

The house at the heart of St Pauls

Summary report and accounts for the year ending 31 March 2017

Welcome to St Pauls Advice Centre. We provide free, confidential advice to the residents of St Pauls and East Bristol; communities that rank amongst those experiencing the highest levels of deprivation in the UK.

You will find yourself in good company, surrounded by people doing their best to manage in difficult circumstances, and by a skilled and committed staff team supporting them.

These days, you will also find it a pretty crowded company. More and more people struggle to keep their heads above water, between inadequate and overpriced housing, poorly paid, part time work, and a harsh benefits regime. Austerity and Brexit have led to a hostile environment, undermining human rights and civil liberties.

Here, we reject the judgmental attitudes and words used against people – ‘poor’, ‘immigrant’, ‘skiver’, ‘sick’. We see the damage they do, on top of the challenges many are struggling with.

The advice we give, encouraging everyone to access their entitlements while meeting their responsibilities, aims to help individuals maintain their dignity whilst acknowledging the unique contribution each brings to their community.

Our interventions increase income, make debt manageable, and help regularise immigration status for people whose circumstances mean they are unlikely to access support anywhere but very locally. Our many years of work – from our house at the heart of St Pauls – have earned us trust and a good reputation within the community. We look forward to upholding this vital position in the years to come.

Laura Corballis,
Board of Trustees



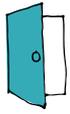
"I have made a positive move forward with your support and advice."

"Thank you for hearing me, supporting me, taking me seriously and welcoming me."

"I'm not living in fear every time there is a knock on the door and I'm able to open my mail."

GROSVENOR RD

Our impact in numbers



We helped 1,385 people, 76% of whom were new clients this year.



90% clients would recommend us.



We increased household incomes by €924,373.



85% of our clients said they understood their rights better

£1.4m

We managed €1.4m of client debt.



87% of clients said their issue was fully or partially resolved.



38% of clients describe themselves as disabled or long term sick.



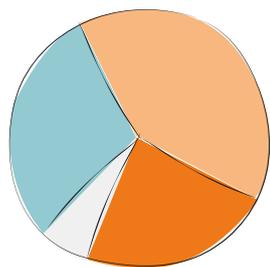
102 advice sessions held in clients' first languages, including Somali and Urdu.



75% of clients were from local BAME communities.

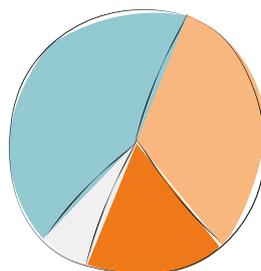
How it all adds up

Income €335,900



- 40% Bristol City Council
- 30% Money Advice Service
- 25% Voluntary income including grants
- 5% Other

Expenditure €353,634



- 44% Debt advice
- 32% Welfare benefits & immigration advice
- 18% Generalist advice
- 6% Fundraising

This information is extracted from the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017, which is available on request or from the Charity Commission website.

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Client stories

Musa was worried about his residence papers.

He had submitted them almost a year ago, but hadn't heard back. Now, his employer was saying that without the right paperwork, it would be illegal for him to renew Musa's contract.

Our immigration adviser contacted Musa's MP who discovered that his paperwork was in process but delayed. A letter from the Home Office ensured his work contract was renewed, so he could keep up rent payments.

Musa felt relieved that he wouldn't lose his home.

Aamira was distressed as she couldn't feed her children.

Her benefits had been stopped and the money that she had wouldn't last another day.

After making some calls, our adviser was able to clarify what documentary evidence Aamira needed to submit to HMRC. A foodbank voucher ensured that Aamira and her children would have enough to eat for the next couple of weeks.

Aamira left feeling less fearful that her children would go hungry.

Jeannie felt she was spiralling into depression.

Her agoraphobia and anxiety had worsened following a PIP assessment that had ruled her as being fit to work.

Once our welfare benefits adviser had listened to her story and taken time to explain the appeal process, Jeannie felt more able to cope. Being heard and supported reassured her that she could appeal.

The decision was overturned and Jeannie's symptoms improved.