

The Well

Annual Report - 2015/2016



From the Chairman

Dear Friends

An annual report is an opportunity to take stock. As you read our report for 2015-2016 in the life of the Well you will see that there are many reasons to be grateful.

Our last report was written against the background of a real need for the services offered by the Well, but uncertainty about its short-term future because of the financial challenges we faced. The board is glad to report that this year that uncertainty is no longer a major feature, in large part due to the generosity of individuals, churches and grant funders.

As you will see we have been as busy, if not busier than ever. The 2015 figures - the most recent available - show a continued demand for The Well - and from the reports coming from the staff, 2016 looks to be just as busy. We have been able to extend our services by opening one evening in the week and also by sharing the expertise of our staff who have offered training to other organisations about working among people from a variety of cultures.

We still remain in the same premises. Most days, when people are waiting to be seen, the need for new premises is highlighted. We simply don't have enough room. However we are keen to move to the right place so we commit this need to your ongoing prayers.

As ever we are grateful to our staff and volunteers for the selfless work that they do among people who often feel themselves to be vulnerable. We are also grateful to those who financially and prayerfully support the work of the Well. Above all we are grateful to God because we serve in the name of Jesus Christ and are dependent on God's provision and enabling for all our work.

Although we are grateful we are not complacent. We continue to rely on the generosity of individuals and congregations. Thus as you read our report I would like to thank you for your support in the past and would gently encourage you to continue or renew that support. You can find details of how to support our work financially by going to <http://thewell.org.uk/support-the-well/> All contributions are gratefully received and make a difference in the lives of our service users.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you find our report to be an encouragement.

William Wilson
(Board chair).



Activities at The Well (& Beyond!)

Over the past year the activities held both in The Well and in partnership with Govanhiill Free Church, have continued to be very popular, with people making 2772 “visits” to the men’s and women’s English Classes, Bubbles (mother and toddler group), and our Craft Group.

Mothers have expressed their appreciation that wee “Ahmad” was so well prepared to go to Nursery because he’d been at Bubbles. It’s been great to have BBC Children in Need funding to pay our sessional workers for this great work.

The English classes remain very popular, with many commenting on how much they appreciate having a place they can learn English in a relaxed way. Well done to both Kenny & Fiona and the team at Govanhill Free Church and thanks for all you do.

The Craft Group continued throughout the year, with women learning new skills and just having fun together.

Monday Evenings

How do you extend the capacity of The Well, when it’s already at full stretch?

How do you give those who work the opportunity to be a part of the work in The Well?

These are the questions that The Board grappled with and decided to open on Monday evenings from 7:00 - 8:30

We are delighted to have four new volunteers take on this work. After a slowish start, some of our service users began to prefer coming on a Monday evening - they usually didn’t have the long wait that can often happen during the day. Monday evenings are a good time to fill in forms, or make CVs. The Monday evening team are becoming expert at filling in forms for EEA migrants!

We’re beginning to wonder if perhaps we need to think of other evenings - but of course that needs people.



Fatima & Rita

Fatima - a Pakistani woman - has been coming to The Well since it opened 22 years ago, I only know this as I've seen her in photos from the early days of The Well!

Rita is from a Slovakian Roma background and has been coming to The Well for about 4 years.

One of the challenges we've faced in recent years has been the very diverse ethnic people who have been coming to The Well for support, sometimes those from South Asia feel that their "Well" has been taken over by the new incomers, and those from Roma background thinking we were showing favouritism to the Pakistanis! It's not always been an easy to juggle and manage people's expectations.

However we have observed things changing between Fatima & Rita - they often come in at the same time to use the computers, and Fatima has been spotted helping Rita do her job searches!

The day that Rita came in and gave Fatima a hug was a very special day. Two woman from very different backgrounds, finding they had perhaps more in common than they originally thought, and forming a friendship through The Well.



Cross-Cultural Awareness Training

In The Well we have a lot of experience of working with folks from many different cultures.

Following requests from other local agencies for help, we developed our highly popular "Bespoke Cross-Cultural Awareness Training."

We have now provided training for church groups, Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow City Council, Daisy Chain (A Church of Scotland Project) and others.

We are happy to provide this training for groups of between 6 and 20.

"The training offered by The Well is very relevant and



Who's Who?

The Well cannot function without volunteer staff - we currently have over 30 people who fill the various shifts and roles at The Well. We are constantly looking for more volunteers, so perhaps you would keep this in mind? And if you think you might be interested please get in touch with Rhoda (rho.yar@thewell.org.uk T: 0141 424 4523)

Some travel long distances to be a part of the team here (Kilmarnock, Helensburgh & Dunbar!!!) Our volunteers are a very special group of people who do their best to make a difference for the person they are helping. I commented one day on the privilege of being able to pray for people by name, and Dougie said "and to be able to call people from all over the world friends." Several volunteers have been heard to say "I love it here, I love being a part of The Well family."

Our paid staff are currently:

Rhoda: Manager

Penny: Deputy Manager

Sarah: Partnership & Communications Worker

Ellen: Admin Worker (seconded from Interserve)

Jan: Receptionist

Bubbles Sessional Staff: Penny, Jaan & Maureen



From The Treasurer . . .

The first quarter of 2105 was perhaps the most challenging time financially since The Well became an independent charity in 2011.

However churches and individuals responded very positively and it was encouraging as the Treasurer, and also for the whole Board that we ended the year with a small surplus - the first in our short history to do so.

The challenges continue, and as an organisation we sail very close to the edge of sustainability on a regular basis. In August 2016 we fell beneath our 4 month reserves, for the first time in 18 months. But thankfully we received several large gifts in September, which once again steadied the ship.

Our costs are £100,000 per year and for the work we do and number of people we help this is a very reasonable figure. The most important focus is providing a sustainable future with ideally 50% of our income coming from individual donors and local churches which would reduce the reliance on grant funding. To do this, our aim is to 'spread the word' of the work that The Well does through a variety of different channels.

We have a dedicated team focusing on preparing grant applications and one successful funding application can make the difference between continuing and closure. We would love to be able to plan to develop the work further - but without confirmed funding this is not possible.



I am passionate about the work The Well does, after being on the Board for several years, I now have the opportunity to volunteer on alternate Monday nights, and I now experience first-hand the difference The Well makes to people. Volunteering has been eye-opening experience and I have enjoyed every minute of it so far - although it has had some challenging moments! It has been good

to get to know some of the clients - building relationships and helping them wherever possible. The most important thing is providing a caring environment where they feel comfortable and relaxed knowing that we will do all we can to help. It has been a steep learning curve and I appreciate our staff and other volunteers more than ever when I see first-hand some of the issues they are helping sort out on a daily basis.

Andrew Telfer

Who & Why



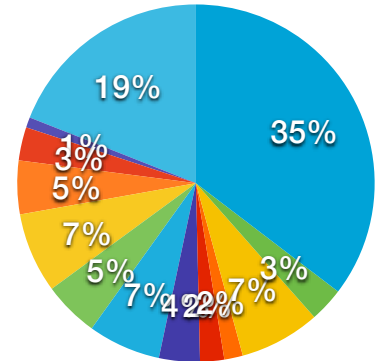
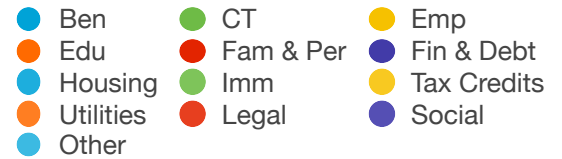
Of the **1367** people who used The Well **8939** times in 2015*, 45% were men, 46% women and 9% were children.

86% came from the local G42 & G41 postcodes.

98% were referred by a friend.

68% have their roots in South Asia, the Middle East or Africa.

Benefits remains the largest single issue that people come to The Well for.



* most recent figures available

Heard in The Well . . .

I wanted the last voice of our report to be that of our service users - those who actually benefit from the commitment of the volunteers first hand.

"I love coming here, it's got a very peaceful atmosphere." Arshad Oct 16

"The Well is the best office. The people are eager to work, They receive all communities with open arms and open heart." Aishya Sept 16

"If I had to pay you, I'd pay double" Maria July 16

Funders:

Go for It

SSPCK

Duff Family Trust

Souter Trust

BBC Children in Need

Lloyds TSB Foundation

The Kenneth Barge Trust

Churches

Individual Donations

The Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes! Ps 118: 23