



acorn
PREGNANCY
COUNSELLING CENTRE

Annual Report 2023

Acorn's "Significant Impact"

Impact on Clients, Impact in Schools

"The counselling has had a significant impact on my life. It helped me through the darkest and most difficult time. It was essential to my emotional recovery and I am so grateful I could access it"

"Talking to a non-judgemental impartial person who was experienced in this area was particularly helpful. I had previously spoken to a therapist who did not have this experience and made me feel much worse"

"I am alive. I might not have been without this"

"There is nothing of equal value available from anyone else"

These are quotes from two of the counselling clients we have seen in the last year. Our schools team have received similar praise:

"Feedback from the students has been first class. We particularly value your non-judgemental approach and you always respond to questions that arise with kindness and compassion. You make a significant difference to our students"

"Supporting our students in this way means the world"

Richard Marshall, Chairman.

April 2023

Acorn Pregnancy Counselling Centre

Annual Report 22/3

Charity 1094389



See you at the
AGM on Mon 5 June, 7pm!
At Pilgrim House
RSVP

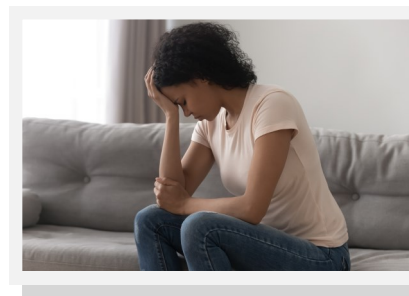




Acorn Counselling

Record numbers of pregnancy loss clients

This year more people have come to Acorn for counselling than ever before. Clients continue to be offered a choice of face-to-face, telephone or on-line counselling alternatives.



Who we helped

307 Counselling sessions

98 clients made contact with us during the year of which 52 came to appointments. 4 of these were for crisis pregnancy counselling, with some 48 clients seen for up to 12 weeks of pregnancy loss counselling sessions each (predominantly miscarriage and abortion). In total 307 x 1 hour sessions with clients were held.

How they found Acorn

Over the past year the main sources of referral have been:

- 31% Time to Talk
- 21% Website/social media
- 18% GPs

Counselling team

Our counselling service has been provided by a team of 4 counselling volunteers including Jean Burden a fully qualified counsellor who joined during the year. Angela Watt has continued to provide fortnightly supervision to the team. Angela also conducts all the initial assessments of clients with Wendy Marshall doing this in her absence.

"I am alive. I might not have been without this."

Client

Seeking more counselling volunteers

Training potential team members

Early in the year we completed a 10 week pregnancy loss training course led by Gillian Woodward and Wendy Marshall for 3 potential counselling volunteers. We are hopeful that in the future one or more of them will be a position to join the team.

Trustees Looking into ways of attracting volunteers

Our ability to meet client needs and numbers is entirely dependent on the counselling team. To provide the quality, professional service that has been a feature of Acorn over the years requires training and experience needing motivation but also time and funding. The trustees are currently looking into different ways of attracting and retaining counselling volunteers for the future to ensure continued provision of the service.



Acorn Schools work

Visiting 10 local schools!

This year the schools team have continued to visit 10 schools in the Worthing area (Angmering, Bohunt, Davison, Durrington High, St Andrews, Shoreham Academy, Sion, Steyning Grammar, The Littlehampton Academy and Worthing High) providing some 90 x 1 hour sessions to year 10 students.



Acorn appreciated by staff and students

Many thanks as ever to Steph Spanner and her enthusiastic team who provide such a key service for so many young people. We know how much they are appreciated from the high praise received from both staff and students alike.

Saying goodbye

We say goodbye this year to one of our schools team assistants Chris Cross. Many thanks for your help, we know you will stay committed to the charity through your prayers.



"Feedback from the students has been first class. We particularly value your non-judgemental approach and you always respond to questions that arise with kindness and compassion."

Teacher

Acorn premises

We're thankful for Pilgrim House!

We remain based from our office and counselling room at Pilgrim House. We continue to be thankful for these excellent premises including use of the upstairs conference room and prayer room which we use for meetings including our forthcoming AGM.

Our sunny counselling room





Finance



Thanks to our donors

Clients and schools' donations are encouraging

Whilst overall income decreased slightly this was due to a reduction in grant income. There has been an encouraging growth in general donations and in particular both client and schools donations. During the year we installed a card reader machine in the counselling room to make it easier for clients to give if they want to. This was funded by Worthing Community Chest and we are grateful to them and to Arnold Clark Community Fund and Green Hills Christian Trust for grants provided.

Given the importance of establishing whether a potential client is appropriate for the counselling service provided by Acorn, we now pay Acorn's supervisor for the assessments undertaken.

Overall there was a deficit of expenditure over income met from existing reserves held which remain at a healthy level.

Ordering online through Easyfundraising to support Acorn

With the withdrawal of Amazon Smile as a simple way of adding (albeit small) income to the charity, we are now one of the many charities registered with Easyfundraising. Please become a supporter of Acorn through Easyfundraising by visiting www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/acorn-pregnancy-cc/

Thanks to the finance team

Many thanks to our finance team of Patrick Woodward (Treasurer), Debbie Squires (bookkeeper) and Andrew Kean (independent examiner).

"Supporting our students in this way means the world"

Teacher



Acorn Centre



Centre Management

Conference time!

Angela Geach has continued to work as our part time (12 hours per week) employed Centre Manager. This is a key role amongst other things being the first point of contact for any client. We are grateful for Angela's caring manner, creativity, diligence and commitment.

This year Angela has attended the annual Pregnancy Centres Network conference and quarterly regional meetings providing relevant feedback to the trustees.



Acorn Trustees and Patron



Five trustees

During the year there have been 5 trustees – my co-trustees being Paul Cross, Pam Denman, Patrick Woodward and Gillian Woodward. Pam and Gillian will be seeking re-election for another 3 year term at our forthcoming AGM. We meet at regular intervals through the year and exchange views and information at any point as the need arises.

Thanks to our patron

Tim Fooks continues as Acorn's patron. We are grateful to have him in this role as a wise and experienced reference point.

Official bodies

Acorn continues to be registered with the Fundraising Regulator and remains a member of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations and of the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy.

Communication



Acorn website and social media

The website and social media presence remain important sources of communication for us and we will continue to step up activity levels in the coming year as we realise the ever growing importance of this medium.

Keeping everyone up to date

Our monthly mailing continues to keep supporters up to date and our quarterly newsletters available for download from the website are also sent to former clients who wish to keep in touch.

We continue to keep the church community of Worthing informed about the work with regular updates sent to ministers. In June we did a presentation of the work of Acorn to the Deanery Synod meeting comprising some 30 local Anglican ministers and representatives.

Stands at local events

We participated in Baby loss awareness and Worthing Mental Health Awareness weeks including provision of an advertising stand in a local Co-op supermarket.

The monthly prayer meetings are attended by a committed core group and we also have a WhatsApp group to keep those interested in praying for the work of Acorn more immediately up to date with needs.



We remain closely in touch with other similar West Sussex-based pregnancy counselling groups but also promote the work of Acorn through other groups including a local bereavement forum.

Acorn presentation at Worthing Mental Health Awareness Week



The Future

Need for Acorn has increased

Visiting 10 secondary schools in the Worthing area means we are reaching most of the young people in Worthing which is fantastic.

However, the 2021 Census provides some significant and sobering data regarding the potential need for Acorn's counselling services.

This past year was Acorn's busiest ever for counselling with some 97 referrals and 47 clients seen.

23,000 potential clients!

However, the Census data implies that there are probably around 23,000 women in Worthing aged 18-60 who have experienced either an abortion, miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or stillbirth. Whilst it may be that not all of these women or their partners would value Acorn's services, it is quite clear that we are just 'scratching the surface' of the need.

Meeting our vision

To meet our vision of 'the Worthing area to be a place in which no one has to experience pregnancy loss or unintended pregnancy unsupported', we need to communicate Acorn's existence better and ensure that we have the trained counselling volunteers available to see those who come forward for counselling.

Richard Marshall, Chairman. April 2023



Can you Volunteer?



Acorn volunteers make a "Significant difference"!

Our volunteers are special people, in fact schools and clients find their work "Significant!"

Could you help?

We are looking to increase our volunteer numbers particularly for counselling and schools. If you would like to join our fantastic volunteer team, please let us know. ★

Counselling volunteer
Church friend

School's team
Fundraiser

Admin
Donor

Treasurer
Prayer partner

Trustee
Member

Like a visit from Acorn?



If you'd like Acorn to speak to a group you're involved in (church group? social club?), or for Acorn's Schools team to visit your school's year 10 students, do get in touch. ★

★ office@acornworthing.org.uk



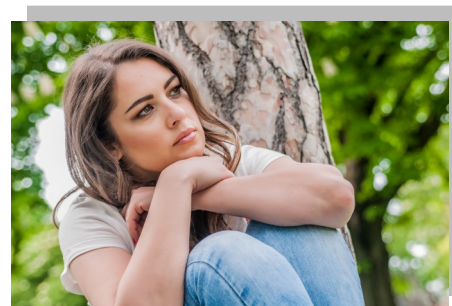
Acorn Charitable Objects

Summary of the objects of the charity as set out in its governing document:

To educate people on the subject of pregnancy and the termination of pregnancy and its effects.

To preserve and protect women's health and to provide advice, counselling and assistance to women and their families who are suffering from any effects or distress as a result of pregnancy or following an abortion, miscarriage, cot death, still birth, or loss of a child.

A summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects is contained in this report.



Administrative information

Name of charity:	Acorn Pregnancy Counselling Centre Limited
Registered Charity Number:	1094389
Company registration number:	04407431
Registered office :	Pilgrim House, St Dunstan's Road, Worthing, BN13 1AA
Trustees:	Richard Marshall (Chair), Patrick Woodward, Gillian Woodward, Pam Denman, Paul Cross
Company secretary:	Patrick Woodward
Treasurer:	Patrick Woodward
Centre Manager:	Angela Geach
Independent Examiner:	Andrew Kean
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank, South Street, Worthing

Contact Acorn

Email:	office@acornworthing.org.uk
Phone:	01903 823893
Website:	acornworthing.org.uk



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