

SAMARITANS

Edinburgh and the Lothians



ANNUAL REVIEW 2005

SAMARITANS

Our **Mission** is to be available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Our **Vision** is for a society in which:-

- Fewer people die by suicide
- People are able to explore their feelings
- People are able to acknowledge and respect the feelings of others.

Our **Values** are based on the following beliefs:-

- The importance of having the opportunity to explore difficult feelings.
- That being listened to, in confidence, and accepted without prejudice, can alleviate despair and suicidal feelings.
- That everyone has the right to make fundamental decisions about their own life, including the decision to die by suicide.

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Chairman's Report

It's a familiar-enough sight in our Duty Room - a Samaritan volunteer with diary in one hand and pen in the other, staring at the roster sheets for the weeks ahead. One three hour shift a week and one overnight shift a month – it might not seem that much, but it's a commitment that has to be fitted in alongside everything else – the job, exams, friends, family, and so on. There's an extra challenge for our volunteers who are supervising a trainee (imagine two separate diaries to be juggled!) and also for shift 'Leaders' who have their own roster to ensure that there's always someone at the end of a phone to provide back-up support.

That's not all. Close by the rosters in the Duty Room is a large notice headed "Who Does What?" with well over fifty names on it. As one of the larger Samaritan Branches we employ two part-time staff, and we also have "non-listening" volunteers who include the members of our Friends' group and our Treasurer. But every other aspect of our round-the-clock service is delivered and managed by Samaritan volunteers. That's a fair achievement, and perhaps we shouldn't be too shy about saying so.

At this time of year it's customary – and right – for the Chairman to put on record his gratitude to all the Branch volunteers for their hard work and support. I do so unreservedly; and I'd like to add my thanks for their warm welcome when I took over as Chairman last March - and for their good humour and their forbearance since.

Why do I put so much emphasis on being a Samaritan volunteer? Here are just three thoughts:

- *We're Samaritans because we want to be.*

We don't become Samaritans because it helps to pay the bills, or because we want to impress our friends, or because we're thirsty for power. It's because we want to make a difference to people's lives as part of a supportive community which cares enough about its fellow human beings to offer them emotional support without passing judgment and in complete confidence –

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even when (perhaps *especially* when) the feelings that we help people to explore are of utter hopelessness and despair. We do it because we want to, and that gives our work a special “edge”.

- *We all share the same vision.*

Whether we've been a Samaritan volunteer for two years or twenty years, we all share the same vision and we all work to the same values and standards. We accept that we should never stop learning, and that's why our commitment includes at least five hours a year of ongoing training. From time to time we may take on extra tasks in the Branch – or elsewhere in the Samaritan movement - but that doesn't mean that we can take our names off the roster! As Samaritan volunteers, the first call on our time should always be to those who want us to listen to them.

- *We are a stable organisation.*

“I've always known about you” is something that we often hear. Soon our Branch will be celebrating its 50th birthday – something that's going to be possible because, year after year, people of all ages and backgrounds have decided that the time has come for them to offer to be a Samaritan volunteer. And also because individuals, trusts and businesses regularly decide to contribute towards our running costs. It's consistent support like this that helps us to feel part of the fabric of the community that we serve.

2005 – some highlights

- Throughout 2005 we operated “round the clock” at our Centre in Torphichen Street. We took over 25,000 phone calls, saw over 350 visitors, and responded to over 1900 e-mails – all significant increases on 2004. Telephone callers are now seeing the benefits of our new “divert on busy” system which has dramatically reduced the rate of “engaged” signals received after dialling a local Branch – so it's now easier to speak to a Samaritan volunteer than it was before.

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- During the year nearly 40 new volunteers completed the new Samaritans Initial Training Course with us, and by the year end we had almost 150 volunteers in the Branch – our biggest complement for some time.
- In May, three of our long-serving volunteers received, on behalf of the Branch, Volunteer of the Year awards at a ceremony at the City Chambers. One of them had recently completed 40 years of volunteering in our Branch – a tremendous achievement.
- During the year we passed the tenth anniversary of our move to Torphichen Street (though we may have been too busy at the time to notice...). We are now nearing the end of a programme of refurbishment of our premises which inevitably get heavy wear and tear.
- 2005 saw the launch of our website, www.edinburghsamaritans.org. It quickly proved to be an accessible “shop window” for the Branch, particularly for potential volunteers.
- Income from our small but very hard-working Friends group went up by 25%. We are grateful to them – and also to our other volunteers whose efforts have helped to generate funds.
- We continued to be active in outreach work in the community, to increase awareness of our service among individuals and groups. Our programme of talks to schools (mainly to 5th Year pupils) has continued, and the programme’s need has been reinforced this year by the tragic deaths by suicide of young people in the Edinburgh and Lothians area. We have continued to offer follow-up support to vulnerable people after they leave the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh following a self-harm incident or suicide attempt or who have been treated in its Accident and Emergency Department. One of our volunteers also spent Christmas in London working with the Samaritans’ Festival Branch team at “Crisis at Christmas”. A team of volunteers from the Branch continues to train and

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support a group of “Listeners” at HM Prison, Edinburgh, who in turn then offer support to fellow prisoners.

- Another aspect of outreach is our work with other voluntary and statutory agencies. We are now members of the Edinburgh Mental Health Forum for Voluntary Organisations, and we continue to take part in local Steering Groups which are delivering action plans for Edinburgh and for West Lothian as part of the Scottish Executive’s “Choose Life” initiative – a ten year plan aimed at reducing death by suicide in Scotland by 20%.

What lies ahead?

Our involvement in “Choose Life” reminds us that Samaritans is not the only organisation trying to address the unacceptably high level of suicide in Scotland. It’s not that we are in competition with each other. Far from it – we all have a role to play. The more widely our volunteers’ work is known about, the higher our profile will be – and people in distress and despair will be more likely to access our service. Our volunteers are likely to become even busier.

As a Samaritans Branch, how do we respond? This isn’t meant to be a blueprint, but rather suggests some pointers for the year ahead:

- We intend to focus our recruitment efforts on those who are available during weekdays, when filling our rosters can still be a challenge. Recruitment of new volunteers is also the key to delivering more outreach work in the community.
- We have every reason to be proud of our volunteer support, on which we’ve been done a lot of work recently. To validate this, with generous financial support from the City of Edinburgh Council we are now working towards the Investing in Volunteers Award – the new UK quality standard for all organisations which involve volunteers in their work.

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- A number of our younger volunteers will be able to get MV Awards (formerly known as the Millennium Volunteer Programme) for their volunteering with us.
- We will continue to keep our shift arrangements under review, to make sure that our volunteers are there when they are most needed and that we offer the best possible caller care at all hours of the day and night. Where necessary, we will look at more flexible shift commitment patterns, so that volunteers find it easier to accommodate Samaritan work into their lives.
- To improve our internal efficiency, we will be piloting a new electronic system for compiling statistics.

Our objectives are to make volunteering with the Samaritans of Edinburgh and the Lothians a more satisfying experience, to raise awareness of our service and of the need for it, and to improve still further the quality and consistency of the care that we give to those who approach us for help, by whatever means. We hope that, in a year's time, we'll be able to report progress in each of these areas.

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THE SAMARITANS EDINBURGH AND THE LOTHIAN BRANCH

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2005

Income	£	2005 £	2004 £
Trusts		8,222	12,025
Corporate Donations		4,541	4,070
Legacies		-	44,401
Miscellaneous Donations		5,344	4,579
Deeds of Covenant and Gift Aid (Gross)		2,577	2,145
Branch Fund Raising		2,079	2,778
Friends of the Samaritans - Income		4,922	3,955
Interest Received		7,893	6,811
Grants - City of Edinburgh		3,359	3,291
- Scottish Prison Service		1,400	400
Rent Received		565	640
		40,902	85,095
Expenditure			
Telephone	4,510		4,162
E-Mail Costs	371		372
Stationery and Postage	2,760		2,347
Heating and Lighting	2,097		2,188
Repairs and Renewals	6,051		2,660
Wages	6,581		6,116
Friends of the Samaritans - Expenses	1,207		1,373
Housekeeping	4,027		4,153
Publicity and Advertising	8,013		8,428
Grant to Regional Publicity Fund	-		10,000
Training and Travelling	6,450		6,729
HQ Levy	5,229		7,413
Rates and Insurance	3,287		2,824
Audit Fee	1,175		881
Miscellaneous	47		74
Depreciation	6,615		5,293
		58,420	65,012
(Deficit)/Surplus for the Year		(17,518)	20,082
Transferred from Contingency Fund	-		-
Transferred from Property Reserve	5,293	5,293	5,293
		(12,225)	25,375
Leaving to be transferred (from)/to General Reserve		(12,225)	25,375

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STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2005

	£	2005 £	2004 £
Fixed Assets			
Property at Cost, less depreciation		232,895	238,188
Miscellaneous Equipment at Cost, less Depreciation		3,965	-
		<u>236,860</u>	<u>238,188</u>
Current Assets			
Prepayments and Accrued Income		1,011	1,354
Cash at Bank		169,737	188,774
		<u>170,748</u>	<u>190,128</u>
Creditors			
Amounts Falling Due Within One Year		8,486	11,676
		<u>162,262</u>	<u>178,452</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>399,122</u>	<u>416,640</u>
Reserves			
Property Reserve as at 1st January, 2005	238,188		
Transfer to General Reserve	<u>5,293</u>	232,895	238,188
Contingency Reserve as at 1st January 2005	62,692	62,692	62,692
General Reserve as at 1st January 2005	115,760		
Deficit, after transfer to/from Other Reserves	<u>12,225</u>	103,535	115,760
		<u>399,122</u>	<u>416,640</u>

These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Branch. For further information the full annual accounts should be consulted. The full financial statements were approved by the Trustees of the Branch on 8th March 2006 and an unqualified report given by the auditors. Copies of the full financial statements can be obtained by writing to the Trustees.

Whitelaw Wells, C A
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

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THE SAMARITANS OF EDINBURGH AND THE LOTHIANS

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS

For the year ended 31 December 2005

We have audited the financial statements of The Samaritans of Edinburgh and The Lothians for the year ended 31 December 2005 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the members, as a body, in accordance with the charity's constitution. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The trustees' responsibilities for the preparation of the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the statement of trustees' responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Law Reform (Miscellaneous) (Provisions) Act 1990 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1992. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the trustees' report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the charity has not kept proper accounting records, or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read other information contained in the trustees' report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

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Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2005 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended, the deficit for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Law Reform (Miscellaneous) (Provisions) Act 1990, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1992 and the charity's constitution.

Whitelaw Wells
Chartered accountants
Registered auditors

9 Ainslie Place
Edinburgh
EH3 6AT

21st March 2006

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TREASURER'S REPORT

As can be seen from the accounts, 2005 turned out to be a much less good year for the branch's finances. A deficit for the year of £17,518 compares with a surplus of £20,082 in 2004, while in 2003 we achieved a surplus of £27,368. In both of these previous years we received large legacies and, in 2003, there was the considerable surplus from the Anniversary Ball.

What this shows is that whereas 2003 and 2004 were both good years financially, but atypical, 2005 was more "normal" in financial terms – and in this context, "normal" means that our "core" income does not cover our outgoings.

So, what is our "core" income comprised of? Again, a glance at the accounts will show that we can expect to receive a regular flow of income from our supporters, both corporate and individual, and that these amounts remain reasonably constant from year to year. The one major change in 2005, apart from the absence of legacies, was the much smaller grant from the Robertson Trust, which has decided to re-align their financial support for the work of Samaritans in Scotland.

Our reserves of cash currently stand at £169,737, sufficient to fund our costs for roughly two and a half years, so, as a result of surpluses in past years, we remain comparatively well off. However, our "core" expenditure rises inexorably, and if we are not only to cover it, but also to be able to continue to publicise our service as widely as we can, enhance our facilities and keep our premises in order, then we must have the funding to do it. One of the Committee's main tasks over the next twelve months will be to work out - and implement - new fund-raising initiatives.

The budget for 2006 indicates another sizable deficit, but, hopefully, increased fund raising activity and careful expenditure control will render that to be pessimistic.

Grateful thanks are due, as always, to Ann Curtis and the Friends, and to all those branch members who have been involved in fund raising during the year. The Friends produced a very worthwhile total of £3,715, a welcome increase on the amount they raised in 2004, and other fund raising within the branch added a further £2,079. In addition to raising funds, these activities help to raise awareness of the Samaritans among those members of the public who attend the various events.

The Friends are always in need of additional volunteers, so please get in touch with Ann, Patrick or myself, if you would like to help or know of someone who would be willing to join the group. Their events also need the support of branch members, as well as from the general public.

I am, as always, extremely grateful for all the support and assistance I have received over the year, from Patrick, John, and the rest of the committee, and to Lesley for her hard work in ensuring the smooth running of the Branch office.

Kerr Baillie
Honorary Treasurer

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A Brief History

Samaritans was started in London 1953 by a young vicar called Chad Varah whose parish work led him to see the need for a confidential emergency service for people in distress who had no one to turn to. The first call to the new service was made on 2nd November 1953 – Samaritans' official birthday.

As a result of the publicity that Chad Varah received - it was in fact a newspaper which suggested the name "Samaritans" – demand for the service grew, as did the numbers of people offering to help. Initially these volunteers did basic reception work, but soon it was realised that many of those turning up to see Chad Varah for face-to-face support were getting all that they wanted from the volunteers. They discovered the value in speaking to someone they didn't know, who'd simply listen quietly to what they had to say without offering advice or passing judgment. Within a few months, Chad Varah recognised that his volunteers were the 'true' Samaritans, and handed over to them the task of supporting the callers.

It was also press publicity which led to the setting up of the Edinburgh Branch a few years later. Prompted by an article about Samaritans' work in 'The Scotsman', a number of local people met to discuss the possibility of a Branch in Edinburgh, and the second Branch in the UK took its first call on 1 June 1959.

There are now twenty Samaritan Branches in Scotland, and over 200 in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

HOW TO CONTACT SAMARITANS

Phone

Call us on 0131 221 9999
Or on our national number 08457 90 90 90

Visit

We are open at 25 Torphichen Street (near to Haymarket Station) for personal callers from 9.00 am to 10.00 pm every day. Appointments are not necessary.

Letter

Write to: Chris PO Box 90 90, Stirling FK8 2SA

E-mail

E-mail Jo at jo@samaritans.org

Text phone

For callers with hearing difficulties, our national text phone number is:
08457 90 91 92

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Scottish Charity No.
SCO 06778



“Listening, Responding, Connecting”