

Charity Number 1103093

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group

**Executive Committee Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 August 2016**

Address	Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group PO Box 1615, Southampton SO17 3WF Email: info@swvg-refugees.org.uk Web: www.swvg-refugees.org.uk	
Patrons	Miriam Margolyes, OBE John Pilkington Dr. Shirley Firth	
Executive Committee	Chair:	Anne Leeming
	Vice Chair:	Angela Sealey
	Treasurer:	Andrew White
	Coordinator:	Christine Knight
	Members:	Claudia Glyn Elizabeth Prescott-Decie Lesley Sheldon-Browning (from 7 December 2015) Sue Turner Nele Van der Wielen
Secretary	Jessica Hasan	
Administrator	Xanthe Hackett	
Bankers	HSBC Bank plc, 58 High Street, Winchester SO23 9BZ	
Independent Examiner	Peter Casson FCA	

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group

The Executive Committee presents its report and the financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2016.

Governance and management

The Executive Committee comprises a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 members elected at each Annual General Meeting. In addition the Committee may co-opt up to 2 additional members.

Members of the Committee who held office during the year are listed on page 2.

The Committee holds 6 full meetings each year and is supported by a number of sub-committees each of which includes at least one member of the Committee. The committee also meets annually to discuss longer term issues and develop an action plan.

Aims and objectives

The main objects of the Group as set out in its constitution are:

For the relief of need, hardship and distress in the United Kingdom amongst refugees, asylum seekers and other immigrants by providing such charitable assistance as the Executive Committee think fit, including providing such persons with advice, assistance, representation, counselling, in matters such as money, debts, welfare, benefits, housing, health, asylum, immigration, education, training and employment.

Focus of our work

The Group is a volunteer led charity whose members work with asylum seekers and refugees mainly living in Southampton. The core of our work is to provide one-to-one support for individual clients who are assigned a trained visitor who meets with them regularly to provide friendship and practical help.

Our ASSIST scheme provides some temporary financial support to those clients pursuing their asylum claim, who are destitute but are not entitled to receive benefits or undertake paid work. It meets the cost of renting a room and/or provides a weekly subsistence allowance.

Our Legal Justice fund allows us to use the services of a very experienced immigration solicitor who provides advice to the Group on individual client cases and provides training for our members.

Review of the year

About our clients

Thirty nine clients (with 14 children) have been visited regularly and 28 others have stayed in occasional contact. Sixteen new clients have been taken on. Our clients came from 24 countries, the main countries of origin being Eritrea, Zimbabwe and Iran.

Twenty two clients (with 5 children) have received financial support from the ASSIST scheme for part or all of the year. Twelve clients (with 2 children) have received NASS (state) support during the year, 10 in Southampton and 2 elsewhere.

Five clients have been granted leave to remain in the UK.

About our members

The Group has approximately 60 members. 42 of our members who are trained visitors regularly visited one or more clients for all or part of the year.

The Group employs 2 part-time staff providing essential support services.

The ASSIST scheme

The scheme funds room rents for clients at an average cost of about £85 per week and provides a subsistence allowance, currently £35 per week. The cost this year was £59,365. Funds are initially allocated to individual clients for a maximum period of 8 weeks with a review taking place every 4 or 8 weeks thereafter.

The scheme also provides assistance to clients who obtain leave to remain but are not given the right to claim benefits or access other services (no recourse to public funds). Support is provided for a short period while they look for work.

Other client support

The group organises various social activities for clients particularly for children and also provides funds for clients' hobbies and fitness activities. It also helps clients with travel costs, education materials and exam fees and purchases clothing, toys for children, bicycles and a wide range of other items.

Legal Justice Fund

The changes to entitlement to legal aid introduced in 2013 have not yet caused an increase in legal costs being met by the fund as clients with asylum claims have been able to find solicitors with access to legal aid to take them on. The fund has continued to meet the cost of training for members, to pay for specialist reports and translators and travel costs to court hearings, to meet solicitors and to submit claims.

The fund is also used to assist clients who have been granted limited leave to remain and who are then required to pay renewal fees to the Home Office and a health levy. The total cost of these charges is currently £1,311 per person including children.

Campaigning

The campaign subcommittee was expanded during the year. It continues to support the Southampton City of Sanctuary group which aims to bring together all interested organisations in the City to raise awareness of the needs of asylum seekers and refugees in order to make the City a more welcoming place. It has concentrated on feeding local data into national campaigns and lobbying local MPs on asylum-related issues.

Finance

Receipts for the year were £92,737 an increase of £10,639 compared to last year. Payments totalled £97,264, an increase of £22,239. The net deficit of £4,527 compares to a surplus of £7,073 for 2015.

Receipts included grants from charitable trusts of £51,800. We were very grateful for new grants from The A B Charitable Trust, The Bromley Trust and The Tolkien Trust and for continued support from The Allen Lane Foundation and a number of local charities.

Income received from individual donors and local organisations increased by £6,010, offset by a reduction in income from fund-raising events of £2,204. We are grateful for the support we have received from local churches and other organisations and many individuals.

Payments included those related to clients of £74,355, an increase of £20,135 which was entirely due to expenditure on the ASSIST scheme increasing to a more normal level following the reduction in 2015.

Reserves Policy

The Executive Committee has reviewed its reserves policy and decided that the minimum level of reserves should be £40,000, representing about 3 month's expenditure for the ASSIST scheme, (based on the average of the last two years) and 6 months for other expenditure. This would allow for commitments to clients for financial support to be discharged and provide a residual reserve to allow the Group's other activities to continue.

This report was approved by the Executive Committee on 7th November 2016 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne Leeming (Chair)

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group

Independent Examiner's report to the Executive Committee

I report on the accounts of the Group for the year ended 31st August 2016, which are set out on pages 6 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of the Committee and Examiner

The Executive Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Committee considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility:

- To examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities 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 the Executive Committee 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 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act 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.

Peter Casson FCA
13 Skylark Road
Trumpington
Cambridge
CB2 9AQ

12 November 2016

**Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group
Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2016**

Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted £	2015/16 Restricted £	Total £	2014/15 Total £
RECEIPTS				
Donations from organisations	7,703	599	8,302	6,478
Donations from individuals including gift aid	21,340	0	21,340	17,154
Grants from grant making trusts	17,800	34,000	51,800	45,000
Proceeds of fund-raising events	10,773	0	10,773	12,977
Interest	522	0	522	489
Total receipts	58,138	34,599	92,737	82,098
PAYMENTS				
Visitors' travel and other expenses	3,968	0	3,968	3,918
Payments to or for clients				
Professional fees	0	2,908	2,908	1,502
For accommodation and subsistence	0	59,365	59,365	39,712
Travel	2,178	1,898	4,076	2,561
Other	5,612	2,394	8,006	10,445
Total payments to or for clients	7,790	66,565	74,355	54,220
Administration				
Salaries	3,108	9,000	12,108	9,819
Expenses relating to fund-raising activities	653	0	653	1,190
Training	956	586	1,542	1,373
Printing, stationery, postage, etc	1,180	0	1,180	1,324
Other	3,458	0	3,458	3,181
Total administration expenses	9,355	9,586	18,941	16,887
Total payments	21,113	76,151	97,264	75,025
Net excess of receipts over payments for the year	37,025	(41,552)	(4,527)	7,073
Transfers between Restricted & Unrestricted Funds	(51,660)	51,660		
Balance brought forward	45,858	9,166	55,024	47,951
Balance carried forward	31,223	19,274	50,497	55,024

**Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group
Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2016**

Statement of assets and liabilities at 31 August 2016

	01.09.15	Received	Paid	31.08.16
	£	£	£	£
CASH FUNDS				
Unrestricted Funds	45,858	58,138	21,113	31,223
Transfers to Restricted Funds		(51,660)		
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Restricted Funds				
For ASSIST scheme	5,833	15,000	59,365	9,167
Transfer from Unrestricted Funds		47,699		
For sundry restricted purposes	0	599	599	0
For Legal Justice Fund	0	10,000	7,187	6,774
Transfer from Unrestricted Funds		3,961		
For Administration and visitor expenses	3,333	9,000	9,000	3,333
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Total Restricted Funds	9,166	86,259	76,151	19,274
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Total Funds	55,024	92,737	97,264	50,497
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Represented by:			31.08.16	31.08.15
			£	£
HSBC Treasurer's account			4,847	5,374
Virgin Money Deposit			45,250	49,250
Float for expenses			400	400
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			50,497	55,024
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DEBTORS				
Tax on Gift Aid donations			1,361	1,168
Rents paid in advance and other debtors			2,570	415
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			3,931	1,583
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CREDITORS				
For expenses			1,868	925
			<hr/>	<hr/>

Signed for and on behalf of the Executive Committee

Anne Leeming
(Chair)

7 November 2016

**Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group
Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2016**

NOTES:

GRANTS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2016	2015
	£	£	£	£
Grants received from grant making trusts were:				
The Bromley Trust	15,000		15,000	15,000
The Tolkien Trust	0		0	5,000
The Observer Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	1,000
Knight Charitable Trust	800		800	0
Sheba Charitable Trust	500		500	500
St Clare and St Francis Trust	500		500	500
For ASSIST scheme				
The A B Charitable Trust		10,000	10,000	10,000
The Beatrice Laing Trust			0	2,000
The Hilden Charitable Fund			0	4,000
The 29 th May 1961 Charitable Trust			0	3,000
The Tolkien Trust		5,000	5,000	0
For Administration and visitor expenses				
The Allen Lane Foundation		4,000	4,000	4,000
The Tolkien Trust		5,000	5,000	0
For Legal Justice Fund				
The Tolkien Trust		10,000	10,000	0
	<u>17,800</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>51,800</u>	<u>45,000</u>

PAYMENTS

Payments include sums paid to members of the Executive Committee in re-imbusement of expenses incurred as visitors or on administration.

1,381 1,831

COMMITMENTS

The group had outstanding commitments for the support of clients which fall after the relevant accounting dates amounting to

2,848 3,315