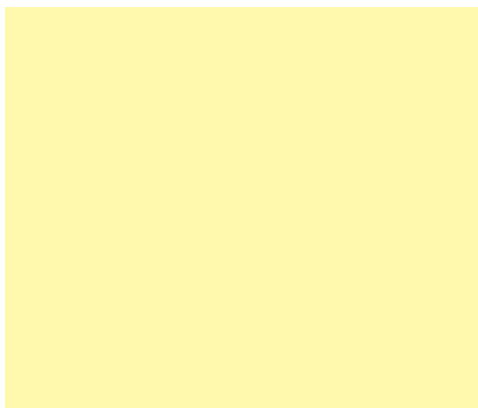


MID SUSSEX YMCA



**Creating Opportunities
for young people,
parents and families**



**ANNUAL
REVIEW**

**2004
2005**

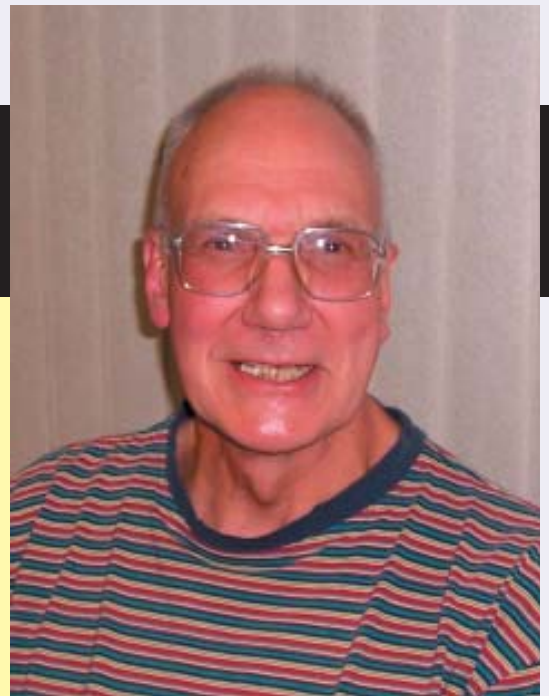


Mid Sussex YMCA is a Christian Charity. Our vision is for all young people to have a place where they belong, a voice that is listened to and opportunities to realise their full potential.

We will achieve this by delivering high quality services that **empower individuals** to grow in confidence and develop their social, personal and independent living skills by **creating opportunities** for them to participate in and contribute to their local community.

Mission & Vision

Letter from the Chairman



Dear Friends,

Our year 2004 – 2005 has again been busy and active. Besides being our first year as a charitable company, it is the year we have probably made our most important decision for the future of our YMCA.

During the year it has become perfectly clear to the trustees of Mid Sussex YMCA that we need full time management for all our work in the local community. Without it we cannot hope to fully develop and grow in our Christian Aims and Purposes, giving support to our staff and proper control of our projects. With this in mind we have appointed Janet Stokes as our Chief Executive Officer from the 1st April 2005.

Janet has made good steps forward in a short time and is helping the trustees to review what we as a YMCA are doing and why we are doing it. It has and will inevitably lead to difficult decisions and changes in our direction. These will, I believe, lead to opportunities for better projects being undertaken in the end, with verifiable outcomes from the work entailed.

Although there are risks involved we have now given ourselves the opportunity for a good future and can look forward to the coming years and the developing work of our YMCA.

None of this work can be done without the dedication and commitment of our trustees, staff and supporters who have our grateful thanks for all they do.

With love, thanks and prayers for you all,

Paul Wehrle
Chairman - Mid Sussex YMCA

At its centre are Christians who, regarding Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, desire to share their faith with others and make him known, believed, trusted, loved, served and exemplified in all human relationships. It welcomes into its fellowship persons of other religious faiths and those of none.

Accordingly we stand for:

- a world wide fellowship based on the equal value of persons respect
- and freedom for all, tolerance and understanding between people of different opinions
- active concern for the needs of the community
- united effort by Christians of different traditions.

We aim to:

- provide a welcome to members for themselves, in a meeting place which is theirs to share, where friendships can be made and counsel sought.
- develop activities which stimulate and challenge its members in an environment that enables them to take responsibility and find a sense of achievement.
- involve all members in care and work for others.
- create opportunities for exchanging views, so that its members can improve their understanding of the world, of themselves and of one another.

Aims & Purposes

Hello Everyone

This has been an exciting year of change and development for Mid Sussex YMCA and I feel very privileged to have been appointed to the newly created post of Chief Executive Officer.

We have made the move to spacious new office premises in Maple House and have received the donation of a complete set of office furniture. This makes for a much more professional and pleasant working environment for everyone and enables us to meet the people that we work with at our own premises. We have also upgraded our telephone system and now have a website.

My first task as CEO was to spend a considerable amount of time reviewing our existing services to ensure that they are financially viable, adequately staffed, well managed and effective in meeting the needs of the community.

Having worked through this period of consolidation my next job, in conjunction with the Board of Management is to pursue the member's Mission and Vision statements so that we can create a direction for the future work of the association.

Securing funding and generating income to support and develop our work continues to be a challenge; I'm sure that many of my colleagues in the voluntary sector would share this view. However, as long as there are needs to be met and gaps to be filled, we will do all that we can to create opportunities for young people, parents and families.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the dedicated and committed staff, paid and unpaid, who have not only made me feel very welcome and shown their support but have continued to work as professionals throughout these times of change and some major upheavals. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the public and voluntary sectors who have helped me find my way around Mid Sussex and continue to support our work.

Janet Stokes
Chief Executive Officer



Housing Floating Support Service

Mid Sussex YMCA's Housing Floating Support Service can provide support to 11 young people at any one time. Our aim is to develop their life skills so that they will be able to live independently and 'float off' from the service. We have provided help with housing and benefit issues, budgeting, accessing training and educational opportunities, form filling and letter writing and assisting them in accessing other agencies.

The service began in April 2003 following the closure of the YMCA hostel in Fairfield Road. Still in the early stages of development it has received 21 referrals already this year from the likes of Mid Sussex District Council Housing Needs Team, Social Services, health visitors, Hyde Housing, Downland, Haywards Heath College and the YMCA Young Parents Group. One of the positives with Floating Support is its flexibility, allowing support to continue even if the young people move accommodation.

The project was reviewed in June 2004 by its funding provider 'Supporting People'; written evidence of Stake Holders, policies and procedures, support planning, health and safety, fair access, diversity and inclusion were all assessed. As part of the process, Supporting People interviewed two young people receiving support from the service, to assess the feedback and the standard of support offered to them. Projects funded by Supporting People are assessed against the Quality Assessment Framework and services are graded from A to D. We have obtained Grade C's for all objectives and are currently working towards a B for the next review .

I am twenty years old and I have four young children aged five, four and twins of eleven months. I live in Haywards Heath where I don't know anybody. I had to move here from Uckfield due to domestic violence. My four year old has behaviour problems and suspected ADHD. It has been hard for me especially away from my friends and family. I have no transport so I am completely on my own. However having my support worker has been amazing. He comes to see me once a week. He has helped me get cooking utensils, beds, cookers, and a fridge freezer. He has also stopped me from going insane. I can talk to him about anything and how I am feeling. As you can imagine I don't get a lot of adult conversation. Mark has helped me with my finances and has helped me to talk to people on the phone. I think what the YMCA does is fantastic. You have helped me in so many ways. Keep up the good work.

A Housing Sub-Committee Meeting with Mark, Fay, Neville and Janet



The project has developed through support and input from the Housing Sub-Committee and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved and especially Fay Jones who has held the chair since its conception.

We are pleased to announce that information about the service can now be viewed at our website along with a downloadable referral form and links to other youth organisations in the area.

In February this year we were invited to attend the Mid Sussex District Council Young Persons Housing Panel meeting to review how young people can be assessed and allocated the appropriate services when applying for housing, according to need and eligibility.

All of the young people we have worked with this year have succeeded in maintaining their tenancies, three are moving on to full-time jobs and one has returned to college to complete and pass her A' levels.

The YMCA aims to support young people, to help them reach their true potential through mind, body and spirit. The project is there to support these young people but ultimately it is about the young people being able to support themselves, so they can live independently.

I have included testimonies from some of our clients who explain in their own words the effect Mid Sussex YMCA is having on their lives.

Mark Dew
Floating Support Project Leader

I am an 18 year old girl and I am writing this letter to say how much the YMCA has helped me personally. I was thrown out of my house at 16 by my father and was put in emergency accommodation with my boyfriend. We stayed there for seven months. I was very unorganised and found it hard being away from home, especially as my boyfriend at the time didn't help with much.

I was introduced to Mark Dew in July just as I was moving into permanent accommodation. He used to visit me on a regular basis supporting me with advice. He helped me with letters and job interviews. He used to ring me often to see if I was ok as I was going through a very stressful time in my life. Mark helped me get a cooker and a fridge which I don't know how I would have coped without. I most definitely feel that all young people who are in difficult situations will benefit from this help in the future. As I improved our meetings became less frequent as I was able to move back to mum's house as my dad is no longer there following domestic violence to my mum and brother. Things are a lot better for me now. I have a nice job with a regular income; I work hard and enjoy it. I am expecting my first baby in August and I am very excited. I would like to say a huge thank you to the YMCA and to Mark. He helped me so much and it would have been terrible without his help.

I am aged nineteen and moved into my flat last November. Since I have received Floating Support I have managed to sort out rent, bills, and am sorting out rent arrears from my previous place. I have also sorted out repairs that needed doing and am currently getting the utilities that I need like a washing machine. I feel the project has helped a lot. For example I am now able to phone places myself and contact my housing officer which I couldn't do before. I do feel other young people will benefit from this project.

S.P.O.T (Supporting Parents of Teenagers)

"I am now able to handle difficult situations more effectively; I do not 'rise to the bait' so easily"

"Even though the course has finished, I continue to meet socially with some of the other parents and to catch up with how things are going"

"Discussing our issues with other parents that share the same experiences has been really supportive and helped me to realise I am not alone"

"I am now able to get my son to take responsibility for the decisions he makes and to face the consequences of those decisions"

Mid Sussex YMCA run 6-week programmes for parents whose children who have begun to display the often contrary behaviour of adolescence. This is a way of offering support to the parents whilst developing their skills to deal with challenging situations. It also acts as a self-support group where parents can share their knowledge, skills and experiences with one another in a non-judgemental environment. Experienced and trained Mid Sussex YMCA staff support this work by facilitating the 2-hour weekly sessions with discussion, practical activities, videos, skills exercises and refreshments.

This year we have been able to run two courses and would like to develop and extend this valuable work into the future.

In an effort to reduce the number of unwanted teenage pregnancies in Mid Sussex, 'It Happens' was formed to deliver information to 13-19 year olds on the realities of being a young parent. Members visit local secondary schools and youth settings to engage students in discussion and activities around the subject. What makes this project so unique and effective in reaching its target audience is that the information is presented by young people who have themselves become young parents.

"I really enjoyed the peer support course. It was good to learn more about the project and what it involved. I enjoyed writing my story but it was very scary when we had it videoed, but very helpful to watch it back and see our mistakes"

**MID SUSSEX
YMCA
SPOT**
SUPPORTING PARENTS OF TEENAGERS

I'm goin' out
- just OUT ok!

I hate you!!!!

I'll come home when I'm ready..

So what if I didn't go to school

IT'S SOOOOO UNFAIR!!!!

Sound familiar?
"Y' not come along to one of our 8 week
programmes that support the parents of
young people aged 11 and over

For further information
please contact:
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Burgess Hill, West Sussex
BN15 3RD

Tel: 01444 233346 or email:
admin@ymcaxidsussex.org.uk

You can also visit our website at
www.ymcaxidsussex.org.uk

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH TEENAGERS

The Mid Sussex Young Men's Christian Association is a Charitable Company limited by Guarantee No. 501120,
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Parent & Child Special Needs Project

Over the past 12 months Mid Sussex YMCA has run twice-monthly activities for children with special needs, their siblings, families and carers. It enables the children to integrate with others, build friendships and strengthen family relationships in a safe and fun environment and gives the parents some free time to socialise and receive support from one another, without having to worry about their children. Mid Sussex YMCA staff have facilitated and continue to support the strong bonds that have formed within this group. For each session there are usually 4 play workers (young people committed to working with special needs children) and 3 parent support staff. In total we now have 128 families registered with this project.

Special events are also organised during the school holidays. During half-term we used Clair Hall for a private showing of 'The Incredibles' and the Triangle Leisure Centre for a swimming group. Both events were very well attended.

"I think the facilities and support are excellent – projects like these really make difference in peoples lives. Thanks"

The project continues to meet the ever evolving support needs of the families involved and is great fun.

"A great benefit to us as a family group to be able to have use of a local facility that has support and social interaction for us"

Peer Support Group - It Happens

The process of becoming a peer educator was equally important, for young parents to learn new and increase existing skills. They have grown in confidence and feel that they have had valuable experiences from which others can learn.

There are currently 12 members, all of whom have completed Peer Education training at Haywards Heath College. This number is growing all the time and the group meet to encourage new members to join and become involved. It has also attended many other short training courses and awareness workshops including, Basic Drugs Awareness, Personal Safety, Domestic Violence, Self Defence,

"I enjoyed the life stories because it made me realise that young pregnancy does happen and it woke me up to the reality"

Youth Work and Basic Computer Skills. Some have even attended a public speaking course in order to learn skills and gain confidence in delivering the information in a wider variety of youth settings. This clearly paid off when a Meridian TV crew filmed group members through the process of delivering the work - from their homes to the end of the presentation in school.

The project has developed through its growing number of committed members and plans to become responsible for its own funding and co-ordination. Mid Sussex YMCA wishes them every success for this work in the future.

Tiny Little Cherubs (TLC)

Operating over two sites in Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, TLC is a weekly support group for teenage parents. There is an established core membership of young parents and parents-to-be and over the last year the attendance records show 482 young parents and 683 children have accessed the service.

The group enables young parents to socialise with others of a similar age and experience, whilst their children are being cared for. Mid Sussex YMCA provides 3 play workers to attend to the children and 2 parent support staff to facilitate group discussion and cohesion. This is complemented by twice-monthly visits from the local Health Visitor, Connexions, and other professionals offering free advice, information and training as well as signposting and referrals to other services.



"It's friendly and you get to meet people your own age and don't get judged for being a young parent"

"Plenty of toys, a good place for some adult interaction and to make new friends that you have things in common with"

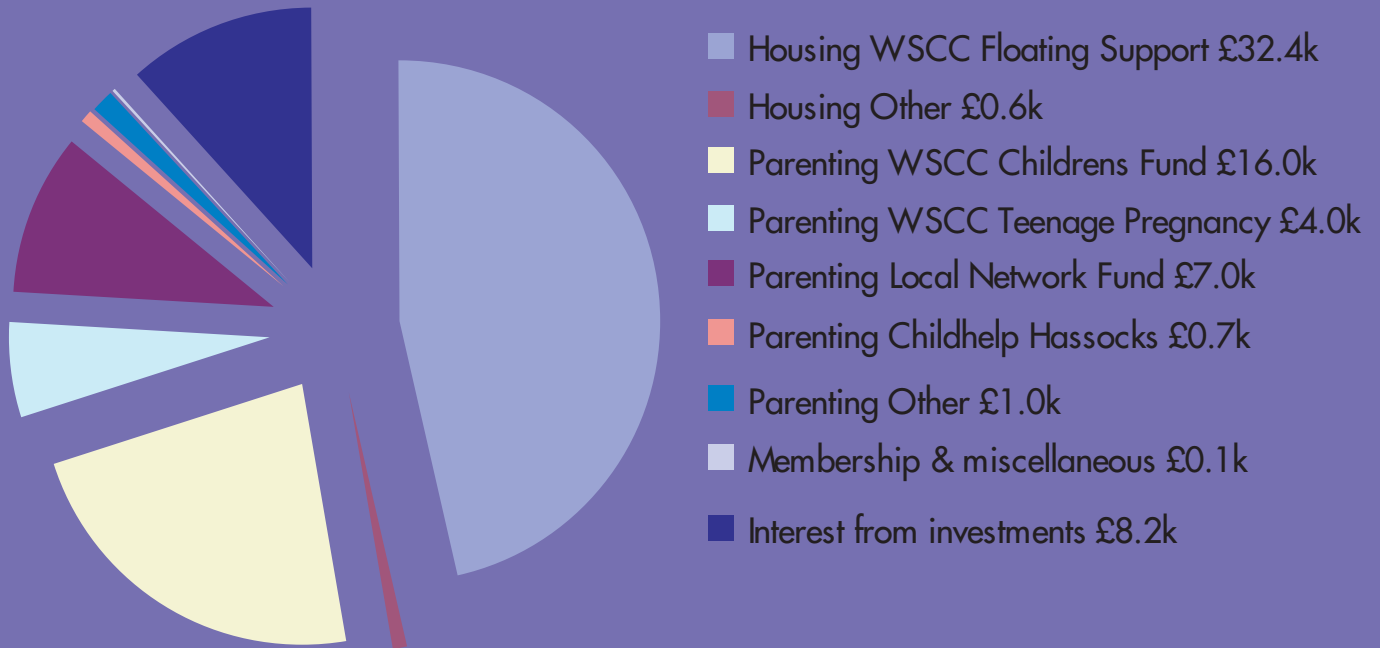
We have also been able to provide access to free training courses in computing, healthy cooking and child development.

It is the mission of Mid Sussex YMCA to provide young parents with opportunities to explore and develop their potential as both parents and individuals and the TLC project has this focus very high on its agenda.

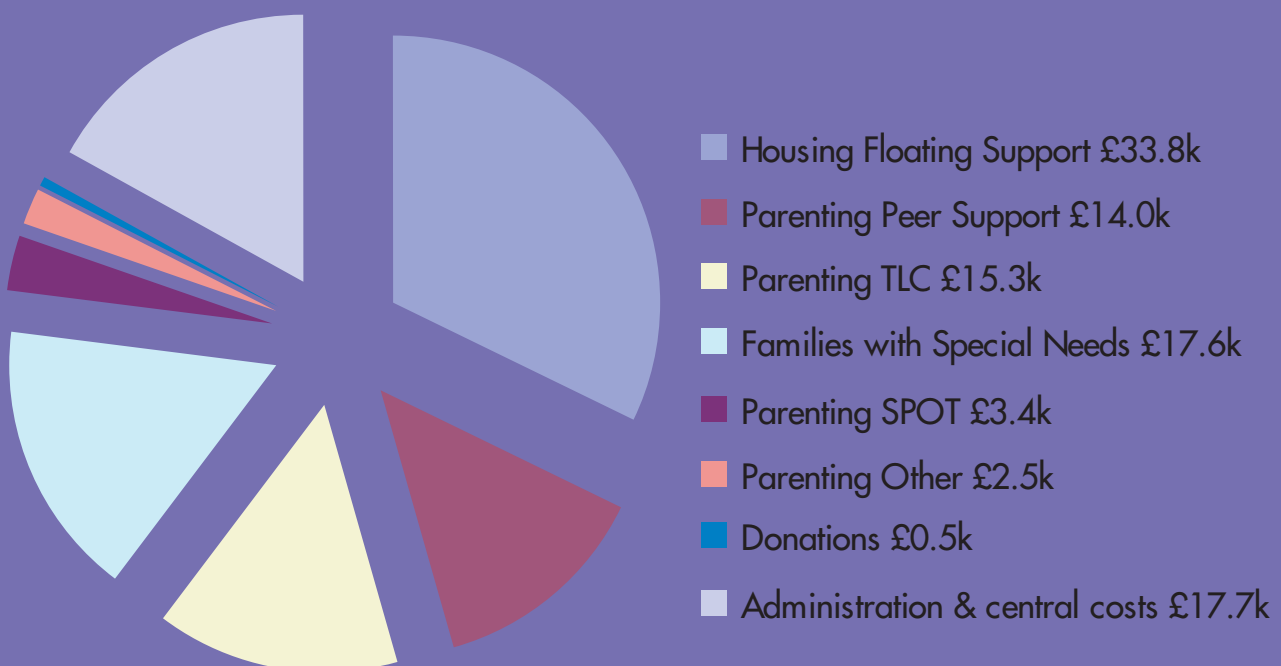


Summary of Income & Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2005

Sources of Income for 2004-05



Expenditure for 2004-05



THANK YOU

Mid Sussex YMCA would like to thank very much indeed all those who have supported our work this year, in particular our members and those that have served as trustees on the Board of Management and the following people and organisations.

Our Funders

West Sussex County Council

- Supporting People
- Children's Fund
- Teenage Pregnancy Fund
- Social and Caring Services

Local Network Fund

NIACE

...and Donators

Childhelp Hassocks

Burgess Hill and District Rotary Club

Burgess Hill Lions Club

Metasolv

and those who have worked in partnership with us

Donna Betts – Connexions

Margaret Drake – Health Visitor

Arthur Higgs – CJs Playland

Jayne Parsons – Social and Caring Services

The Staff Team

Janet Stokes

Mark Dew

Michelle Meyer

Ann Willis

Diana Griffiths

Paulette Reynolds

Jennifer Baker

Martin Halliday

Laura Pumfrey

Clemma Broard

Mark Holton

Emily Muddell

Jennie Smith

Aimee Wilson

Leanne Townsend

Sarah Lyons

Claire Mallows

not forgetting those who have moved on

Gwen Durnford

Hannah Wright

Stephanie Dagger

Catherine James

....and our Volunteers

Kathy Willis

Zoe Lerwill

Rebecca Du Preez

David Penk

Neville Baker

John Stokes

If you would like to find out more about our work you can write to use at Mid Sussex YMCA, Maple House, 192 London Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9RD,

telephone 01444 233366,
email - admin@ymcamidsussex.org.uk
or visit our website at www.ymcamidsussex.org.uk

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