

Annual Report  
January 2008 - March 2009



The  
**Treetops**  
centre



**S**exual  
**A**ssault  
**R**eferral  
**C**entre

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## Manager's introduction

The Treetops Centre opened on 22nd November 2006 and from that date until 31st March 2009, we have received 979 clients. 89% of people have reported to the police with 11% contacting the SARC and attending as a self referral. This allows clients the option to have a forensic medical examination, if reporting within seven days, and then they can decide whether they wish to continue with a report to the police. Forensic evidence is gathered and kept in secure storage whilst the client decides how to proceed.

This year has seen a 15% increase in the number of clients overall, compared with 2008 - which was in turn an increase on 2007. 9% of our clients were male, and 18% were 16. More statistics can be found on pages 14 and 15.

2008/9 has brought many developments for the Treetops Centre, which is one of only 27 Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) in England and Wales. A third more SARCs are now available nationally than in 2007. It is expected that by 2011 there will be a SARC in each police force area.



Kim Nisbet began work in March 2008 as the SARC Young Persons' Worker and has made a positive impact across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, gaining respect from young people and colleagues.

Further funding has been obtained from the Home Office following a successful bid. This will allow the SARC to provide information leaflets and other material for under-represented ethnic minority groups, and to help increase onward referral capability within the two counties of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Additional funding was allocated to support the extension being built to the SARC to provide FMEs with office space, and a non-sterile medical room which will facilitate more medical examinations for those victims who fall outside the 'forensic recovery window' but would benefit from examination.

Building work began in March 2009 and is anticipated to be completed by August 2009.

A "Keep Safe" campaign will begin across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in 2009.

Leaflets, posters and information have been produced, together with a DVD suitable to be shown in schools, colleges, universities, clubs and other venues.



We are also helping to organise an event across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, on 22nd October 2009 at the Hampshire Rose Bowl: "Raising Awareness of Sexual Violence", a conference with presentations, DVDs, stalls and networking.

More support has been received from a private company and Southampton Safer City Partnerships which has provided mobile phones for clients needing a replacement phone in the few days after attending the Centre.

There have been two SARC Joint Training Days in 2008, the first day having a focus on mental health, with the second topic related to the impact of sexual violence on younger people.

In 2009 the SARC will be holding Joint Training Days in June and December. On 3rd June the focus will be the care pathway for a victim of rape or serious sexual assault reporting to the police, to support services available after the court process is complete -

From Report to Court Plus. We continue to work in partnership with all of our colleagues in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors and I want to thank them all for their continued help and support which is genuinely appreciated every day.



**Mary Bridgman, SARC Manager**

## Kim Nisbet, Young Persons' Worker



I have been in post for a year now and work with young people, mainly aged 13–18 years, and I can work with clients up to the age of 24 if they have specific needs. During this time I have supported 91 clients, and I am still working with 53 of them.

When clients attend Treetops they are asked if they would like to work with the Young Persons' Worker and, if they agree, I will contact them within 72 hours of receiving the referral. I also work closely with paediatricians, GPs, mental health teams, rape crisis services, schools and colleges.

Many of the clients I work with are referred to various additional support agencies across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, including the Moving On project, YOU COUNT, Connexions and Off The Record. One client who I worked with last year has overcome many issues and has been successful with her university application for this year.

In 2009/10 I will be involved in delivering the 'Expect Respect Pilot' in Portsmouth schools and will be involved in developing an education programme with Hampshire police to extend across schools in Hampshire.

I continue to network widely across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and have worked the health teams to ensure I can offer pregnancy testing and chlamydia screening for young people as part of the service the young persons' worker provides.

If you wish to contact me please phone the main Treetops Centre line 023 9231 0352.

## Dr Sandy Fielding, Clinical Director

The medical input at Treetops is provided by a rota of sexual offences trained female doctors, Forensic Medical Examiners (FMEs). Our doctors mainly have backgrounds in general practice, genito-urinary medicine, contraception and sexual health and general forensic medicine.



There is an ongoing recruitment and training policy for new FMEs. A programme of continuous professional development is available for our FME team and we also attend the SARC multi-agency training events, involving FMEs, project workers, police and other agencies involved with the Centre.

I have been involved in a series of joint presentations with the Forensic Science Service. These have been delivered to the individual Police Operational Command Units across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

I have also been involved in the training of the Crown Prosecution Service lawyers, those who deal with sexual offences, attending sessions on the Rape and Serious Sexual Assault courses.

Several presentations have been given to GPs and Walk-in-Centre nurses during 2008, informing them of the services available at Treetops. These are continuing in 2009.

The Treetops Centre and Portsmouth City Teaching Primary Care Trust have developed a protocol for dealing with clients who have severe, acute mental health issues. There is now an established pathway into the acute service for these clients.

Our FMEs constantly aim to provide the best service possible for clients attending the Treetops Centre.

### **Shelley Mathews, Social Work Student**

As a final year student I could not think of a better placement in which to learn and develop essential skills and knowledge for a career in social work. The support and supervision received from the manager and young persons' worker superseded my expectations, allowing me to fully explore my professional practice within a controlled and safe environment. Even my IT and analytical skills were improved due to the input of the admin worker. My experience at the SARC has enlightened me as to the invaluable work they do, and how much the country is in deficit of such services. As a result of working within this setting, alongside the young persons' worker, I too am pursuing a career with young people.

### **Andrew**

Andrew, our database and administrative support worker, works three days a week at the SARC and is a very valuable member of our team.



## **Shonagh Dillon, Project Manager, Early Intervention Project (EIP)**

The Early Intervention Project has been really pleased to be part of the continued developments with the SARC in 2008/09. Two more EIP project workers have undertaken the Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) and the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) training and we have another project worker booked on to the training for 2009.

EIP is pleased to announce that we have been accepted on the CAADA Leading Lights Programme. This is a national set of standards set out for IDVA services across the country to adhere to. The project will have to meet approximately 59 key criteria ranging from service standards to governance and finance. The process takes approximately 9-12 months and when successful EIP will be awarded with Leading Lights status, ensuring an accredited service can be delivered to professionals and survivors.

## **Pat Brooks, Chief Executive, Portsmouth Area Rape Crisis Service (PARCS)**

The Home Office is rightly targeting resources to ensure that women and men who have suffered sexual violence are given a better service than they have in the past. I feel these resources are targeted at the SARCS.



The crisis in funding for long term counselling that Rape Crisis offers should be accessible to everybody who wishes to access our services.

However, I believe that PARCS and other rape crisis services in Hampshire are extremely fortunate in that we have a SARC Board that recognises the need for partnership working with rape crisis centres.

The Treetops Centre has over the past year endeavoured to ensure that some of the funding allocated from the Home Office is targeted towards our services and has worked to try and obtain additional funding to assist our services. I look forward to continuing to work with the SARC team in this spirit of partnership in the next year.

## The Crystal Unit

The multi-agency approach has been expanded to include the Crystal Unit in Portsmouth. It seeks to improve the response to victims from first contact through to trial by bringing together investigators, SOITs, advocates and CPS lawyers into a dedicated team. Home Office funding has been provided to set up the Unit and following a successful initial six months, funding has been extended until October 2009. All of the initial findings are very positive and we look forward to the final report and recommendations.

Kim Nisbet and Zoe Jackson, an Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) from the Early Intervention Project, have worked closely with the Crystal Unit. This has enabled the team to strengthen the understanding of investigations around sexual offences and offer a more holistic service to clients using the criminal justice process.

**Shirley Dinnell, Head of CID,  
Hampshire Constabulary  
(Chair of SARC  
Management Group 2008)**



The SARC has continued to provide an excellent service to the victims of serious sexual assault throughout the year. SOIT (Sexual Offence Investigation Trained) Officer training has been developed further, with a mentoring scheme included to assist new SOITs finding their way through this very sensitive and often difficult area of police activity. It is hoped that the additional support provided will reduce the attrition rate of SOITs, enable them to provide a better service to victims and maintain their own welfare.

In summary the SARC continues to be an integral and essential part of improving and professionalising the response to sexual assault victims and investigation in Hampshire and the IOW.



**Aileen Macnaughton, Associate  
Director, Children, Families and  
Sexual Health, Portsmouth City  
PCT (Chair of SARC  
Management Group 2009)**

As Chair of the Management Group, I believe that the Treetops Centre has been an exemplary service since it became operational in 2006. It has gained credibility and respect from clients and agencies and strives to monitor and improve provision continuously. Portsmouth Primary Care Trust are pleased to support the Centre and look forward to the completion of the building extension in July 2009, which will further enhance the service for clients, staff and visitors

## Comments from colleagues and clients

I am extremely impressed with all the staff at The Treetops Centre, they show tremendous dedication and commitment to the great work they do. I have visited several times and it has become apparent that the needs of the client are of the utmost priority; Treetops offers a service to people at a time when they are at their most vulnerable, they are treated in a relaxed environment with the height of professionalism and sensitivity.

I feel it is really important to acknowledge the important work that Kim does with the younger people; disclosure of these types of crime are difficult for adults and it takes someone really special to gain the confidence of these children.

**Claire Portsmouth**

"Was good to talk to someone who won't think you are stupid"

"Knew I had someone there for my support, just cared about my feelings"

"I have felt very comfortable talking today and feel happy leaving here knowing I talked to someone. The project worker was really nice and helpful"

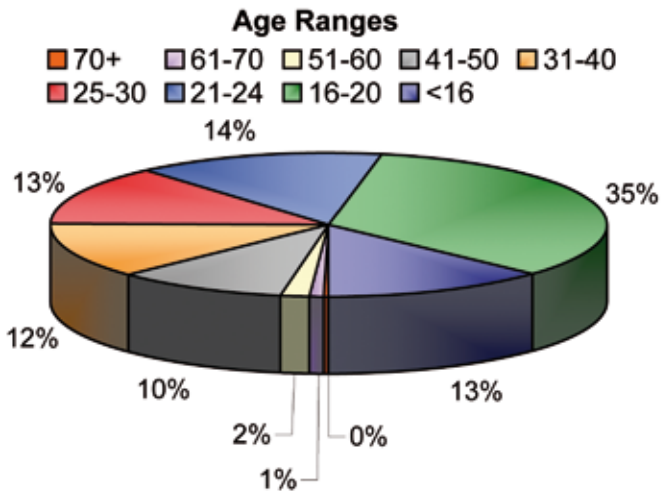
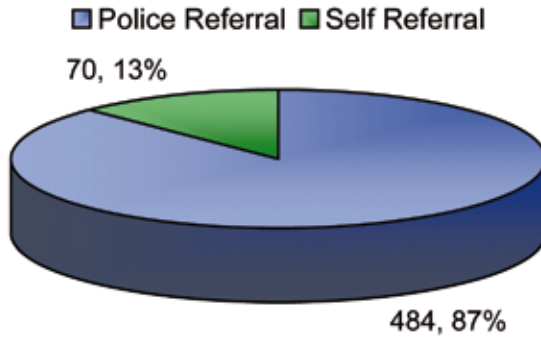
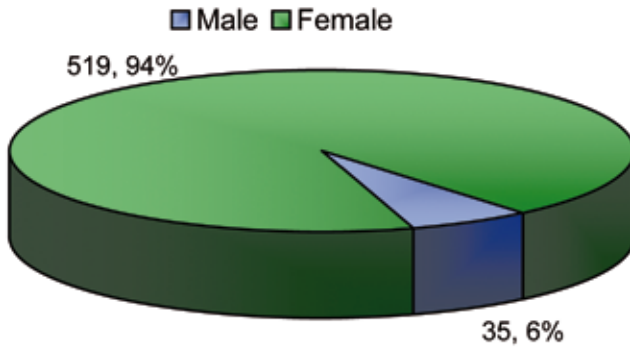
"I felt very comfortable talking to you, thank you for listening. You made me feel confident about myself. Thank you for taking me to the GP"

"Very impressed with service. Staff were very helpful and kind"

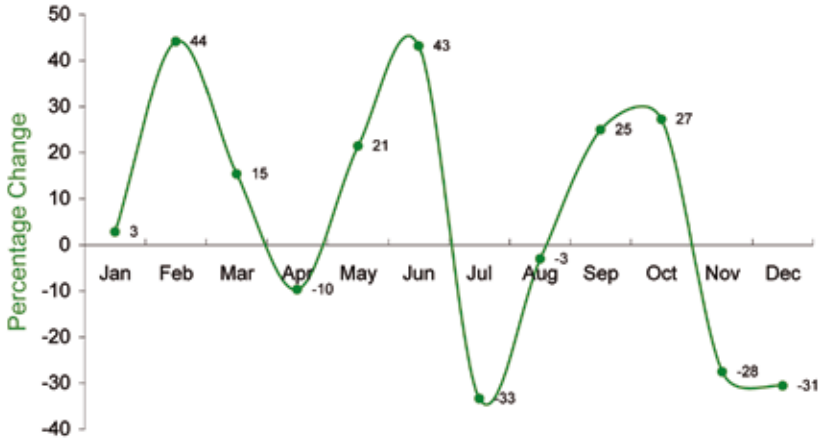
"Helped me feel better having someone to talk to and sorted out me going to PARCS"

"Just a note to say how much I enjoyed the training course...the whole day was well run, presentations clear and informative and a very good atmosphere"

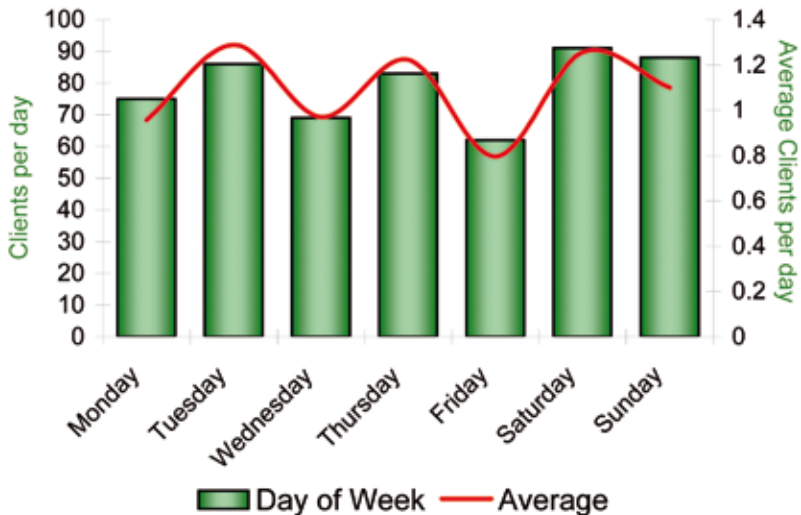
## Centre Activity



**The Monthly Percentage Change of SARC referrals between 2007 and 2008, for example February 08 had 44% more referrals compared to February 07**



**Client attendance per day of week and average per day**



## The Treetops Centre Management Group

The Treetops Centre has a Management Group which meets monthly and is responsible for ensuring the effective operation of the Centre. Its members are:

Mary Bridgman	SARC Manager
Dr Sandy Fielding	Clinical Director
*DCS Shirley Dinnell	Head of CID (Chair 2008) Hampshire Constabulary
Shonagh Dillon	Early Intervention Project Manager, Portsmouth City Council
Aileen Macnaughton	Associate Director, (Chair 2009) Portsmouth City tPCT
Sue Owers	Crown Advocate CPS
Peter Miller & Tara Williams	SOIT Co-ordinator **OCU 1 (Winchester area)
Gary May	SOIT Co-ordinator OCU 2 (Isle of Wight)
Lucy Davis	SOIT Co-ordinator OCU 3 (Basingstoke area)
Tom Light	SOIT Co-ordinator OCU 4 (Portsmouth)
Melanie Morgan	SOIT Co-ordinator OCU 5 (Southampton)
Paul Langridge	SOIT Co-ordinator OCU 6 (New Forest area)
Pat Brooks	Portsmouth Area Rape Crisis
Jo Pearce	Southampton Area Rape Crisis
Gary Stubbington	Winchester Area Rape Crisis
Naomi Wilson	Basingstoke Area Rape Crisis

\*Detective Chief Superintendent

\*\*Operational Command Unit

## The Treetops Centre Board

The Treetops Centre Board meets quarterly and has overall responsibility for service delivery and development, and ultimate responsibility for decision making.

Pam Hobbs	Director of Finance and Support Services, Portsmouth City tPCT (Chair 2008)
*DCS Ray Webb	Head of CID (retired from Hampshire Constabulary December 2008)
*DCS Shirley Dinnell	Head of CID, Hampshire Constabulary (Chair 2009)
Mary Bridgman	SARC Manager
Dr Sandy Fielding	Clinical Director
Aileen Macnaughton	Associate Director, Portsmouth City tPCT
DCI Linda Dawson	Hampshire Constabulary (2009)
Sue Owers	Crown Advocate CPS
Sally Jackson	Hidden Violence Co-ordinator Portsmouth City Council
Pat Brooks	Chief Executive, Portsmouth Area Rape Crisis

On behalf of the SARC Team I would like to express our thanks to everyone who has supported the Treetops Centre, and in particular, Chief Superintendent Ray Webb, who retired from Hampshire Constabulary in 2008, and was instrumental in the development and completion of the Centre.

## **NHS Litigation Authority**

'The NHSLA has a statutory duty to manage and raise the standards of risk management throughout the NHS. In order to achieve this, all NHS trusts are assessed every few years against a set of risk management standards which are based on those factors which give rise to the greatest number and cost of claims. More information about the NHSLA risk management programme is available on its website at [www.nhsla.com/riskmanagement](http://www.nhsla.com/riskmanagement).

As part of the assessment process, the assessors will look at a small number of sets of service user notes and a selection of incident report forms. None of these documents will be removed from the premises. The aim is to ensure that these documents are created and managed in accordance with appropriate policies and procedures: for example whether they are written clearly, signed and dated, stored securely, etc. The assessors are not concerned with individual service user details. They are all professional people who have previously worked in NHS organisations and are now employed on behalf of the NHSLA under strict principles of confidentiality.

If you wish to object to your records being made available during an NHSLA assessment, please just notify the trust.'

## Other formats of this leaflet

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To contact the centre tel 023 9221 0352  
[www.treetopscentre.co.uk](http://www.treetopscentre.co.uk)

Treetops  
centre

## The Treetops Centre

### Providing you with care and support... at the time you really need it

- At the Treetops Centre we're ready to look after you if you have been the victim of rape or sexual assault.
- We have one expert team, drawn from specialist staff working for Portsmouth City PCT, Hampshire Police and Portsmouth City Council.
- And we're all in one calm and convenient location, to help you feel secure.

