

OXFORDSHIRE ADVOCACY

Registered Charity Number: 1131403

Company Number: 06845465

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2013

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Full name of Charity: Oxfordshire Advocacy

Governing Documents:

Memorandum of Association of Oxfordshire Advocacy
Articles of Association of Oxfordshire Advocacy

Charity Registration Number: 1131403

Company Number: 06845465

Manager: Jez Newall (to August 2012)
Louise Cooper (from November 2012)

Trustees:

Hilary Pogge	Chair
Amer Akbar	Joined June 2012
Hilary Beale	
Martyn Bishop	Resigned June 2012
Anne Cowell	
Larry Gardiner	Resigned June 2013
Robert Mathers	
Diana Roberts	Resigned June 2012
Hilary Walker	

Registered Office:

Oxfordshire Advocacy
Barton Neighbourhood Centre
Underhill Circus
Barton, Oxford
OX3 9LS

Website: www.gettingheard.org

Email: oadg@oadg.org.uk

Bankers:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner

G White ACMA
41 Gibson Close
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 1XS

The Trustees of Oxfordshire Advocacy are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

What is Oxfordshire Advocacy (OA)?

OA is an Oxfordshire based charity providing a free, confidential and independent advocacy service. OA supports people to say what they want, to secure their rights and services and to represent their interests. Advocates argue their case for them, or help them to speak up for themselves, so that their views are heard and taken into account. Advocates support people to write letters, make telephone calls, research information, attend meetings and appointments. An advocate will work in a one to one partnership with the person whom s/he supports.

Purposes and aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association are to:

- Develop advocacy services in order to address disadvantage experienced by people who due to illness, physical or sensory impairments, learning disabilities, financial hardship, mental distress, dementia, old age, incapacity, race, homelessness or other issues need advocacy support.
- Assist individuals and groups in empowerment, inclusion and protection of rights through representation of their views.
- Promote awareness of and understanding of advocacy practice.
- Promote the recruitment and training of volunteer advocates.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous 12 months. This review will focus on the successes of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help.

The focus of our work

Our work splits into two complementary areas: Generic Advocacy and Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy.

1 Generic advocacy service

We provide this service for adults in Oxfordshire both on an instructed i.e. the person can communicate their needs and wants, and a non-instructed basis. Non-instructed advocacy is used only when it becomes apparent that it is not possible to find out what the advocacy partner wants or prefers. Every effort will be made to

communicate with the person and to understand their communication. Only when this is not possible will the advocate begin to work in a non-instructed way i.e. closely observing their behaviour. Our aim is to ensure that people who need our services remain at the centre of any decisions made around their life and to support their carers to ensure they get all the services they need.

"It doesn't take too much clairvoyance to see that someone who is pacing up and down a corridor, staring out of the window and pounding her fist against the wall with a nurse saying 'No Jane, you can't go out' needs someone who can ask 'Why can't Jane go out?'"

Within this service we provide:

Dementia advocacy - to support people of all ages living with dementia and dementia like disorders. Although the majority of people are older, the issues are applicable to all age groups who are affected in this way. It is important to get to know and understand their wishes through a variety of means including photographs, past and present interests indicating a lifestyle and representing these to ensure that the person is kept at the centre of any decision making process.

Advocacy for people with a learning disability – to support adults to participate in making decisions and being heard on issues including housing benefits, accessing leisure, employment and training opportunities, the future care of their child, end of life planning and self-directed support.

Short term advocacy – provides advocacy to people and their carers enabling them to remain independent and more in control of their own lives. This can include attending benefit tribunals, resolving housing, accommodation and employment issues, supporting people going to court who have no access to legal aid or support, accessing primary care and mental health services, helping them to access education and training opportunities. We have also offered drop-in surgeries to provide opportunities for early referral to prevent a situation deteriorating.

During 2012/13 we received 389 enquiries overall for this service, 284 of which became advocacy partnerships. This represents a conversion rate of 73% which demonstrates a good level of appropriate referrals to the service overall. In addition, we signposted 20 individuals to other services which were more appropriate to their needs and gave relevant information to 83 people.

Training and supporting volunteer advocates – To maximise our effectiveness, OA trains and supports a bank of volunteer advocates who work alongside individuals or 'partners' to ensure that their voices are heard. Annually, our volunteers contribute around 2,000 support hours, including undertaking initial training and also follow on training covering topics like domestic violence and mental health. Volunteers are a vital part of our service and without them we would be unable to respond to the number of people who urgently need our services.

At present we have a bank of 39 trained volunteers of whom about two thirds are active at any time, and they undertook 241 partnerships out of 284 over the past year. This represents 85% of all partnerships that Oxfordshire Advocacy undertook during 2012/13.

Volunteers have participated in a range of advocacy partnerships over the past year. Some examples of these have included:

- Helping a man with severe depression to attend a medical assessment to check his eligibility for benefits
- A young woman with a learning disability to express her wishes about the future care of her child
- A young woman who had a severe stroke and was unable to say whether she wanted to return to her partner's or her parent's home when she was discharged from hospital.

Volunteers have supported people to make end of life plans both in terms of medical care, but also funeral arrangements and helped people struggling to access enough support so they can continue to look after their loved ones who have long term medical conditions at home.

Volunteers support Oxfordshire Advocacy in other ways too. This year we have had volunteers putting significant time and supporting with the following:

- Marketing / attending events / awareness raising.
- ICT Hardware and software planning and development.
- Database design and architecture.
- Support with volunteer training and training facilitation.

Oxfordshire Advocacy Volunteers share their experiences

"I get a warm glow inside as I walk back to my car when a partner says that they couldn't possibly have got the (positive) result that was achieved without our support. That makes the effort worthwhile."

"Advocacy can be challenging but I enjoy the creativity involved in solving those challenges. For example, making up picture games to allow someone with limited understanding and verbal communication abilities to think about their choices and to express their wishes as far as possible. I think volunteer advocacy is hugely beneficial, not only for the individuals who are given the support they need to play an active role in directing their lives, but also for the advocates themselves, by allowing them to appreciate the skills (e.g. reasoning, assertiveness, effective and confident communication) that they may otherwise take for granted."

"Many of us take for granted that we can get our point of view across in most circumstances - we are used to being heard. But for those who lack that ability life can be a daily struggle. Working as an advocate is at the same time extremely

humbling but also hugely rewarding. I derive huge satisfaction seeing my partners' relief at being really heard as a result of the support which advocacy offers."

Volunteer networking groups

During 2012/13, we successfully established two volunteer networking groups in the north and south of the county where they can share good practice and find mutual support. They arrange their own meetings and feedback to OA's Volunteer Co-ordinator where any issues can be drawn to the attention of OA's manager and trustees.

2 Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy Service (IMCA)

Oxfordshire Advocacy has provided the IMCA service since April 2007. The service has been led by two Mental Capacity Act Leads and supported by the rest of the team. All OA's Advocacy Coordinators are trained IMCAs. IMCAs are an independent voice for people who lack capacity to make specific decisions, when that decision is being taken for them by other professionals and they have no friends or family to be consulted on their behalf. The role acts as a safeguard to ensure that best interest decision making is carried out for these individuals and that their wishes and feelings are represented, as far as this is possible, and taken into account.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS): Under DOLS the role of paid Relevant Person's Representative (RPR) has been developed. When the individual being deprived has no friends or family, a paid RPR is requested. This is very much an advocacy role and OA uses both the staff and recruits from the volunteers pool, ensuring that those undertaking it are trained in the Mental Capacity Act and DOLS.

OA has continued to provide the IMCA service. The number of eligible referrals during the year was 92. There were 44 DOLS authorisations received from the supervisory body all of which were acted upon within stipulated guidelines. The number of referrals has decreased due to lower numbers of IMCA DOLS referrals. However the core IMCA work has increased therefore increasing IMCA casework hours, particularly during the final quarter of the year. This was largely due to the local authorities' sudden decision to withdraw their clients from two care homes. This resulted in 8 IMCA referrals in a matter of 2-3 days.

IMCA leads have been committed to ensuring promotion of the service and the continuing professional development for all IMCA caseworkers and paid RPRs.

Other key activities undertaken in the marketing and implementation of the service were:

- Promotion of service through contacts and participation with the Safeguarding Adults Manager, Oxford Health, NHS Foundation Trust.
- Promotion of service through contact and participation with Faiers Mental Capacity Act Training to OCC decision makers.
- Networking with the Mental Capacity Act South East Forum.
- Attendance at Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board sub group for DOLS.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

Our main activities and who we help are set out above. All our charitable activities focus on ensuring that vulnerable adults in Oxfordshire have their rights recognised and their views and wishes taken into account in decisions which affect their lives. This involves providing trained advocates who can either argue the individuals' cases for them or help them to speak up for themselves.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Oxfordshire Advocacy (OA) is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated on 12 March 2009 and then registered with the Charity Commission on 27 August 2009. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees are trustees for the purpose of charity law and directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.

Potential new Trustees are interviewed by the Chair who provides them with a Trustee induction pack, and those wishing to be considered are invited to attend a Trustee meeting as an observer, to meet the Trustees and ask any questions about the role. Those then wishing to become a member are voted on by the existing Board of Trustees. Trustees act as individuals and do not represent or act on behalf of another group. The current board has a broad mix of skills and experience for a charity of this size, including legal, financial, advocacy, social work and the health service.

In addition to an induction provided by the chair, new trustees are encouraged to participate in the three day initial training in advocacy that we provide for our volunteer advocates to deepen their understanding of our work.

Organisational structure

OA's trustees currently meet 12 times a year and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity.

The day to day provision of services rests with OA's Manager. She is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that scheme objectives are met. The manager also has responsibility for the day to day operational management of the organisation, supervision of the six members of the staff team and also ensuring that the team (and by extension our volunteer advocates) continue to develop their skills and working practices in line with legislative changes and good practice overall.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the incoming resources and application of resources during the year and its state of affairs at the end of the year. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- follow applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Summary of Investment Powers

There are no limitations in the Trustees' powers of investment.

Risk Management

The Trustees have reviewed the major risks that the charity faces, and systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Significant risks in relation to our main funding source will be mitigated by the recruitment of a part time fundraising officer who will focus on seeking grants and donations from trusts and foundations and the Big Lottery Fund. Increased partnership working will also ensure the diversification of our activities overall. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are also in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers and partners. All these procedures are reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Independent Examiner

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that G White be re-appointed as independent examiner for the ensuing year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Statements: The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Statement of Recommended Practice (Accounting and Reporting by Charities) (SORP 2005) and the charity's governing document.

Overview: The accounts show a deficit in the financial year of £24,578. Total incoming resources were £143,284 compared to the previous year's total of £154,195. Expenditure has increased by just £695 from £167,167 to £167,862.

Unrestricted Fund: The deficit on unrestricted funds in the year has reduced from £21,585 to £15,058.

Restricted Funds: The deficit on restricted funds in the year was £9,520.

Reserves Policy: The trustees have set a policy which aims to have unrestricted reserves sufficient to cover three month's core running costs and costs of closure. Trustees estimate this would give a target of unrestricted reserves at March 2013 of £60,000 compared to actual unrestricted reserves of £79,950.

Signed for and on behalf of the Trustees


.....
Hilary Beale

Trustee

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF OXFORDSHIRE ADVOCACY**

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2013, which are set out on pages 10 to 15.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed  Date 2016/2013

Mr G White, ACMA
41 Gibson Close
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 1XS

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2013	Total Funds 2012
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds		63,591	17,277	80,868	85,680
Incoming resources from charitable activities		62,286	0	62,286	68,155
Other incoming resources	4	130	0	130	360
Total incoming resources	6	126,007	17,277	143,284	154,195
RESOURCES USED					
Cost of generating funds		1,530	0	1,530	5,973
Charitable activities		137,740	26,678	164,418	159,795
Governance costs		1,278	0	1,278	975
Other resources used		517	119	636	424
Total resources used	5	141,065	26,797	167,862	167,167
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(15,058)	(9,520)	(24,578)	(12,972)
FUNDS BROUGHT-FORWARD		95,008	10,613	105,621	118,593
FUNDS CARRIED-FORWARD		79,950	1,093	81,043	105,621

OXFORDSHIRE ADVOCACY
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2013

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2013

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2013	Total Funds 2012
		£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank and in hand		70,804	2,087	72,891	102,688
Debtors		20,332	0	20,332	14,077
Total		91,136	2,087	93,223	116,765
LIABILITIES					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	10	11,186	994	12,180	11,144
NET ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES	11	79,950	1,093	81,043	105,621
REPRESENTED BY:					
Unrestricted Funds		79,950	0	79,950	95,008
Restricted Funds		0	1,093	1,093	10,613
TOTAL FUNDS	11	79,950	1,093	81,043	105,621

The notes on Pages 12 to 15 form part of these financial statements.

Audit Exemption Statement

For the year ended 31 March 2013 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' Responsibilities

- the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts
- these accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 26th June 2013 and signed for and on behalf of the Trustees

H.A. Beale
.....
Hilary Beale
Trustee

Registered Company number :06845465

1. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the Financial Statements are detailed in the paragraphs below.

1.1 Accounting Convention The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and are in accordance with applicable accounting standards. In preparing the financial statements, the Charity follows best practice as set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2005 (SORP 2005) commencing 1 April 2005.

1.2 Funds Accounting In accordance with the SORP the funds have been analysed under the following specific headings:

1.2.1 Unrestricted Funds These funds are available for any purpose within the aims and objectives specified in the governing documents. Unrestricted funds can still be designated for specific purposes.

1.2.2 Restricted Funds Restricted Funds must be spent on the purpose specified by the donor.

1.3 Incoming Resources Income is recognised when received, or when due under a legally enforceable contract.

1.4 Resources Expended and Basis of Allocation of Costs Expenditure is included on an accruals basis. Costs directly attributable to a specific charitable activity have been charged to that activity.

1.5 Governance Costs Governance costs represent the costs associated with the strategic management of the Charity.

1.6 Capitalisation and Depreciation of Tangible Fixed Assets All assets purchased from unrestricted funds and costing more than £500 are capitalised. Assets purchased from Restricted Funds are written off in the year of purchase.

Office equipment is written off by the straight line method over its useful life of 5 years.

1.7 Tax Status As a registered charity, the company is exempt from taxation other than Value Added Tax.

2. CHANGES TO PREVIOUS YEAR'S ACCOUNTING POLICIES

2.1 Support costs have been allocated to funds in proportion to hours worked by staff on the various funds. In 2011/12 only direct costs were allocated to funds.

3. NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES

Net incoming resources are stated after charging:	2013	2012
	£	£
Independent Examiner's remuneration	200	150

4. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	2013	2012
	£	£
Sundry Income	130	360

5. ANALYSIS OF TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED

	2013	2012
	£	£
Cost of generating funds	1,530	5,973
Charitable activities		
General advocacy work	113,593	126,898
Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)	24,147	23,661
Advocacy Work (funded by TSB)	16,700	0
IT Systems Upgrade	6,610	0
Volunteer Training	3,368	9,236
Governance	1,278	975
Other resources used	636	424
Total Resources Expended	<u>£167,862</u>	<u>£167,167</u>

The amount shown under IMCA represents the cost of co-ordinator time and expenses. The grant also covers management time and related expenses, which have been included in General Advocacy work.

6. ANALYSIS OF INCOMING RESOURCES

	2013	2012
	£	£
Grant – Oxfordshire Social and Community Services	49,168	49,168
Oxfordshire County Council IMCA service	60,996	61,000
Oxfordshire County Council / Learning Disability Partnership Board	12,728	12,763
Lloyds TSB Foundation	16,700	0
Other grants	2,127	22,250
Donations	0	1,345
Advocacy income	1,290	7,155
Bank interest	145	154
Other	130	360
Total	<u>£143,284</u>	<u>£154,195</u>

7. EMPLOYEE COSTS

	2013 £	2012 £
7.1 Staff costs:		
Salaries	106,012	111,633
National Insurance costs	6,978	7,915
	<u>£112,990</u>	<u>£119,548</u>

7.2 No employee received more than £60,000 per annum.

7.3 The average number of employees during the year, calculated on a full time equivalent basis, was 4.1 which compares with 4.4 in the previous year. This figure is based on paid contracted hours, whereas the costs at 7.1 include overtime.

8. RESERVES

Total Reserves as at 31st March 2013:

	2013 £	2012 £
Unrestricted funds	79,950	95,008
Less:		
Unrestricted Funds which could only be realised by disposal of fixed assets held for charity use.	0	0
Total Reserves	<u>£79,950</u>	<u>£ 95,008</u>

9. TANGIBLE ASSETS

Fixed assets have all been fully depreciated.

10. LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2013 £	2012 £
Operating creditors	10,405	7,656
Social security and other taxes	1,775	3,488
	<u>£12,180</u>	<u>£11,144</u>

11. FUNDS

The table below is a summary of the transactions in the year on the various funds. IT Development and Training still retains balances because the restricted grants have yet to be fully spent. Deficits on all the other funds have been met by transferring funds from the General Fund.

	Balance brought forward	Net Incoming/ (Outgoing) Resources Before Transfers	Transfers	Balance carried forward
Unrestricted Funds	£	£	£	£
General	95,008	(51,907)	36,849	79,950
IMCA	0	36,849	(36,849)	0
Total Unrestricted	95,008	(15,058)	0	79,950
Restricted Funds				
IT Systems Upgrade	7,000	(6,610)	0	390
Advocacy	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Training	3,613	(3,487)	0	126
Other	0	577	0	577
Total Restricted Funds	10,613	(9,520)	0	1,093
Total Funds	105,621	(24,578)	0	81,043

12. NET ASSETS.

The Trustees consider that the net assets available are adequate to enable the charity to fulfil its obligations.

13. TRUSTEES' EXPENSES AND EMOLUMENTS.

Payments were made to three trustees during the year to cover actual costs of expenses incurred, together with travel costs paid within the rates approved by HMRC. The total costs incurred were:

2013	2012
£	£
<u>£513</u>	<u>£811</u>