female 38		No Response 2
RACE/ ETHNICITY	White 54	Black 0	Other 3	No Response 6
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Heterosexual 48	Lesbian 1	Gay 3	Other 1 No Response 10
DISABILITY	Disabled 54	Non-Disabled 7		No Response 2
AGE	0-15 0	16-30 4	31-60 37	61+ 19 No Response 3

Staff and Volunteers

Staff and Project Reports

Staff and Volunteers

Some staff changes have been made over the year. Rebecca Longley, our ILSS worker, left us to work for Southampton Institute. As the first employee of the project she worked tirelessly to ensure that the service would be a success. Many thanks to her and best wishes for the future. Gerry McKeown was appointed as Rebecca's replacement and took up his post in June 1997. He is making an excellent start to his career with SCIL. Lynn left us for a short while and thankfully has now returned as our administration support worker. Another returnee is Hazel Peasley who was appointed SOCS Support worker for the South East of Hampshire. Christine Hunt was appointed as Assistant Co-ordinator on the Hampshire Consumer Audit Project working with Susan Laing. Old hands David Gibson, Ian Loynes and Janet Marshall continue their sterling work.

Once again we would like to express our thanks to the band of volunteers who continue to support the organisation. Stephen Polden returned on a regular basis and has been joined by Pauline Tizard. Other volunteers who have now been with us some time include Suzanne Cooke, Collette Galloway and Gill Nixon. Although Derek has left the Management Committee he continues to volunteer several afternoons per week. Gordon plays an active part in office life and for a long while Catherine Romans helped out considerably. There have also been several others who have assisted though not on quite so regular a basis. Best wishes and thanks from the Management Committee and staff.

Project and Staff Reports

Co-ordinator

As you will garner from the project reports listed after this there has been a lot of activity within SCIL over the last year. We have been trying to influence policies on direct payments and charging, and pushing central and local Government to ensure that they take on board disability issues. Direct action remains an important method by which disabled people can come together to challenge issues that affect their lives and SCIL members have been much involved in this, particularly around accessible transport. My aim, as manager of staff, has been to maintain a 'hands off' approach and let the project workers flourish in their roles whilst being available to support them when required. Much time this year has been spent on recruiting new workers, Gerry as ILSS worker; a replacement administration worker, eventually Lynn to take up her old post; a SOCS support worker for SE Hampshire; and Chris as HCAP Assistant Co-ordinator.

Project and Staff Reports (Continued)

Funding remains a major problem and we are always trying to ensure that all our projects receive long-term financial support. At the moment our ILSS and SOCS support schemes seem to be more secure and as reported earlier our DET register has received funding for three years.

My work continues to be providing support and information to disabled people and others and I represent SCIL at other organisations and events. One highlight of the year was to give a speech on behalf of the voluntary sector at the launch of the City Council's Voluntary Sector Strategy.

The lease on our premises has been renewed which will give us security for the next three, possibly six, years. Minor improvements need to be made and these will be carried out over the next year.

David Gibson

Independent Living Support Scheme (ILSS)

I have been in post since 2nd June 1997. From the start as well as learning the job and the procedures involved a promotion campaign of the scheme was put into action, promoting the register to disabled people and also potential personal assistants. This involved arranging for promotional leaflets and posters to be designed and printed (although some of the previous material was used). Once this was ready it was distributed to areas that would generate the most interest. I targeted Doctors Surgery's, Universities and Colleges, Social Services departments, Day Centres, Libraries, and Disability Information Centres. It is hoped that this will maximise the continuing success of the scheme, and of people's awareness. Information was hand delivered in order for me to familiarise myself with their locations and also to take the opportunity to introduce myself. In all, around 15-20 introductory visits were made.

I have also run two recruitment drives. Adverts were drawn up and placed in the local press. Throughout the time I have been in post I have received 90 enquires to become Personal Assistants, 31 within the past few weeks. Most enquirers heard about the register from the Echo and Advertiser (27), Doctor's surgery (19), Jobcentre (12), Friend (8) and students union (4), SCIL (4), Library (3) and other sources (13).

Since running the recruitment drives, three sets of interviews have been held with 14 candidates being offered interviews, 4 declining an interview, 10 interviewed and then registered, with another 8 awaiting to be interviewed, which will be arranged shortly.

Since June I have received 16 enquiries about the register, 8 of which have now

Project and Staff Reports (Continued)

registered, the other eight have not yet returned registration forms. Most disabled people learnt of the register through Social Services (5) Doctors surgery (4), SOCS worker (2) and other sources (5).

I have also been on 27 home visits to both new and existing members, and I have attended 11 in house meetings with other organisations seeking advice on how to go about starting up their own similar schemes. As well as this I have been on three training courses, two in house and one external.

It has been a very interesting first few months and an eye opener to what can be achieved given the right support, encouragement and a positive attitude towards people living independently with choice and control over their lives. I also feel that the service this post provides is essential to ensure more people become aware of the options open to them, helping them become and maintain independence which leads to a better quality of life.

Gerry McKeown

SOCS Support Workers

This year has seen something of a change of emphasis for the SOCS Support Worker project. Whereas last year we spent a large amount of time and energy arguing for the funding of the project to continue, there does seem to be far more acceptance by both Hampshire and Southampton Social Services that the role of SOCS Support Worker is an essential part of SOCS. Whilst there is no time to rest on laurels, and there is an impending review of the role of the support worker, I do feel more secure than last year.

Workload has continued to be very high this year, I have supported about 150 disabled people in the last year, plus a large number of enquiries from Social Workers and other statutory/voluntary sector personnel. My aim being to provide a high level of support in all areas. The result of this work is borne out by official figures that show the number of people on SOCS in my area has grown from about 80 in 1995 to a figure above 200 at present.

I have been involved in the implementation of the new Direct Payments Act in both Hampshire and Southampton, ensuring that the interests of disabled people are taken fully into account. I have also had a large involvement in the campaign against charging for SOCS, a campaign that forced the local authority to backtrack on its original plans to start means testing users for SOCS. I believe that this involvement at all levels on shaping future policy has earned SCIL a higher profile, without selling out our principles.

We have been asked by several local authorities outside of Hampshire to share our

Project and Staff Reports (Continued)

their areas. It is good to see other authorities looking at the good practices that have developed with SOCS over the last 16 years, as well as the key involvement of users at all stages. We have worked with HCIL, HCODP and other users extensively in this area.

The coming year should see continued development and expansion of the scheme and I look forward to being involved in this developmental process, especially in making SOCS type schemes available for people with learning difficulties.

Ian Loynes

SE Hants Since taking up this post in the middle of last month I have been busy finding my way around the south east of the county: meeting social services personnel in Havant/Petersfield and Faream/Gosport; contacting the SE Hants SOCS Users Support Group with a view to discussing their role and how best we can support them; and, most importantly, supporting existing and potential SOCS users (8 to date). Clearly it is a time of change because of Direct Payments and I hope that together with Ian I can help build the foundation for a growth in peer support in Hampshire.

Hazel Peasley

Disability Equality Training

During the past year the training register has been limping along on funds from training courses as and when they took place as the core funding ran out last October, but we survived and are still functioning. Training courses have been delivered for Hampshire and Wiltshire Social Services, Southampton City Council and others. We continue also to be asked to be involved in training days run by other organisations. Now that Southampton has set up its own Social Services department after becoming a new unitary authority we are also going to be involved in their training schedule as well.

There are moves from BCODP to at last set up a national register of DET trainers and we hope to be involved in this to ensure that the high standard which we aim to set for our training is continued throughout the country. This will be a very important piece of work for our register to be involved with.

Much time was spent during the last year trying to identify further funding to keep the project going. We received a significant donation from Marks & Spencer PLC during the summer. As reported on page 3 we are now in receipt of a grant from the National Lottery Charities Board which will enable the continuation of my post for another three years and also to run a Trainer Training course to recruit more local trainers to the register. Here's hoping next year will prove even more successful now that we will have a break from 'money hunting' until the next time!!

Janet

Marshall

Project and Staff Reports (Continued)

Hampshire Consumer Audit Project

I started work as Co-ordinator in January 1997 and was joined by Chris Hunt in June. Hazel Peasley is also closely involved.

Consumer audit is based on the idea that consumers (service users and carers) have a lot of under used expertise about community care services and are the best people to evaluate services. Our aim is to demonstrate that this is true in practice.

Local Health Authorities and Social Services have invited us to audit a range of the community care services that they commission. These include equipment services, residential care, day centres, advice lines and employment schemes.

To do this we have recruited and trained fifteen consumer auditors. We developed and delivered an eight day training programme covering a wide range of auditing skills including interviewing, data analysis, background to community care, team building and disability equality/equal opportunity issues. So far we have audited two services, a day service in Aldershot and an equipment service for people with a visual impairment. Preparations for the next three are underway.

Consumers involved in the projects have also defined key outcomes or results which they believe all services should deliver. These are based on core values of Choice, Control, Independence and Equal Opportunities. We are developing ways of measuring how these are achieved.

We believe that we are the only people currently doing consumer audit in the UK. Although other consumers have evaluated their own services, we are unique in enabling consumers to audit services that they do not use themselves, using their experience to identify good and bad practice. A review by the Department of Health in August said that Hampshire Consumer Audit was one of the most exciting, innovative and practical projects they had seen under the national *Building Partnerships for Success* initiative.

The project is funded until January 1999. During 1998 we will be concentrating on carrying out audits. We aim to demonstrate the practical value of consumer audit and develop a working method that can be applied elsewhere so that consumer audit has an assured long term future.

Susan Laing

Treasurers Report

Although the financial position of SCIL has generally improved over the last few years we continue to be tightly constrained by our finances. Project funding continues to cover costs and generate a contribution to general overheads but our low grant from the City Council and inability to recover overhead costs from our DET project has resulted in an excess of expenditure over income on our general fund for the year ended 31 March 1997. This deficit will need to be eliminated over the next couple of years.

The following comments relate to the accounts for the year to 31 March 1997.

Copies are available from the Co-ordinator.

Last year we reported total income increased by 20% which again has been almost repeated this year. Total income was nearly £142,000, 18% more than last year. This is the result of our increased service provision, in particular the HCA Project.

The General Fund shows a substantial increase in income owing to the Lottery Grant and Consultancy which was previously included under a separate Co-ordinator Fund. Other income remained fairly static though Rents receivable has been eliminated following our takeover of the office previously sub-let. Expenditure is also substantially increased reflecting the transfer of Co-ordinator salary and on-costs. This figure also includes the cost of continuing, on a short term basis, the employment of our Education Worker. Savings were made in running our photocopier since we had one free on loan for one year; on repairs and renewals; and on attending conferences. However additional costs were incurred in travel expenses; telephone, following the introduction of our new system; sundry expenses; depreciation, reflecting the increased expenditure financed by the Lottery grant; advertising, which was attempt to promote ourselves more widely; and training. The latter reflects the need to keep up to date with the changes in government policy, information technology and other items. Our minibus needed engine and bodywork repairs which pushed up the cost of operating it. Finally the HCODP repayment is because money given to us in a prior year was not used and eventually given back to them. Contribution to overheads from on-going projects and transfers from those completed were some £4500 down on the previous year. The final result is a deficit carried forward to next year.

Project Funding

Hampshire Consumer Audit project only began in January 1997 though monies had been received in advance from Hampshire County Council. DET shows a drop in revenue over the previous year since we did not have any major contracts this year to run trainer training courses. The precariousness of the financial situation shows why there was an urgency to raise additional funds. As reported elsewhere money was received from Marks and Spencer PLC and a successful application to the National Lottery. SOCS and the ILSS scheme are broadly in line with the previous year though salary and on-costs on both projects reflect the upgrading of our clerical support worker to full-time.

The **Balance Sheet** shows the carried forward balances on each of the above accounts. It also shows that the cash in hand and at bank position became precarious. This has since improved and the balance at the end of March 1998 will be substantial.

The Coming Year

1997/98 promises to be an interesting year ahead with much work still to be done. Direct payment schemes are to be introduced by both Southampton City and Hampshire County Councils and we must ensure that disabled people are fully consulted about it. Whilst there is a duty to use public money responsibly the demands placed on disabled people operating their own personal assistance schemes must not be too onerous. Charging remains a thorny issue and we must be vigilant to ensure that people are not charged for operating their own personal assistance schemes.

The Government has recently announced proposals to means test many disability benefits and to shift responsibility from central to local government. This is not acceptable to us and may need a highly organised campaign to make them change their policy. Strengthening of the anti-discrimination legislation is well overdue and we will support efforts to get the government to make comprehensive changes to the present Act and also establish a Disability Commission with power to enforce legislation.

Locally the City Council is establishing a Disabled Persons Consultative Forum. Whilst we have reservations about its effectiveness and accountability, it has been set up and we must be involved in it.

As an organisation of disabled people which is non-impairment specific we are endeavouring to reach out more to disabled people who have learning difficulties, those surviving the mental health system and disabled black and minority ethnic people. Translation of materials into different formats will be a priority. We hope soon to be in position to announce a major new initiative in this area.

Improvements need to be made to our office, particularly on the installation of a second toilet and providing the reception area with more and better information about our services and personnel. Information technology advances at such an alarming rate with new software demanding larger and faster personal computers. Several of our machines are now six years old with very small hard disks which are incapable of doing what we need. We need to identify sources of funding to replace these.

Management Committee

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