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Annual Report 2009/10





The PSU provides practical and emotional support to litigants in person, their friends, families and supporters, and other court users. The work we do is unique. We do not give legal advice, but volunteers invest their time, skills and energy to solve clients' problems.

Teams of trained and highly skilled volunteers work in PSU offices in the Royal Courts of Justice, the Principal Registry of the Family Division, Manchester Civil Justice Centre and Wandsworth County Court. Whether it is filling in forms, guiding clients around the building, telephoning other support agencies or accompanying litigants into court, we provide an outstanding instant-access service.

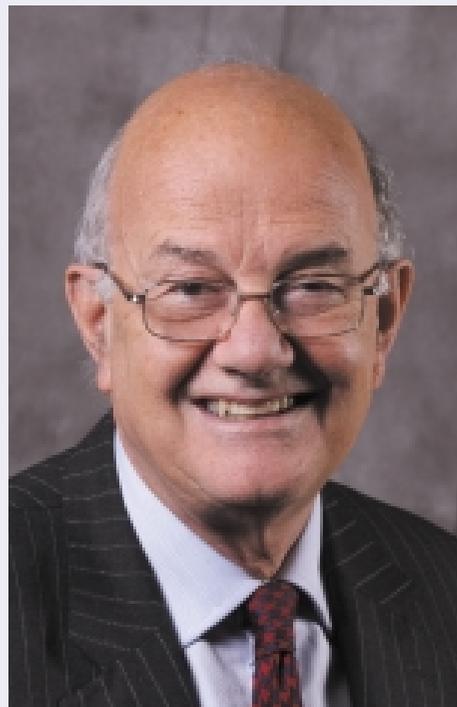
It is a straightforward idea, but very effective, and our service is free, confidential, independent and open to all. Clients can telephone, drop-in, make an appointment, or write to us. It is a point of pride that we see clients immediately.

Core activities include:

- attending court with clients;
- preparing litigants for hearings;
- helping them find and fill in the correct legal forms;
- guiding people around the complex court buildings;
- referring individuals to other specialist agencies.

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In last year's Annual Report I wrote, "I urge you all who read this to lend your support to the invaluable service provided by the PSU". I repeat this sentiment, and strongly emphasise it, at a time when the PSU begins further expansion and development.

I have recently chaired a meeting of the Judges' Council which has enthusiastically endorsed plans for the opening of PSU Cardiff. We must hope that funds will be raised quickly because, as in every court in which they operate, the PSU volunteers and the unique help they offer to litigants in person will be most welcome.

It can be difficult to understand why this work is as important as it is.

PSU volunteers are men and women vested with qualities of empathy, pluck and common sense, who help litigants in person with their very many and varied problems. It is rewarding work. It is especially helpful for those aspiring to become barristers and solicitors because of the practical training opportunities offered. Working at the PSU enables them to develop and enhance their skills before going into practice. From their point of view, they are exposed to the realities of litigation, as seen through the eyes of an individual who is unrepresented but who has a complaint he or she wishes to draw to the attention of the court.

Often, however, litigants in person do not understand the processes, and the volunteers who work with the PSU can help reduce their confusion, address their anxieties, and enable them to present their cases with a degree of coherence which might otherwise be missing. This enhances the processes for them, and saves a considerable amount of court and judicial resources. In short, we all benefit.

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Judge

Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales

July 2010



Although the last year's financial crisis has affected most charities, the PSU has not only prospered but continued to expand, develop and plan for growth. It has been our busiest year on record and support has been given to 5,857 clients.

This has to be a ringing endorsement of the valuable contribution made by our team of energetic, skilled and caring volunteers who facilitate access to justice for unrepresented litigants. It is also an acknowledgement of the ongoing appreciation and encouragement our service receives from both the judiciary and Her Majesty's Court Service.

Over 30,000 clients have been supported since we set up in 2001, but if we are to provide assistance to everyone in need in the civil courts throughout the country, we still have a long way to go. To help achieve this we have strengthened our Board of Trustees and welcomed Lord Justice Lloyd as our new Liaison Judge in the Royal Courts of Justice. He succeeds Lord Justice Dyson who has recently been appointed to the Supreme Court and who has accepted our invitation to become a Patron of the PSU.

Looking ahead to 2011 when we celebrate our 10th birthday, we plan to open a new unit in Cardiff and to expand our service in Manchester. To secure the necessary funding for this development we have recruited a full time fundraiser who is applying to trusts and foundations and our successful and ever growing Friends' scheme contributed nearly £25,000 last year as well.

We still remain the only charity providing essential non-legal assistance to distressed and vulnerable people in the civil and family courts. However, to achieve our aim of establishing a Personal Support Unit in every civil court in the land, there is still much to do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diana Copisarow".

Diana Copisarow
Chairman

We never forget the terror faced by our clients as they arrive at court without a lawyer. Every day, thousands of people go through our civil and family courts on their own, and at risk of losing their home, their children or their livelihoods, or even their right to stay in the UK. And their numbers are increasing rapidly. We are determined to grow to meet the demand. We know that all over the country there are many willing would-be volunteers (law students and those mid-career or towards the end of a professional life) and the court staff and judiciary are always keen to work with us.

After almost a decade, we have more than maintained our fearsome reputation for excellence. Our PSUs are characterised by their welcome and their warmth. Volunteers are always relentlessly polite, calm and patient.

Our client satisfaction rates are outstanding and our complaints system is virtually redundant.

But we are never complacent.

We have just launched our new website at www.thepsu.org, so that we can spread our message more widely.

A large scale internal review of service delivery by volunteers was acted on immediately. We have refocused training and development, and sharpened our custom and practice.

Fundraising is a continual challenge and so we work tirelessly to find, and then spend, our precious funds wisely. In the last 12 months we have looked closely at every cost and internal



system to become even more flexible and responsive to need. Our staffing structure has been radically overhauled, and we have sought out, and continue to attract, talented individuals who are passionate about our cause to strengthen the service.

It continues to be a privilege to work for the PSU.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith March".

Judith March
Director



Navigating a course through complex buildings, reams of court forms and years of legal custom presents a challenge to qualified lawyers. For unrepresented litigants it is often a bridge too far. This disadvantage is often exacerbated by poverty, social exclusion, severe physical and mental health problems and language barriers. These are the people we are here for.

The PSU's 200 volunteers close the gap between litigants in person and the courts, and act as facilitators. Our volunteers offer practical non-legal advice to help clients resolve their problems. Whether a last-minute run to file a court form or sitting next to a client in court, our aim is to cater for the emotional needs of clients and boost their confidence so that they can present their cases calmly, coherently and effectively before the judge. We make sure clients obtain basic access to justice, enable the courts to be administered efficiently, and ensure that justice is dispensed effectively.

We welcome everyone regardless of race, religion, gender, sexuality, age or disability and have never barred a client.

We are the only charity offering this much-needed service in the UK and members of the judiciary regularly commend our work:

I have been meaning to write for some time to say how impressed I am by the work of the PSU. It is easy to see the effect that your support has on litigants in person. I ought to, but do not always, say something at the time but that does not mean that I do not notice. Thank you very much.

The Hon. Mrs Justice Proudman, DBE

Key achievements for 2009/10

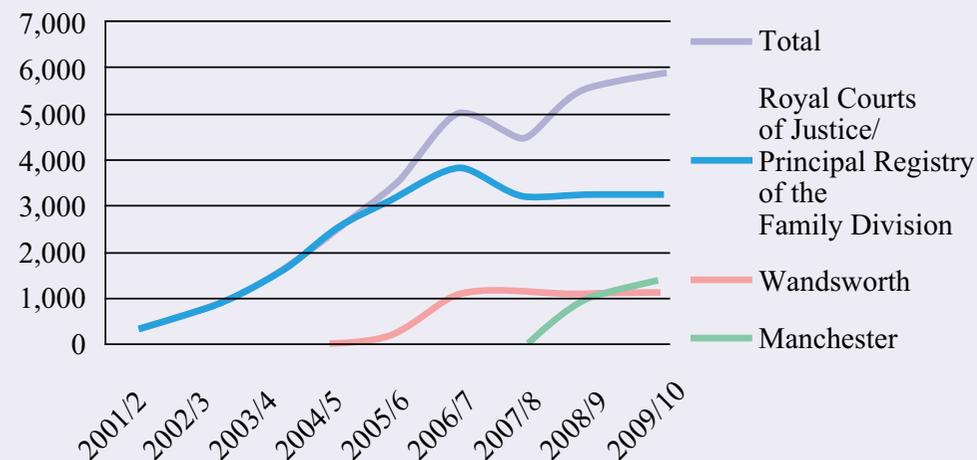
- 100% of clients were satisfied with the service we provided; 97% were completely satisfied;
- New advertising materials were produced and our new website launched at www.thepsu.org;
- We perfected our 'plug and play' model; a blueprint for our expansion into other courts across the country;
- We recruited a permanent fundraiser, based in London, who is working hard to secure trust funding;
- We undertook a volunteer review of the service and are already implementing recommendations.

"A great example of a simple idea brilliantly executed and skilfully managed"

Grant Assessor, 2010

The last year has presented challenges for the PSU. Whilst funding has become more difficult to obtain, our client numbers have increased. We saw a record number of clients - 5,857 - and, early in May 2010, we were delighted to offer our unique support to our 30,000th client. Already in the first quarter of 2010, we have seen a 27% rise in client numbers compared with the previous year. We are proud to have maintained our high client satisfaction rating.

Client contacts 2001/2 to 2009/10

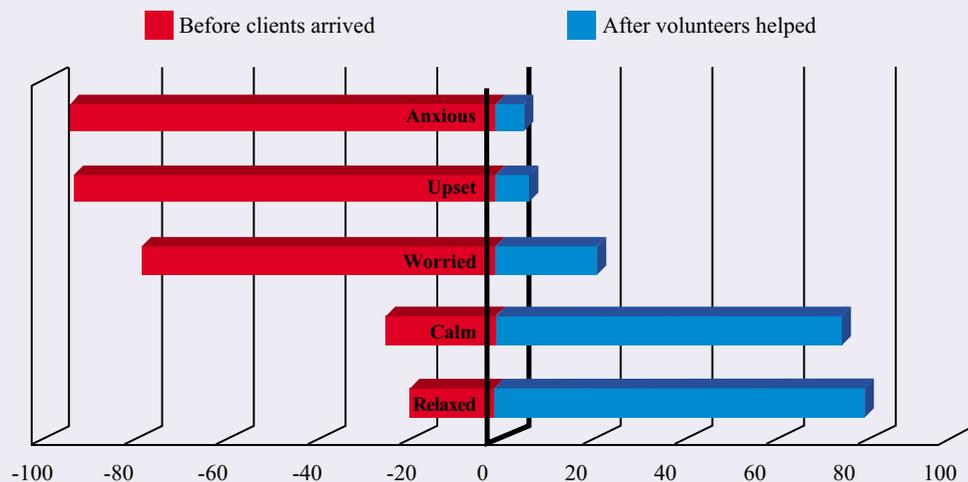


During the year, the PSU underwent a strategic review and restructuring. We have created distinct roles for finance, fundraising and volunteer administration to ensure that the PSU has a strong base from which it can grow and develop. We are already seeing a return on our investment in fundraising as our income begins to rise. Together with the appointment of a Volunteer Co-ordinator at the Royal Courts of Justice, funds and time will be available for the Director to lead the planned programme of expansion.

As part of the strategic review, the Board of Trustees evaluated how the service should develop and established the twin aims of *improvement* of our existing service to increase the benefit we provide and *expansion* to take our service to more civil courts and increase our impact nationwide.

Attending court is a daunting experience for anybody. For our clients, arriving alone and uncertain, the whole experience is an ordeal. Litigants are generally dealing with the highly personal and human areas of the law: divorce, contact with children, immigration, bankruptcy and housing. The consequence is that emotions, and tempers, run high.

The PSU acts as a bridge between litigants and the court and a buffer between emotions and facts. The first task of the PSU volunteer is to put the client at ease. The chart below demonstrates the dramatic difference PSU volunteers make to how clients feel about their court experience:



As one client put it:

‘I have today received support, guidance and procedures in plain language that is enabling me to move forwards with knowledge and confidence. Thank you.

The support is invaluable...since no other support is allowed. ...I would put it in a higher esteem than when I was able to pay to have a solicitor or barrister with me...much, much appreciated, and very, very grateful.’

And it is not only the litigants who benefit:

“The value of the PSU’s service is immeasurable – basically, they make the system work...The PSU volunteers are very skilled people who are able to pacify often angry and frustrated litigants...The litigants get a personal service, and our time is saved.”

Shirin, Senior Manager, Court of Appeal (Civil Division), 2009

In around 10% of cases, PSU volunteers will actually attend court with clients. Clients report that as a consequence of having a PSU volunteer with them they feel better prepared, less anxious and have more confidence, thus enabling them to get a fairer hearing.

Aran, a client with serious debt problems, described our service as

“Light relief in a desperate situation.”

Whilst Michelle, another client, commends the **‘polite, supportive, calm, reassuring’** volunteer that helped her with her bankruptcy petition.

Charles is grateful because the PSU helped him, and his wheelchair, navigate the **‘very disabled unfriendly’** Royal Courts of Justice. He needed to traverse between various court offices to complete the legal forms to stop his eviction.

An older client, Marjorie, who has visited the PSU on several occasions for help with her insurance case writes:

“I have always found it most helpful to have the service of the PSU...They have offered both practical assistance and a cup of tea to ease the stress of being a litigant in person.

Thank you PSU”

Future Plans 2010/11

The aims and objectives for the PSU in the coming year are:

- To reach many more clients and provide an outstanding service;
- To work even more efficiently to minimise our costs;
- To open PSU Cardiff and plan where to open our next office;
- To stabilise our funding and make it sustainable, and open PSUs in more areas so that more litigants in person are helped (see note 13 on page 26).



There is no typical PSU client. Each arrives with his or her own set of needs and challenges. Some simply cannot afford a lawyer, some do not need one, and others actively do not want one. One thing that unites clients is the sense of bewilderment, uncertainty and frustration that seizes them when they arrive. Sadly, in most cases, this confusion is worsened by ill health, disability, lack of English language skills, or poverty. Our highly skilled volunteers are at the ready to respond quickly and decisively to the needs of clients. No appointment is necessary at the PSU, and most clients arrive in urgent need of help.

Kelli, a young woman dealing with debt explains that the PSU was a **“very useful service at short notice. Someone came straight away to assist.”**

We know that one size doesn't fit all and we therefore treat everyone as an individual and provide bespoke support to clients. This ethos is aptly summarised by Andrew, a regular visitor to the PSU with an ongoing civil case:

“Everything a person needs, it will be found in this office PSU.”

We also believe in taking care of the person behind the case as much as the case itself, from start to finish.

Aliye is in her 40s and pursuing a family case by herself and benefited from our holistic approach:

“Wonderful welcome and first class assistance before court, during the

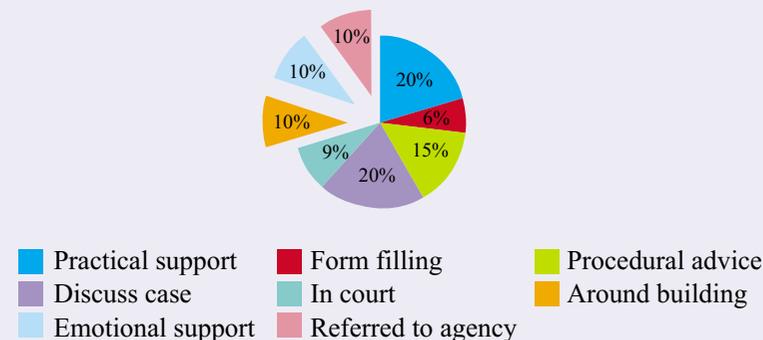
court case and de-briefing in office afterwards. Acting for myself hugely stressful but made manageable by the PSU.”

The word that appears most often in client feedback is **‘excellent’**. The PSU is committed to providing an outstanding service and has strong recruitment, training and mentoring schemes in place to ensure we attract the best volunteers and get the best out of them.

Nothing is too small or too much trouble for our volunteers. PSU volunteers invest time with clients and ‘go the extra mile’ to solve their problems, which sets the PSU apart.



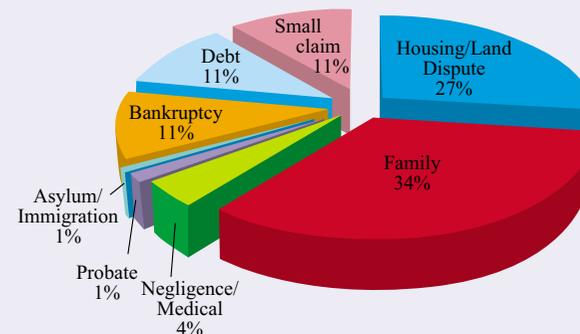
Type of support given



In 2009:

- 25% of clients did not speak English as their first language
- 49% belonged to a minority ethnic group
- 27% had a serious health problem
- 15% were registered disabled

Types of case



1 in 6 people in the UK suffer from common forms of mental illness at any one time. Figures are even higher in groups facing social exclusion. On this basis, at least 1,000 of the people we support each year may struggle with mental health difficulties.

People with poorer mental health are more likely to report ‘difficult to solve’ civil law problems. They are also likely to report multiple problems. In the Civil and Social Justice Study 2006-2009, it was reported that 27% of civil law problems led to stress-related ill-health. Civil law problems can act to increase vulnerability to further problems.

(Data from Legal Services Research Centre (2009) *Civil Law, Social Problems and Mental Health Factsheet*, LSRC Research Factsheet No. 1, July 2009)



Our core and student volunteers remain the lifeblood of our service. They are the human face of the law and are characterised by a blend of levelheadedness, mettle and courtesy. The mix of core and student volunteers brings creativity, energy, and vitality to the charity.

Core volunteers come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Many are retired professionals, or are taking a career break. Over 30% of core volunteers have been with the service for over 5 years, some since the service opened its doors in 2001. They stay because they know they make a real difference.

Student volunteers are in training to become barristers and solicitors. Each year we recruit around 50 high calibre graduate law students to work across our four offices. We take students from the College of Law and BPP Law School in London and Manchester, and Manchester Metropolitan University.

We would like to congratulate one of our volunteers, George Gordon, who received the inaugural Access to Justice Foundation Student Prize for his article on Pro Bono Costs Orders. Successful litigants who are helped pro bono can now claim costs, which are paid to the Access to Justice Foundation by the losing party for distribution amongst pro bono organisations.

The PSU provides an unparalleled training opportunity that gives students incredible access to the civil and family courts, their procedures and practices. All our students report that their time with the PSU helps them to secure pupillages or other openings in the law.

We are a volunteer-led organisation and have thriving volunteer committees. In addition to providing our frontline service, volunteers assist with administration, fundraising, events, management and evaluation.

The PSU works closely with pro bono partners, and has particularly close ties with FRU, the Bar Pro Bono Unit, Citizens' Advice Bureaux and Law Centres. Our service complements theirs. The Director sits on the Attorney General's Pro Bono Co-ordinating Committee, which leads the development of pro bono initiatives. We have strong relationships with Her Majesty's Court Service, who generously provide our office space, and the judiciary, who champion and support our work in the courts in which

we operate. Recently, PSU Manchester undertook a 3-month pilot referral scheme with the Manchester Metropolitan University Legal Advice Clinic. 10 referrals have been made, and 8 clients have already benefited from the legal advice they obtained.

The outcomes are currently being reviewed. If successful, this scheme can be implemented on a permanent basis. We would also aim to establish a similar referral service with our other law school partners.

We are always looking to reach as many clients as possible. In May 2010, we launched our new website (www.thepsu.org) which will be a tool to attract clients, inform other agencies, and assist funders in finding out more about our organisation. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mark Wilding of Mark Wilding Graphic Design for creating our new website and to Mik Beaumont for his IT and systems support provided to the PSU over the last 6 years, both on a pro bono basis.



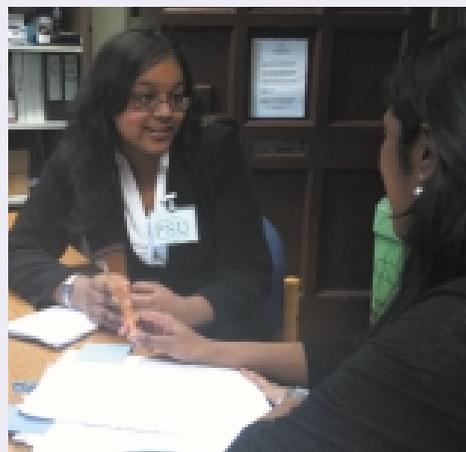
Our flagship office in the Royal Courts of Justice, together with our specialist family office in the Principal Registry of the Family Division, has gone from strength to strength this year.

We have excellent relationships in divisions across the Royal Courts of Justice and we are grateful to court staff who regularly refer clients to us (33% of cases). Court staff know the dramatic difference a PSU volunteer makes to a litigant in person and their case.

A further 31% of clients come to the PSU as a result of seeing a poster or picking up a leaflet placed in key locations around the court buildings. Nonetheless, we are constantly looking at ways to increase our profile to ensure that we can welcome as many unrepresented litigants as possible.

The single largest type of case seen at the Royal Courts of Justice is bankruptcy (17%) followed closely by housing and property disputes (14%). Family cases are also common and arise in 13% of cases. 55% of clients in the Royal Courts of Justice and the Principal Registry of the Family Division visit the PSU on more than one occasion as cases are often complex and long-running.

The support we offer varies from advising on court procedure (12%) to discussing cases with clients (21%) and helping them find their way around the building (19%).



Around 15% of cases require court attendance and in 8% of cases we help litigants access other support and specialist advice agencies. Some clients require only a few minutes of volunteer time, others require hours of support.

In May, we were delighted to raise over £2,000 by taking part in the London Legal Support Trust walk.



PSU Manchester was launched in January 2008 and is the first PSU outside of London. Located in the prestigious Civil Justice Centre, we support a cross section of people residing in the Greater Manchester Area.

Initially, a great deal of work took place to communicate the benefits of the PSU to judiciary, court staff and people attending court. After 2 years, the reputation of the PSU has grown and the demand for our service continues to increase. Already, we have assisted 3,000 litigants and the office is now staffed by 40 trained volunteers.

Clients remark that **“In a totally relaxed and calm atmosphere, the PSU helped me to clarify the issues confronting me and move forward”** and **“There was someone to talk to and also a friendly face in court.”**

The PSU’s main aim was recognised and simply put by one client:

‘The PSU was there when I needed help’.

Before visiting the PSU, 86% of clients stated that they were extremely anxious confused or unconfident, but afterwards felt much calmer and certain (94%). This highlights an important benefit of the service. A composed and reassured litigant who not only understands their case, but also the underlying procedure, is in a much better position to present before a judge. Inevitably, this saves a great deal of court time.

Our most common client response is that:

“I came in terrified, and came out calm.”





Since we opened in 2005, PSU Wandsworth has grown quickly and now has a regular client base of around 1,200 per year. The loyal and long-standing team of volunteers are underpinned by a Co-ordinator, who is a volunteer herself.

During the last year, the administration and record-keeping procedures at Wandsworth have been improved. This assists our volunteers when helping clients and ensures that they can find the right resources as quickly as possible.

Together with the other PSU offices, we have rationalised our data collection forms to provide us with solid information to review and evaluate the service.

Our straightforward method of capturing client feedback tells a bleak story in Wandsworth. Clients are predominantly black (42%), female (65%) and poor. They just want to hold on to their homes or their children, but cannot afford a lawyer. Housing and family cases account for 66% of our work, but the vast majority of our clients (74%) attend the PSU only once as their cases are in the County Court and generally require less time.

We have an excellent relationship with the court staff, and 57% of clients are referred to us by them.

Sasha Haworth, our previous volunteer Co-ordinator, has moved from the area, and we would like to thank her for her management of PSU Wandsworth. We would also like to thank Genevieve Muinzer and Nick Segal who support the service.

We want every civil court to have a PSU. There is no shortage of clients, volunteers, or frustrated court managers, who already value the outstanding service we provide.

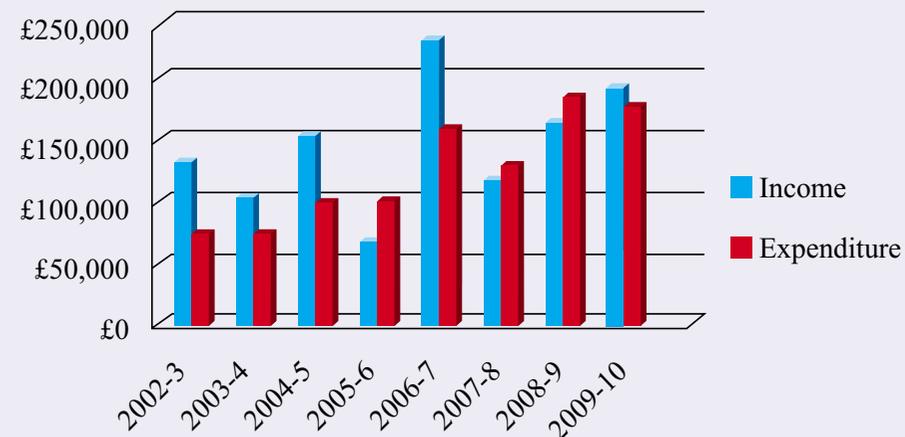
With a budget of £180,000, a volunteer team of 200, and 3.4 staff nationally, the fact that we reached 6,000 clients last years is incredible. In the last year we have worked carefully to minimise costs so that we operate even more efficiently.



Our costs are kept so low because of the generous support of Her Majesty's Court Service who provide our office space, and much help in kind. Secondees we have welcomed in recent years gained a huge amount of experience whilst making their mark on the charity. We are looking forward to hosting an intern from the Civil Service Fast Stream Diversity Programme this summer, and more secondees in the future. We have also been able to staff PSU Wandsworth with a volunteer Co-ordinator which allows that office to operate for a minimal £3,000 per year.

We receive a core grant from the Ministry of Justice - £50,000 - and our Friends scheme raised around £25,000 last year. The remaining £100,000 is provided by major and minor trust donations and other fundraising efforts.

The new fundraiser is working to stabilise the PSU's income streams so as to make them sustainable. In particular, it is hoped that more funding will be sourced from the legal sector on a renewal basis.



Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of Court Based Personal Support Ltd for the purposes of company law) who served during the year are set out below:

Diana Copisarow, OBE (Chairman)
 Michael Naish (Vice-Chairman)
 Ros Lewis (Treasurer) (appointed 07 July 2009)
 Edward Copisarow
 Vanessa Davies
 Hasan Hameed (resigned 12 May 2009)
 Leslie Johnston
 Jeffrey Manton JP
 Harry Matovu QC
 Margaret Morrison
 Genevieve Muinzer
 Christopher Stewart-Smith, CBE
 Nigel Thorpe (appointed 13 May 2010)
 Donald Williams
 Lucas Wilson (appointed 13 May 2010)

President

Sir Mark Potter

Patrons

The Rt. Hon The Lord Bingham
 The Rt. Hon The Baroness Butler-Sloss
 The Rt. Hon. The Lord Clarke
 The Rt. Hon Sir John Dyson SCJ
 The Rt. Hon. The Lord Judge,
 Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales
 The Rt. Hon. The Lord Neuberger,
 Master of the Rolls
 The Rt. Hon. The Lord Phillips,
 President of the Supreme Court
 of the United Kingdom
 The Rt. Hon. The Lord Woolf

Royal Courts of Justice Liaison Judge

The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Lloyd

Manchester Liaison Judge

His Honour Judge Richard Holman,
 Designated Civil Judge for Manchester

Objects

The Charity's objects are:

(A) to pursue charitable purposes by the provision of personal support and assistance, without regard to race, gender, sexuality, age or disability, for (i) those suffering or likely to suffer emotional or psychological stress or otherwise in need of such support or assistance by reason of their involvement with actual or anticipated legal proceedings at the Royal Courts of Justice, The Strand, London or elsewhere in the United Kingdom, and (ii) their spouses, partners, families and friends supporting them in relation to such legal proceedings; and

(B) to further all and any purposes which are charitable according to English law.

The Trustees have fully complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

Governing Document

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 24 January 2002 and not having a share capital and is governed by its memorandum and articles of association. It was registered as a charity on 26 February 2002.

Organisation

All Trustees are Members of Court Based Personal Support. The governing body of the reporting charity is the Board of Trustees, which has a current total of 14. It now meets at least three times a year together with the Director.

The Board undertakes reviews of its development and procedures to maximise the efficiency of the service. The Board is currently reviewing its governance, and so far this has led to the recent appointment of two new trustees and a streamlining of the responsibilities and operation of the Management Committee.

Risks

The Director continually assesses the main risks to the charity and reports on the headline risks and actions to be taken to the Management Committee and the Board of Trustees. All policies, especially Health & Safety and confidentiality policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. Professional indemnity, employer's liability and trustees' indemnity insurance have all been taken out.

Reserves

This year, the Trustees have designated the sum of £40,000 for the development of the service to other geographical locations, as detailed in note 13 to the accounts. The Trustees have reviewed the charity's reserve requirements in light of the anticipated risks to the organisation. The Board of Trustees has agreed a policy to maintain a general reserve which equates to at least six months of the total expected running costs. As at 31 March 2010, the general reserve was £113,604. Our forecast running costs for 2010/11 are £190,500 and our level of reserves therefore equates to approximately 7 months (2009: 8 months). The reserves therefore meet the policy requirement.

Investment policy

The Trustees have the power to invest monies not immediately required. Given the level of reserves and current interest rates together with the intention to expand the service geographically, the Trustees have decided to keep any monies not immediately required in interest bearing accounts with the Charities Aid Foundation Bank and the National Westminster Bank.

Director and Company Secretary

Judith March

Registered Charity Number

1090781

Registered Company Number

4360133

Registered Address

Norman House, 8 Burnell Road,
 Sutton, Surrey SM1 4BW

Principal Office

Room M104, Royal Courts of Justice,
 Strand, London WC2A 2LL

Bankers

National Westminster Bank plc,
 Law Courts, Temple Bar Branch,
 217 Strand, London WC2R 1AL

CAFCash Ltd, Kings Hill, West
 Malling, Kent ME19 4TA.

Auditors

Myrus Smith, Chartered Accountants,
 Norman House, 8 Burnell Road,
 Sutton, Surrey SM1 4BW

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of Court Based Personal Support Ltd for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, 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 charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditors

A resolution to appoint auditors and to authorise the Trustees to fix their remuneration will be proposed at the Meeting of the Board of Trustees on 27 July 2010.

Exemption statement

The Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved and signed on behalf of the Trustees.



Diana Copisarow
Chairman of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Court Based Personal Support

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and Not Having a Share Capital)

Registered Charity Number 1090781, Company Number 4360133

We have audited the Financial Statements of Court Based Personal Support for the year ended 31 March 2010 on pages 22 to 26. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The trustees' (who are also the directors of Court Based Personal Support for the purposes of company law) responsibilities for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and for being satisfied that the financial statements give a true and fair view are set out in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006. We also report to you whether in our opinion the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

In addition we report to you if, in our opinion, the charity has not kept adequate accounting records, if the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns, if we have not received all the information and explanations we

require for our audit, or if certain disclosure of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made.

We read the Trustees' Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2010 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities;
- the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006; and
- the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.



S.A. Jones (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Myrus Smith,
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Norman House, 8 Burnell Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4BW
27 July 2010

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010**
(Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	Note	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
		£	£	2010	2009
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generating funds					
Voluntary Income	2	54,256	19,893	74,149	99,536
Activities for generating funds:					
Fundraising events		19,573	8,602	28,175	9,615
Investment Income		303	-	303	6,408
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Grants receivable	3	76,000	15,000	91,000	50,095
		<u>150,132</u>	<u>43,495</u>	<u>193,627</u>	<u>165,654</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of generating funds					
Costs of generating					
voluntary income	4	21,550	804	22,354	15,814
Charitable activities	5	59,836	89,587	149,423	163,871
Governance costs	6	7,445	-	7,445	7,999
		<u>88,831</u>	<u>90,391</u>	<u>179,222</u>	<u>187,684</u>
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES					
		61,301	(46,896)	14,405	(22,030)
Transfers between funds					
		(26,896)	26,896	-	-
		<u>34,405</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>	<u>14,405</u>	<u>(22,030)</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		119,199	30,000	149,199	171,229
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		<u>£153,604</u>	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£163,604</u>	<u>£149,199</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2010

	Note	2010	2009
		£	£
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	1,307	1,682
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	10	5,810	1,820
Cash at Bank and in Hand		163,770	154,686
		<u>169,580</u>	<u>156,506</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	11	7,283	8,989
		<u>166,297</u>	<u>147,517</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		166,297	147,517
NET ASSETS		<u>£163,604</u>	<u>£149,199</u>
REPRESENTED BY:			
Restricted Funds	12	10,000	30,000
Unrestricted Funds:			
General Funds	13	113,604	108,217
Designated Funds	13	40,000	10,982
		<u>£163,604</u>	<u>£149,199</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

Approved by the Trustees on 27 July 2010

R Lewis

R. Lewis
Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Basis of Accounting

The Financial Statements have been prepared on the accruals basis in accordance with applicable accounting standards under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities", issued in March 2005.

b) Income and Expenditure

All income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and all expenditure is included in resources expended on an accruals basis. Credit is taken for grants receivable over the period to which they relate. Grants received in advance are included as deferred income.

c) Intangible Income

The Charity benefits from considerable voluntary assistance from a number of organisations and individuals who give their time and skills for free, the value of which cannot be quantified. In particular, the Charity occupies rooms and benefits from furniture, other assistance and telephone services provided free of charge by Her Majesty's Courts Service on all 4 court sites. As the

benefit is not quantifiable, this intangible income is not reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities.

d) Allocation of Costs

Costs have been allocated between costs of generating funds, charitable activities and governance. Where costs cannot be specifically identified within one of the above categories an estimated allocation has been made.

e) Cost of Generating Funds

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income and fundraising.

f) Charitable Activities

Charitable activities include those costs incurred in achieving the Charity's main charitable objective.

g) Governance

These costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and are primarily associated with its constitutional and statutory responsibilities.

h) Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on computer equipment purchased on a straight line basis over 3 years.

i) Taxation

Court Based Personal Support is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable activities.

2. VOLUNTARY INCOME

	2010 £	2009 £
Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust	10,000	-
City of London	10,000	-
Mercers' Charitable Foundation (Restricted)	10,000	-
Edith Murphy Foundation	5,000	-
Zochonis Charitable Trust (Restricted)	5,000	5,000
Welton Foundation	3,000	-
Carole and Geoffrey Lawson Foundation	2,500	-
Lord Mayor's Charity (Restricted)	1,150	-
Segal and Muinzer (Restricted)	1,000	3,000
Euromast Systems	1,000	-
Caron Trust	1,000	-
Trees G and Mrs Pollitzer Charitable Settlement	1,000	-
N. Smith Charitable Settlement (Restricted)	700	-
Alexandra Rose Day Fund (Restricted)	500	500
Anthony Du Boulay Charitable Trust	500	1,000
John Grant Davies Trust (Restricted)	500	-
Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund (Restricted)	500	-
Modiano Charitable Trust	500	-
John Ellerman Foundation (Restricted)	-	30,000
Garfield Weston Foundation (Restricted)	-	10,020
Allen and Overy	-	3,000
Freshfields, Bruckhaus, Deringer	-	3,000
Clifford Chance	-	2,500
Matrix Chambers (Restricted)	-	1,500
Herbert Smith LLP	-	1,000
Romulus Construction	-	1,000
	53,850	61,520
Other donations and Gift Aid	19,756	37,296
Other donations (Restricted)	543	720
	£74,149	£99,536

3. GRANTS RECEIVABLE

	2010 £	2009 £	2010 £	2009 £
Unrestricted:				
Ministry of Justice	76,000	50,095		
Restricted:				
Targeted Support Fund	15,000	-		
	£91,000	£50,095	£22,354	£15,814

4. COSTS OF GENERATING VOLUNTARY INCOME

	2010 £	2009 £	2010 £	2009 £
Fundraising events:				
Direct costs	5,694	8,019		
Support costs				
Staff costs	16,660	7,795		
	£22,354	£15,814		

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2010 UNRESTRICTED £	2010 RESTRICTED £	2010 TOTAL £	2009 TOTAL £
Costs directly allocated to activities				
Staff and volunteer costs	41,775	78,602	120,377	121,699
Recruitment costs	-	329	329	255
Support costs allocated to activities				
Communications	44	256	300	1,186
Legal and professional	623	-	623	610
Office costs	15,870	10,400	26,270	38,983
Depreciation	1,524	-	1,524	1,138
	£59,836	£89,587	£149,423	£163,871

6. GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2010 £	2009 £
Staff costs	4,283	4,460
Other costs	293	539
Audit fees	1,351	1,850
Legal and professional fees	1,518	1,150
	£7,445	£7,999

The Trustees received no remuneration and claimed no expenses during the period.

7. NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR

This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	£1,524	£1,138
Auditors Remuneration	£1,351	£1,850

8. STAFF COSTS

	£	£
Staff costs were as follows:		
Salaries	113,211	93,424
Social Security Costs	11,088	9,900
Pension Contributions	7,839	10,840
Other Staff Costs	119	9,551
	132,257	123,715
Volunteers Expenses	9,062	10,239
	£141,319	£133,954

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

The average weekly number of employees during the period, calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents, was 3.4. Volunteers are not employees of the Charity.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office Computers £
Cost	
Balance at 1 April 2009	6,681
Additions	1,149
Balance at 31 March 2010	7,830
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2009	4,999
Charge for period	1,524
Balance at 31 March 2010	6,523
Net book value	
As at 31 March 2010	£1,307
As at 31 March 2009	£1,682

10. DEBTORS

	2010 £	2009 £
Other Debtors	£5,810	£1,820

11. CREDITORS

	2010 £	2009 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other Taxes and Social Security Costs	2,131	2,757
Other Creditors and Accruals	5,152	6,232
	£7,283	£9,889

12. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance at 1 April 2009	Movement in Resources		Transfers (Note 13)	Balance at 31 March 2010
		Incoming	Outgoing		
	£	£	£	£	£
PSU Wandsworth	-	4,866	6,389	1,523	-
PSU Manchester	-	27,667	39,926	12,259	-
Royal Courts of Justice	30,000	10,962	44,076	13,114	10,000
	<u>£30,000</u>	<u>£43,495</u>	<u>£90,391</u>	<u>£26,896</u>	<u>£10,000</u>

These restricted funds are created by the receipt of grants and donations to be spent on specific projects.

The £30,000 from the John Ellerman Foundation, brought forward to part-fund the Director's salary, was fully expended in the year.

A donation of £10,000 was received towards the end of the year from Mercers' Charitable Foundation. This amount has been carried forward to cover volunteers' expenses over the next two years.

The above table shows the total cost of the three projects and where these costs are not met entirely by restricted funds, a transfer has been made from General Funds to meet the deficit.

13. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance at 1 April 2009	Movement in Resources		Transfers (Note 12)	Balance at 31 March 2010
		Incoming	Outgoing		
	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	108,217	150,132	88,831	(55,914)	113,604
Designated funds					
PSU Wandsworth	10,982	-	-	(10,982)	-
Service Development at new locations	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
	<u>£119,199</u>	<u>£150,132</u>	<u>£88,831</u>	<u>£(26,896)</u>	<u>£153,604</u>

In 2007 the Trustees designated the sum of £30,000 for the provision of improved services at Wandsworth County Court. A balance of £10,982 was brought forward at the beginning of the year and the remaining reserve was released back to General Funds on completion of the project.

As set out in Note 12, £26,896 was transferred from General Funds to Restricted Funds to make up the difference between expenditure on PSU Manchester, PSU Wandsworth and Royal Courts of Justice and the restricted funds secured for these projects.

It is intended that this is an initial designation toward spend over the next three years to expand into two new regions and develop further satellite services around Manchester and in further London Boroughs.

14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	1,307	-	1,307
Current assets	159,580	10,000	169,580
Current liabilities	(7,283)	-	(7,283)
	<u>£153,604</u>	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£163,604</u>



As Master of the Rolls and Head of Civil Justice, I have a personal understanding and appreciation of the important contribution the PSU makes to the effective administration of justice. Litigants in person invariably arrive at court confused, ill-prepared, and worried, or even angry. PSU volunteers perform the invaluable, sometimes even miraculous, task of calming litigants, going through their paperwork, and talking through their cases.

This means that litigants are cooler, calmer and more collected, and are therefore better prepared to present their arguments to the court. As a result, judges can focus on the key issues and key facts, without being deflected too much with the emotional concerns of the litigants. Consequently, justice is much more likely to be done, and a substantial amount of judicial time saved. So, for the interests of both justice and the judges, thank you, PSU!

*The Rt. Hon. The Lord Neuberger
Master of the Rolls
July 2010*

The Board of Trustees would like to extend its thanks and pay tribute to the time, generosity and skill of the PSU's many friends and supporters. Without them, the PSU could not continue, grow and flourish:

First and foremost, our incredible volunteers, without whom the charity could not survive.

The judiciary, who never cease to champion our cause, in particular our Manchester Liaison Judge, His Honour Judge Richard Holman and former Royal Courts of Justice Liaison Judge, Sir John Dyson.

HMCS staff across the four sites in which we operate, who unstintingly assist our volunteers in solving clients' problems. And our many pro bono partners and the legal advice charities who refer clients to us and receive referrals from us.

Our funders, whether individual, corporate, trust or public. We are particularly grateful to the Ministry of Justice for their contribution to our core funding and who have printed this Annual Report.

Finally, our staff, secondees and interns, who help keep the service running.

Thank you.