

# Annual Report

2015-2016

St Vincent's Support Centre



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## Centre Manager's Report

Where to start? What a year we have had at St Vincent's!

When I took over the reins from Charlotte Walton last year, I knew in a very short space of time that I had found a very special place with a fantastic team of staff and volunteers. In the time that I have been here, I have been amazed by the team's commitment to delivering excellent services to the community and everyone that comes through the doors. With an ever increasing demand for our services, the effort that everyone

puts in, and the enthusiasm and passion they have for the work that they do, means that everyone is guaranteed a warm welcome and a first class response to their need.



2015/16 has proved to be a very challenging year for the centre both from the increase in requests for help and support and an unanticipated centre move. In October we found out that we needed to find a new home which needed to be within the same area and also have the scope to offer the same range of services under one roof. In late December, we were offered space in Berking Avenue and plans were quickly put in place to develop the old warehouse space into a fit for purpose centre. Of course this brought challenge: both for service delivery, budget and logistics but also an opportunity for the team to show exactly how resilient they are and how innovative in being able to continue to deliver services during the time of change. We now find ourselves, after much hard work by the team – including the amazing building team who worked with us onsite - in a purpose built centre which is accessible to all and fit for service delivery. There is still a bit of work to get it feeling like “home” but we are well on the way to having an amazing space.

During the last year, we have said goodbye to some of the team including Vic Berry & Kamal Guraj who have moved on to new adventures and we have welcomed Basharat Hussain & Sheena Hockley to the SVSC family. We also had our first Leeds Trinity University intern Laura Tomlinson join us for a six month placement and we wish her every best wishes for her future and hope that she found her time with us rewarding ( although I'm not sure she expected to be learning on a building site!).

I also would like to thank the Management Committee for their invaluable support and guidance over the last year- they have been absolutely steadfast in their help and have provided me with information and advice on too many occasions to count.

I look forward to the next year at St Vincent's and all the adventures that lay ahead for us as we develop the services and centre to be even more brilliant than it already is.

*Sheena*

# A very successful year



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## Chair's Report

*An overview from George Skalski – Chair of the Management Committee*

I am delighted to report another very successful year for St. Vincent's. And despite the expected and unexpected challenges we have faced over the last 12 months, we have continued to improve our services, supporting more people in need and helping more people out of poverty than ever before.

Our main and very much unexpected challenge was to find suitable new premises following the ending of our lease on York Road.



Despite having to find an additional and unbudgeted £84,000 to fund the move and refurbishment of our new premises, our financial position remains strong, with good reserves securing our position through to at least March '17. We have taken a long term positive view of our position and our plans reflect both our intention to improve still further our leading edge services, as well as the income generated through our commercial operations. Our shop, not as yet fully up and running, is already ahead of its Q1 budget.

We would not be in this strong position without the continued support of our many donors, funders and sponsors, very much including Land Securities, the owners of the Trinity Shopping Centre, BACIL, Trinity University, Leeds

Community Foundation, The Henry Smith Foundation, Advice Leeds / Financial Inclusion Fund, Kevin Rowse, Manchester City Council, Eversheds Solicitors, ICM Creative, our Landlord- Willow Grove Properties as well as the Big Lottery Fund., Marks & Spencers & British Gas

I would also like to mention all of our staff and volunteers, all of whom rose to the massive challenges of the last year, especially those centred around the premises move, and without whose unstinting help and perseverance the year would not have been so successful.

I am very proud to lead our Management Committee. They have used to the full their diversity of talents and backgrounds and have actively participated in helping make this year turn out so positively, both operationally and financially.

And, as always, a very grateful thanks to the SVP, our national organisation, in particular our National Office and Trustees, West Yorkshire Community Support Projects, our very generous Leeds Central Council, not forgetting all of the local Conferences, as well as the Church Communities they are part of, both in Leeds and throughout Yorkshire, who continue to support and guide us in many different ways.

For Sheena, our new Centre Manager, I am sure it has been at times a baptism of fire, but I am delighted to report that together with all of our experienced and committed Departmental Heads, Sheena has ensured that a sound platform has been established for the next chapter in our history.

All of us at St. Vincent's look forward to the exciting times ahead. We will continue to develop joint initiatives with our sister SVP projects in West Yorkshire, as well as ensuring that we continue to deliver the very unique services the St Vincent's Support Centre in Leeds has pioneered.

**Thank you for being part of our success story and journey. *George Skalski***

# Financial Summary



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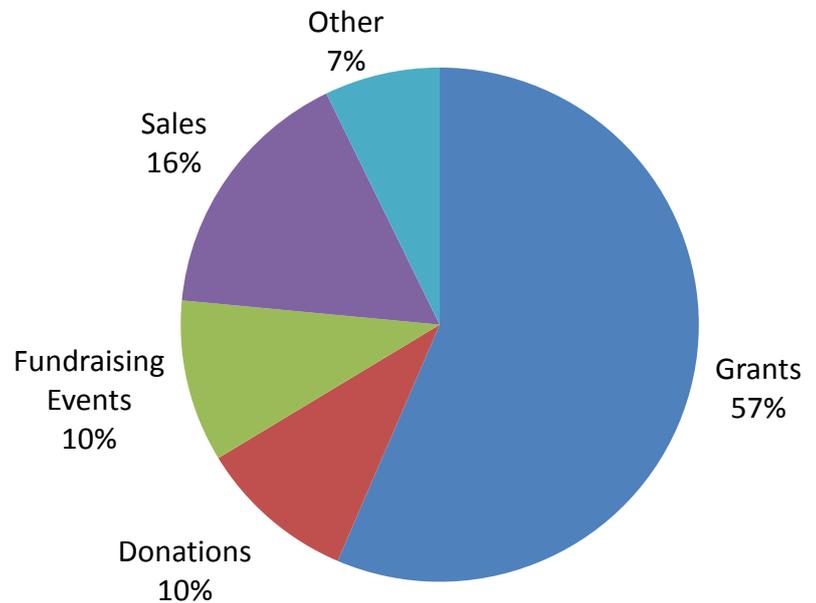
## Overview of the year

In the year ended 31 March 2016 St Vincent's achieved a total income of £404,928 (Restricted £247,314) and incurred costs of £430,045 (Restricted £249,452) giving a deficit of £25,117.

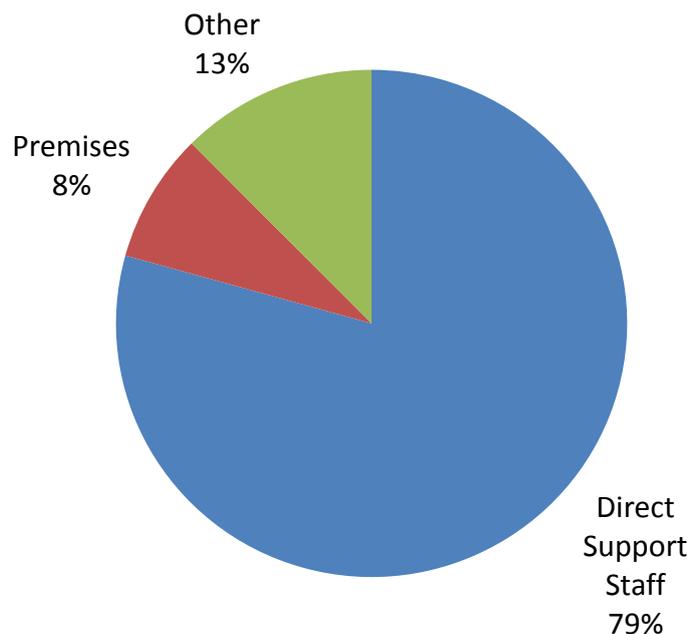
**Total Funds at year end were £242,453 (Restricted £33,995). This level of reserves represents 7 months running costs.**

**We would like to recognise the generous support of our funders, especially the Big Lottery Fund, Money Advice Service and Leeds Community Foundation**

## INCOME



## EXPENDITURE



# Quarterly Report



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### Quarter 1

Quarter 1 saw the handover of the centre from Charlotte to Sheena as manager- it was the end of a long and extremely successful era with Charlotte at the helm and everyone at the centre was sad to see her go but wished her every success for her future.

We celebrated National Volunteer week in June and held our annual recognition event which was very well attended by staff and volunteers- we couldn't make the centre work without our great team of people that give up their time for free to help others.

As in previous years, the annual SVP 3 Peak Challenge took place in June with supporters battling their way to the top in very high winds- well done everyone!



*This year we:*  
Delivered 6000 learning sessions, helping over 700 students through ESOL, IT and Literacy

### Quarter 2:

We had a very busy quarter with a number of partnership events and activities taking place- we held a 2 day Vintage & Retro Fair at Leeds Trinity shopping centre which was great fun and also helped raise some funds and awareness to shoppers who came to pick up a quirky bargain.

We also piloted British Gas Energy Bingo which was the first of a number of fun and informative events delivered by the British Gas team- they have been great supporters of St Vincent's and we were delighted to offer our help when shaping the activity.

September also saw the Working Wardrobe initiative come to St Vincent's as we worked together with Business in the Community – this proved very popular with people coming to our employability sessions and we look forward to developing this further.

The annual sponsored walk took place in September and once again we were joined by young and old to enjoy a walk around the reservoir at Eccup- a great way to spend the afternoon and also raise funds for the centre.

We attended the SVP National Conference which was a great way to meet new people and also promote the amazing work that is done every day at the centre.

Quarter 2 saw Basharat Hussain join us as Income Maximization officer and he has made a great difference to the support that we can offer our clients.



*This year we:*  
Helped 853 clients with debt advice.



*This year we:*  
Sold over 3100 books to customers in our Community Shop

# Quarterly Report



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### Quarter 3:

Another busy period at St Vincent`s! We discovered that we needed to find a new home and so the search began to find a new home – in the right area and the right size to host all of the services.

In amongst the search, business continued as normal.

We held our first Halloween half term community fun day which was as a result of a volunteer recognising that the community had nothing to attend with young children in the school holiday. We had a great day which was very well attended – and lots of fun with games, activities and even some cobwebs and spiders made by the arts group.

December was, as always, a very busy period with our Christmas campaign seeing over 300 people helped with food parcels and gifts, a lovely day with games and a free Santa`s grotto which saw local families coming to enjoy the festive spirit with Santa himself!

Wetherby fair was also a great success – raising funds for the centre whilst having a great community event. On Christmas Day, 20 people joined us for a festive meal at the centre: A busy but very rewarding month!

### Quarter 4:

We were joined by Laura Tomlinson who came to work with us as an intern from Leeds Trinity University. We have an excellent partnership with the university and we became the first external organisation to host an intern.

The St Vincent`s Team was also enhanced when Sheena Hockley ( yes, another Sheena!) joined us as Debt Advisor- she came to us when we were in the middle of the move and so we are glad that she stayed through the disruption.

The Spring Ball took place in March – another glittering event which saw many of our supporters enjoy an evening of good food and some great dancing!

And finally .... A new home identified, just a short walk from the old centre...and so the move was on. 6 years of furniture, resources and history needed packing while service delivery continued unaffected. The team at St Vincent`s pulled out all of the stops to make sure that this happened. The planning and development of the new centre was assisted by so many people including a planning group and some new volunteers that supported us with their expertise and willingness to help shape the new place whilst happily helping to pack boxes- we are just so grateful for our fabulous volunteers.



*This year we:*  
Our Debt Team dealt with £4,942,462 worth of debt



*This year we:*  
Helped 45 long term unemployed people back into work.



Photo from Spring Ball 2016.  
Special thanks to NV Photography

*This year we:*  
Helped over 300 people at our migrant drop in service

#### A letter from Debbie Morgan, debt advice client.

This is from my heart,

I was struggling to cope with the death of my husband and losing my job, due to ill health.

My life was in a dark place, and I got told about St Vincent's. As soon, as I walked through the door, I was welcomed with open arms - They helped me financially and personally, I will never forget the network support from all the staff.

The staff and volunteers, do above and beyond, I call that being human, even though they have their own life's troubles, The ongoing support has helped me bring light back into my life and my son.

You will never know how much all your help as meant - It's such a community spirit keep up the brilliant work Debbie Morgan

# Thank You



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## Funders:



## Supporters:

