



West Sussex Mediation Service External Newsletter

Message from the Chair

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Xmas
2016



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Inside this issue:

Chair's Message	1
News	2
Open House	3
Xmas Close	3
New Working	4
Changing Times	5

Hi and Season's Greetings to everyone.

I am happy to be looking back on a year of change and to be able to say that we have come through it in pretty good shape, despite a few bumps along the way.

At the start of the year, referral levels were down, but have picked up massively in the second half of the year. I expect referral levels to continue to increase into 2017 as we roll out Conflict Resolution and Elder Mediation develops further. Whilst this is exactly what we want to see, it does have an impact on case handling and with only limited resource in the office, we need to work differently as Nick describes later on.

Funding continues to be a bit of a seesaw. On the one hand, we have had reduced funding from a couple of major funders, but this has been compensated by new funders coming on board. We know that we cannot rely on a constant funding stream and we are committed to reducing our reliance on funders through generating revenue from paid mediation services (these being primarily Family and Workplace mediations). Over the year our revenues from these services have gradually been increasing and I expect this to continue into 2017 and beyond.

Over the year there have been a number of changes in the office, both of staff, and of course the office move in April. Thanks go to Nick, Pam, Anna, Hazel and Christine for keeping things under control during a very busy year. Thank you also to my fellow Trustees who have given generously of their time, knowledge and expertise to WSMS and to Mike for keeping the books and payroll up to date.

Now the festive season is just about upon us, so I wish you all a happy and peaceful time and a prosperous New Year.

Will Adler
Chair





News



> **Funding** – We will soon be reaching the end of the 3rd quarter of our 2016-17

Income 2016-17:

Core Budget	£91,950
Income to date	£67,445
Deficit	£24,505
Bank (incl reserves) (As of 01/12/2016)	£46,735

financial year. The box to the left shows the current state of play with our finances.

Our income tends to reduce in the last quarter with many of our grants hitting our account in the first half of the year. We are pleased to say that our earned income is proving to be a lifesaver, with our tally, so far this year, recently hitting £15,000.



Here is a picture of Nick receiving a grant cheque from the Mayor of East Grinstead, Cllr Bob Mainstone, at the Town Council's offices in East Court. Nick had a good chat with Bob about the work of WSMS, prior to the cheque presentation. Luckily he did not have to go to the Bank with the large sized Nat West cheque! Our thanks go to the Town Council members for supporting our work within East Grinstead. We happen to have recently recruited a East Grinstead resident as a volunteer mediator.

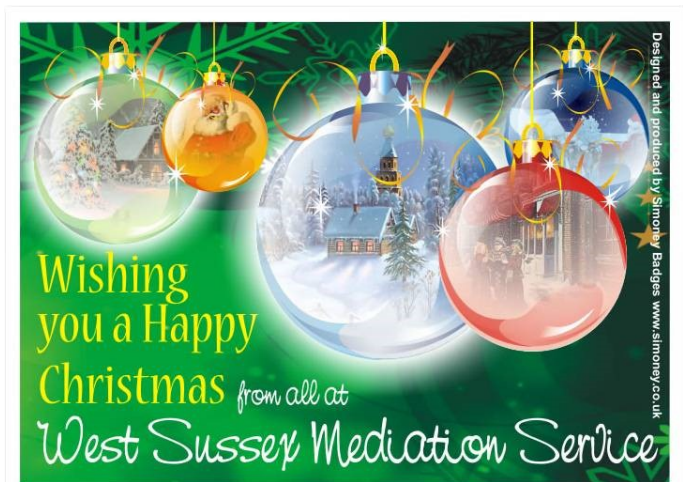


Our turn has arrived. Remember if you do any shopping at Horsham Waitrose **this month**, please place your green token in the WSMS tank.

< ----- (I'm not sure that our tank will match the position in the illustration, which is just a mock up - but it would be fantastic if it got that full!)



**THIS IS OUR
100th
NEWSLETTER !!**

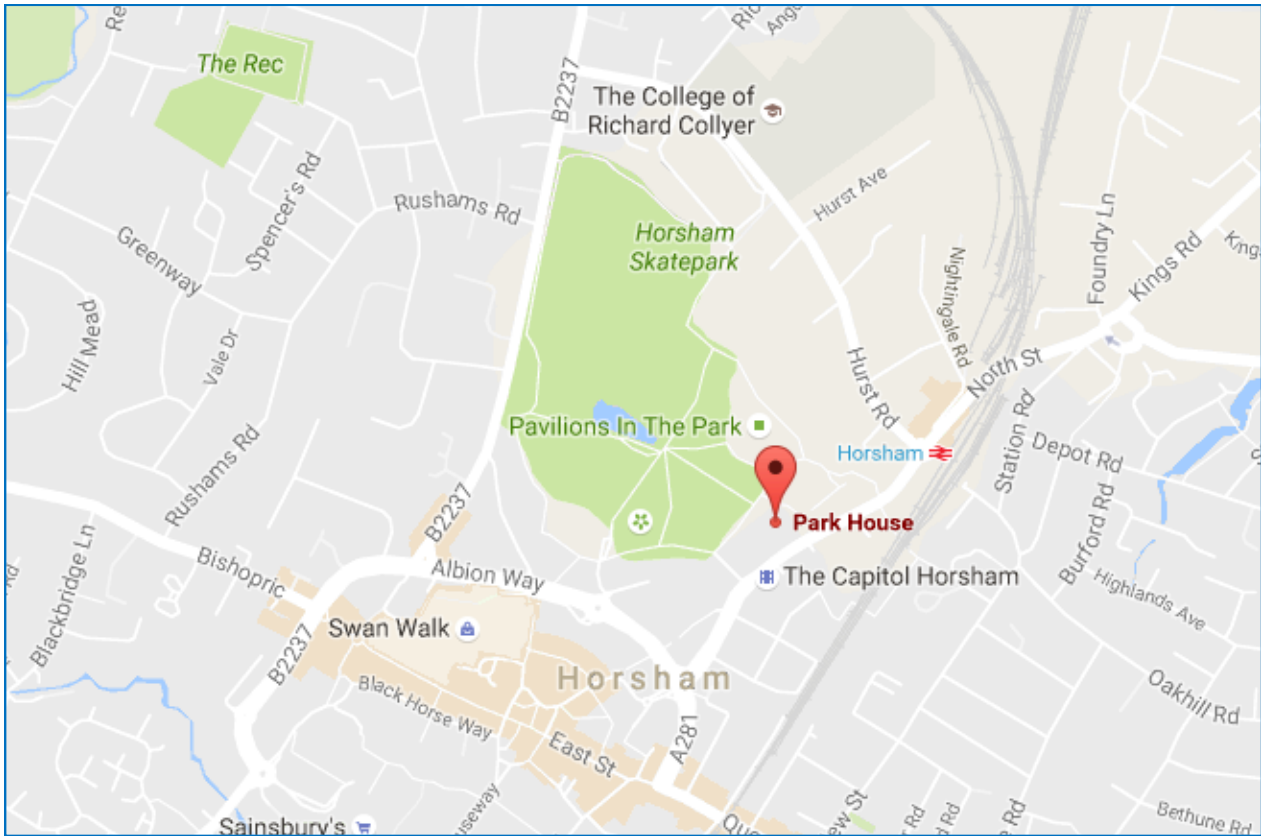




Open House



We like to throw our doors open in the run up to Christmas and as this will be our first Christmas in our new offices, perhaps you would like to pay us a visit. We've chosen **Wednesday 14th December** and you are welcome to drop by anytime between 11.00am and 3.00pm. We will be laying on some nibbles and Mulled Wine. If you are not sure how to find us, see the map below. Don't rely on your satnav finding our post-code (try RH12 1RL).



Shutting Shop for Christmas



Our last day of opening before the holidays will be Thursday 22nd December.

We will be reopen for normal business on Wednesday 3rd January 2017.

We hope you all enjoy a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

A New Year – A New Way of Working

You may have noticed in recent newsletters that we have experienced a considerable spike in the number of referrals since April 2016. Every month between May and September 2016 proved to exceed all previous referral counts for the equivalent months. Unfortunately, this coincided with a reduction in the number of staff hours we had available to us in the office, along with the summer holiday period.

This resulted in something of a backlog of cases, and we found ourselves struggling to keep things moving along as smoothly as we would like. We apologise for any delays this has caused but are committed to getting back on track as soon as possible. Please keep the referrals coming!

You'll appreciate that we have only limited resources, and we will be asking our mediators to get more involved with the organisation of meetings. From January 2017 we will be looking for an increased involvement from our mediators in contacting the parties to make arrangements for both initial and joint meetings.

Our office staff will continue to help, at every stage, when complications arise and to help out finding venues for joint meetings.

In order to try and reduce the amount of time we spend phoning around to find volunteers to take on cases (which can be considerable), we're also going to be relying more on group emails to mediators for case allocations and utilising Doodle polls to assist.

The earlier we are able to intervene in disputes, the better chance our mediators will have in helping to find lasting resolutions.



Support us this
**Christmas
time!**

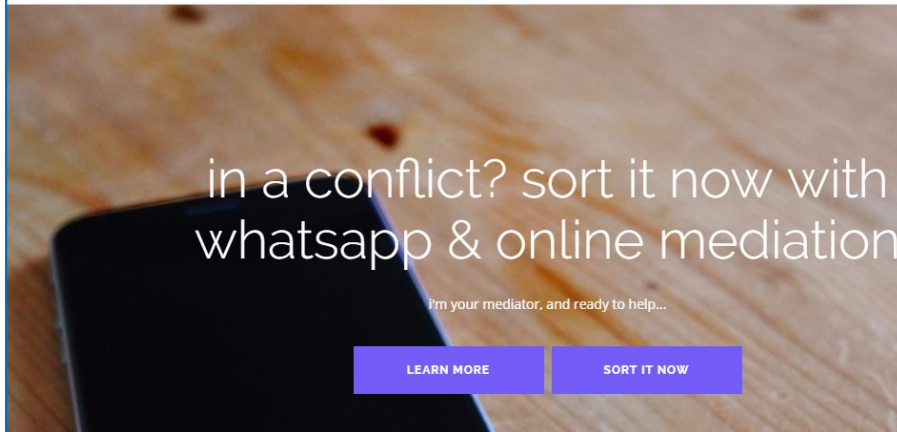
Just by shopping
online via:
Giveasyoulive.com

amazon.co.uk
Argos
Boots
John Lewis

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/wsms>

The Times they are a changin'

mediation in your pocket



Is this the way forward for Mediation?!

One mediation provider is in the process of launching a new website promoting 'Mediation in your pocket'.

The Mediator, based in Scotland, but providing a global service, has yet to reveal all his colours, as

the website is still 'under construction' - <http://mediationinyourpocket.com/>

It appears that he will ply his trade via Whatsapp or Zoom.us

Zoom.us is an online Meeting/Conferencing portal. Meanwhile here at WSMS we will continue to stick the traditional methods of face to face mediation but will keep an eye on technological innovations affecting the mediation world.

If parties are significantly apart, geographically (and possibly in other terms!), it seems sensible to offer an option such as Skype or similar to broker some communication.

'The Times they are a changing' — title of a song & album by Bob Dylan (1964), if anyone can remember that era.



< -- If you are engaging in some fine dining over Christmas, why not book your restaurant via



www.charitablebookings.org Browse their directory of 1000's of UK restaurants, book tables directly by phone and Charitable Bookings will donate £1.50 per diner throughout December, to WSMS, as we are a listed charity with them and it will be at **no cost to you.**