

Patrons of the Manna Society

Most Rev Kevin McDonald, Archbishop of RC Archdiocese of Southwark
Rt Revd Peter Price, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Bath & Wells

Committee Members

- Bill Dodwell..... Chairperson
- Tony Charlton Treasurer
- Pauline Emmerson, Nannette Ffrench, Alex Hobbs, Cha Power, Lynda Smith & Marc Thurgood.

The Committee was elected at the Manna Society Annual General Meeting, held at the Manna Centre, 4th October 2007.

The *Manna Society* began in 1982 and formed under a constitution in 1988 (amended in August 1989). Our Charity Registration number: 294691.

The Society's objects and purpose:

'to relieve poor persons who are homeless and/or unemployed by the provision of food, shelter and other forms of Christian care with the object of promoting the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of such persons and of improving their conditions of life.'

(Constitution No 2a)

The Ethos of the Manna

Our vision is the creation of a just society that respects the dignity of every individual.

The Manna Day Centre is a place of unconditional acceptance. Our task, as we see it, is not to judge but to love.

We aim to respect the dignity and worth of each person with whom we come in contact. Each and every one has an intrinsic value that deserves to be respected. No one is dispensable.

Our task is to feed and care for homeless people and those in need who seek our help, but we cannot be content with this. We must also seek to challenge the structures of society that lead to homelessness and poverty.



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Director's Report

By
Paddy Boyle



Overall it has been a good year. Throughout the year we have continued to offer a very reliable service. With the exception of two “clean up” days, we have been open everyday (7 days a week) for 51 weeks of the year. 150-200 people use our services everyday, two thirds of whom are homeless (47% sleeping rough & 17% living in squats – March 08 figs). We have only been able to offer such a magnificent service thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the dedication of our staff. We have built a new furniture store and are about to acquire a completely new van (our first new vehicle ever!).

Our task this year as in previous years is to respond to the changing face of poverty and help those most in need. There are more destitute people using the Manna Centre now, with no income whatsoever, than there were five years ago. The expansion of the EU in recent years has had a substantial impact on our work, approximately one third of all of our users are from the A10 countries. Whilst the majority of migrants from the new EU countries have integrated successfully into British society, a small minority has been unable to do so and find themselves homeless and in some cases penniless in London. As they have no entitlement to Social Security Benefit, the traditional route out of homelessness i.e. via the hostel system is not open to them. As a result the vast majority are squatting or sleeping rough. In order to help them out of this poverty trap, our A10 Nationals Advice Worker (Kasia) offers them advice on employment and training. Although we only offer two A0 advice surgeries per week, in the past 12 months our A10 advice workers have offered advice and assistance to over 350 people.

The last twelve months has seen both physical and attitudinal changes to our work. The physical change came with the building of a furniture store and the attitudinal with our response to alcohol in the centre and its surrounds. The one storey extension, built to house our donations of furniture, is the biggest change to the structure of the centre in over a decade. Instead of having to store such donations in every available nook and cranny, as in the past, we now have a sizeable, purpose built space in which to do so. Despite this we still envisage times when we will have to refuse furniture donations. The supply outstrips the demand. Our challenge in the coming year will be to find new outlets for good quality second hand furniture. If you know of such an outlet please get in touch.

Although our attitude towards those using our services has not changed, we accept all comers as they are, unconditionally and do not set out to change their lifestyles in any way; our attitude to alcohol in the centre itself and in the vicinity of the centre has changed. Up until November 2007, our service users could bring alcohol into the centre and leave it with a member of staff. The alcohol was returned to them as they were leaving the centre. A small minority chose to drink it in the park diagonally opposite us. This park became a gathering point for drinkers and caused problems for some of our neighbours. When the area in which we are situated became an Alcohol Control Zone, the drinkers in the park on seeing the Police coming (and concerned that their alcohol may be confiscated) would come into the centre until the Police had passed before returning to the park to resume their drinking. Conscious of the fact that there were times when the behaviour of those drinking in the park was unacceptable and not wishing to be a loophole in the Alcohol Control Zone we changed our policy on alcohol. From November 2007 no alcohol is allowed on the premises. If anyone is seen drinking in the park opposite or in the vicinity of the centre, they are not allowed to use our services that day. As a result of these changes very little drinking now takes place within the vicinity of the centre.

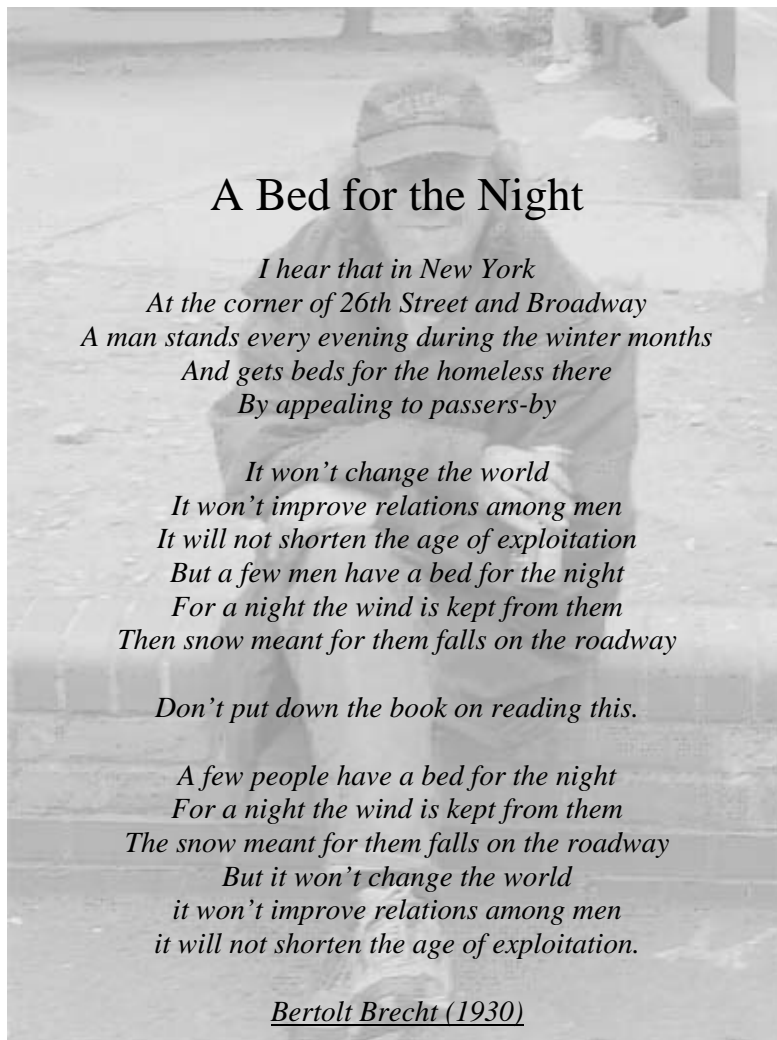
This year has also seen the continuation of the ROBES project. The ROBES project began in February 2007. It is a winter shelter run by local churches. It offers basic accommodation in local churches to 13 rough sleepers each night. This year it ran from January to March and hopes to run from December to March next year. In addition to being a major funder of ROBES, we were also the sole referral agency and responsible for finding ongoing accommodation. In the three months it opened this year it offered

accommodation to 42 rough sleepers. More information about the project can be found on their website, www.rob.es.org.uk

We are totally dependent on the generosity of our supporters and the RC Diocese of Southwark (who give us the building rent free) for our continued existence. Since we began in 1982 the Christian community has been and continues to be our greatest supporter, both financially and in terms of donations. This is what Nannette Ffrench (who founded the Manna Society) intended and I hope will always be the case. As Christians a concern for the poor and needy is not an optional extra, it is central to our faith – “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”. Matthew 26:40.

Financially, Grant-Making Trusts are our second largest donor, followed by Southwark Council who fund our Housing and Welfare advice service. Whilst we are truly grateful for all of the financial help, we are conscious too that being overly reliant on one source of funding would not be an expedient situation in which to put ourselves. This is why we will not seek more than 15% of our overall budget from any one donor on an ongoing basis.

Conscious of the fact that the vast majority of the Manna Society’s resources are spent on addressing immediate needs and relieving immediate hardship, I would like to leave you with a poem that encourages us not to settle for that.



A10 Nationals

By

Kasia Zagrodniczek



This report covers the period from the beginning of February until 14th of August 2008. During that period of time I had 318 meetings with A10 clients, making an average of 45 contacts per month.

Most of the clients were male clients. The numbers of female clients seen monthly varied between none and up to 6. The reason why I seen many fewer women is because it is much easier for women to find work with accommodation.

Approximately 40 per cent of clients who use the service live in squats (this is true mainly for Polish clients); about 30 per cent of clients are sleeping rough (mainly Romanians). Most of the clients I see move between these two forms of accommodation. A small number of clients using the service are staying with friends; in private rented accommodation; have a live in job where they pay rent or are living in hostels.

The biggest group amongst all of the A10 Nationals I see are Polish – approximately 70 per cent. The second largest group are Romanians, followed by Lithuanian, Slovakian, Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, Latvian, Hungarian and Estonian. Most of the clients get to know about the centre from their friends. The rest are referred to us from Outreach Teams, Jobcentres and the Police.

Of the 318 meetings I've had since February, 110 were related to work (including preparing CVs, referring to employment agencies and filling job application forms). 9 clients were registered as a self – employed and 18 found employment and are still employed. (Data for clients who found employment but failed to keep it are not included). 41 clients received help in obtaining National Insurance Number and 6 were registered in Work Registration Scheme (WRS).

20 clients were referred for ESOL (English for speakers of another language) courses run by either the Migrant Resource Centre, Red Kite or the Salvation Army.

28 clients were referred to the Missionaries of Charity, the Hammersmith and Fulham night shelters; and the ROBES project. All offer free accommodation to those without benefits. According to our data 5 of them were given accommodation.

32 clients who wished to work in the building industry were sent for free CSCS training to UR4jobs, Crisis, Red Kite and Primus Personnel.

23 meetings were related to lost ID. 2 clients had their passports funded by St Mungo's.

26 meetings were related to medical issues, including arranging medical appointments, registering with a GP and referrals for a detoxification programme. 10 clients required help with obtaining benefits.

Other issues include opening bank accounts (5 clients), referring to the "Big Issue" (5 clients), debt management (4 clients), legal issues (including fraud) 10 clients and obtaining a Yellow Registration Certificate. 8 clients received help with Tax Returns.

Clients were also referred to the East European Advice Centre, the Polish Psychologist Club, the Barka Foundation (however none of those referred decided to return to Poland).

The A10 service here at the Manna Centre has developed good links and cooperated closely with the Dellow Centre, the Broadway Centre, St. Mungo's, UR4jobs, the Upper Room, Primus Personnel and the Federation of Poles.

Manna Centre Survey results - Friday 7th March 2008

	Numbers	%
Male	162	92
Female	14	8
Accommodation		
Sleeping Rough	82	47
Council/HA flat	37	21
Squat	30	17
Hostel	9	5
Night shelter	9	5
Friends	8	5
Ethnic Origin		
	Numbers	%
EU10	62	35
English	50	28
Irish	16	9
Black Brit.	11	6
Scottish	11	6
European	8	5
Black African	7	4
Other	5	3
Asian	3	2
Undeclared	2	1
Black Caribbean	1	1

EU10s & Europeans		
	Numbers	%
Poland	25	36
Lithuania	12	17
Romania	12	17
Czech Rep	4	6
Slovakia	3	4
Latvia	3	4
Spain	2	3
Hungary	1	1
Bulgaria	1	1
Germany	2	3
France	1	1
Holland	1	1
Croatia	1	1
Estonia	1	1
Portugal	1	1

Polish Accommodation		
	Numbers	%
Squat	17	68
Sleeping Rough	7	28
Council/HA flat	1	4

Romanian Accommodation		
	Numbers	%
Sleeping Rough	5	42
Council/HA flat	4	33
Night shelter	2	17
Friends	1	8

Lithuanian Accommodation		
	Numbers	%
Squat	6	50
Sleeping Rough	6	50



Housing and Welfare Advice Statistics

By
Margaret Shapland



*“Hope is the pillar that holds up the world. Hope is the dream of a waking man” –
Pliny the Elder*

Looking back over the year in the Advice and Welfare service brings satisfaction that we have been able to help over 1000 people through the service tinged with regret that the need still appears to be so great – 42% of clients accessed the service for the first time – but as Pliny words imply, hope is all and our work is about building hope and supporting our clients to fulfil their hopes and aspirations. More of that later but let us look first of all at what has been going on in our service.

What has been happening in the service?

1012 clients served
42% new clients to the service

We maintained the level of service when compared to 2006/7 offering 88% coverage of sessions, seeing on average just over 6 clients per session and each client was seen on just under two occasions. There has been a slight drop in the average number of consultations from 2.06 to 1.88, primarily because clients tend to cover more issues in a single meeting with the advice workers.

1906 consultations
6 clients seen per session
1.88 consultations per client

I wish to talk about some of the issues that are impacting on our clients and some trends we are seeing rather than just concentrating on the raw statistics.

Female clients grow to 15%



Last year we had a spurt in the numbers of female clients using the service to 12%. In this current year, the numbers accessing the service grew to 15% of all clients seen. This is mainly because we have seen the referral routes for clients broaden from “word of mouth” which had been dominant to include the police, other voluntary agencies and day centres, statutory bodies such as local authority homeless services and faith groups. We expect this trend to continue.



A change in emphasis on client’s needs in 2007/8

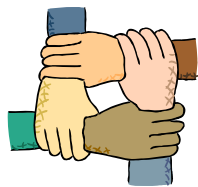
In 2006/7, the most pressing need for clients using the Advice and Welfare service was the fact that they were rough sleeping. This remains the largest single need of clients at 38% in this year compared to 53% in 2006/7. However, many of our clients today require a more “generic” service and this particular category of need has grown dramatically from 10% in 2006/7 to 25% in this current fiscal year.

Generic needs tend to mean working with clients on benefits, employment matters, debt management, identity etc. The growth in this type of advice is in part due to the larger number of A10 clients seen in the centre who need work done in the areas of informing them of the rights and responsibilities in the UK; the requirements they must fulfill to be legally employed and setting them up with the requisite training or

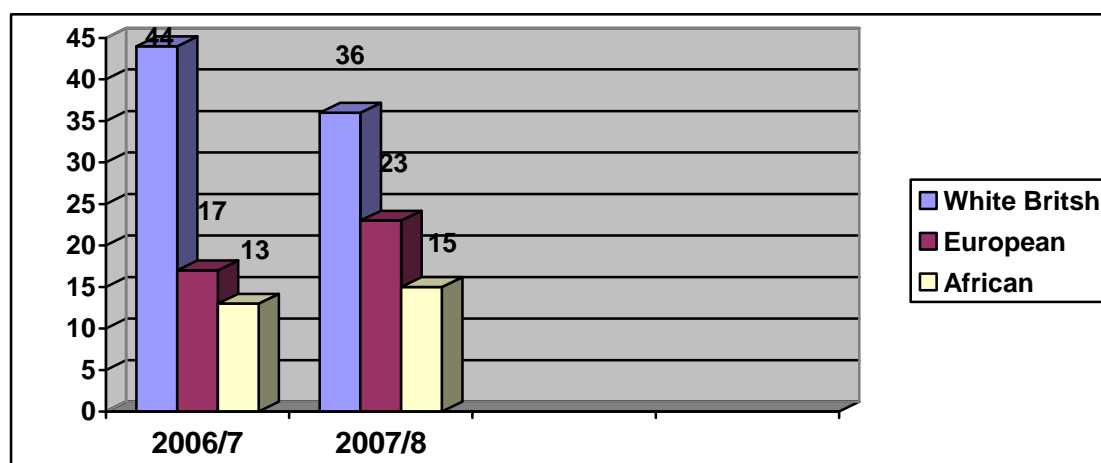
applications for bank accounts, access to the Worker Registration Scheme and the requisite qualifications they need to work on construction sites.

If we look at the key activities on which clients consult us apart from housing, the most popular categories for advice were benefits (17%), identity issues (14%) and “other” needs at 12% - this category tends to include advocacy with utility providers and bill payments in general.

The diversity in the communities using our service continues to grow



In the last annual report, we hinted at the trends we had been seeing in the last quarter of 2006/07 – namely, an expansion in the number of European and African clients accessing the service. That trend is now embedded with White British clients still our largest group but European clients and those of African origin continuing to grow. The chart below compares 2006/7 in percentage terms to this current year.



The numbers of White British clients has reduced from 44% to 36%, whilst our European clients have grown from 17% to 23% and our African clients to 15% of all clients seen.

If we look at our client’s nationality, 56% were born in the United Kingdom, 15% are European Union citizens and 14% came originally from the A10 nations.



Getting our people housed

In 2007/8, 298 people approached us for help with housing- 29% of all the clients seen by the Advice service. Of these, we were able to work with 239 (86% of the total) – those we could not work with did not have any recourse to benefits in the UK or did not have benefits or sufficient forms of identification to enable us to put them forward for housing – or were clients who failed to attend interviews which would have provided an offer of housing. Of those we could place, we managed to place 70% of all those who needed housing.

The overall climate has become more difficult – local homeless departments now very rigorously control the accommodation supply in their borough and act as “gatekeepers” for any hostel spaces or have priority for a number of days before one can approach the hostel with a referral. We just hope to adopt a lateral approach and to explore as many options as we can on a client’s behalf.

Looking towards the future

During this year and in the forthcoming year, we have seen and will see some significant changes in emphasis.

Local Housing Allowances – A fairer way forward for private rented property

This change in Housing Benefit means that private tenants renting property or rooms from a private landlord and on a low income may be able to claim and receive Local Housing Allowance (LHA) from 7th April 2008. The idea is to simplify the rules and to allow tenants more freedom – both financially, and in the choice of where they live.

LHA is a flat rate allowance based on the size of household and the area in which a person lives. The same entitlement rules apply as for Housing Benefit i.e. based on a person's income and savings and proof of a valid tenancy. Payment will normally be to the tenant, who will then pay the landlord.

The aim is to allow people the freedom to negotiate personally with landlord and it reflects the government's "personalisation" agenda, where the aim is to hand back responsibility to the individual.

There have been some issues with respect to protecting vulnerable private tenants and local authorities have sought to enable them to make the choice for their local housing allowance to be paid directly to their landlord.

The Introduction of Employment and Support Allowance from October 2008

From 27 October 2008, the Employment and Support Allowance will replace Incapacity Benefit and Income Support claimed on the grounds of incapacity for anyone making a new Incapacity claim. **The new system will consider what an individual is capable of, and what help and support they need to manage their condition and return to work.** Between 2010 and 2013 it is intended that existing claimants will be brought into the new system. In fact, in the pilot areas where the government's "Pathways to Work" programme has been in operation, was extended to include Incapacity claimants in "work-focused" interviews.

There has been much media coverage of the Government's planned target to reduce the numbers of those on Incapacity by 1 million within ten years.

Many service users I have spoken to in the general community and in the mental health community have made the point that how can they be expected to get back into employment if they have no skills or very limited skill-sets. For the scheme to be successful, a combination of support and up-skilling needs to be in place if people are to become "job-ready" and as Scope (the learning disabilities charity) recent report highlighted, men and women with health and disability problems are rarely the first choice for employers. The impact on our work will be in preparing and informing people of the changes and the choices that they can make and where possible linking people into training or volunteering and job-broking opportunities, so that they can meet the requirement for work-focused activity.

The power of personal belief

We began by talking about being an agent in building and supporting our clients in their hopes and aspiration. I just wanted to reflect on one story where belief, determination and hope came together. Some time ago, a client whom we'll call Paul came to see us. He had been forced to leave home because his wife and family could no longer cope with his gambling addiction and the instability it brought to their life. We were very lucky to find him a place in the one residential programme we are aware of that deals with this form of addiction. The programme demands no small commitment from those who go through it with intense one-to-one and group work over an extended period. Just recently, he came back to see us. It was great to see him – he had completed the programme.

As with all addictions, he still needs support but luckily that support now includes his wife and family again and he is back in work (he was a skilled plumber) He and his family have a future and, yes, we enabled it but we can only help if people believe that they can help themselves – as Dale Carnegie, the American writer on self-improvement observed.

"People become really quite remarkable when they start thinking that they can do things. When they believe in themselves they have the first secret of success". Dale Carnegie

It just remains for me to extend my thanks to all who support our centre for continuing to believe in the people who use our service.

Campaign Report

By
Bandi Mbubi



The Year Gone By, the Year Ahead

When Nannette Ffrench founded the Manna Society 26 years ago and got friends together to embark on a journey into this modern-day wilderness, the mission was, and still is, to eradicate and prevent homelessness and poverty. Both, in a practical and immediate way, by offering a wide-range of services to stop and prevent homelessness through the Manna Day Centre, and by campaigning to change the socio-political system that lead people to become homeless and poor in the first place. Not only is it crucial to provide for essential needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health and emotional support, it is equally important to campaign so as to bring about social justice to all God's children so that they no longer fall prey to homelessness and poverty.

All our activities are therefore geared towards bringing about this fair and just society. The following is a summary of what we have undertaken in order to achieve this goal through campaigning.

I. Reflecting on the Year Gone By

1. Speaking Engagements

We are fortunate to have the support of churches and schools who offer us a platform not only to appeal for funds, but also to raise awareness of homelessness and other poverty related issues.

Throughout the past year, we have spoken to 26 such gatherings of churches, schools and interested groups to mobilise our supporters to take an active role in bringing about a fairer society. The general feedback we have received has been very positive and we are pleased that this has been the case.

2. Assisting the ROBES Project build its Capacity

Partnership has been important in working towards our overall goal of eradicating poverty. We have shared our experience, funds and knowledge with like-minded emerging organisations so as to build their capacity to help homeless people. We recognise that we cannot succeed in this endeavour alone, but through joint work we can achieve our ultimate goal.

In the last 2 years we have partnered ROBES, a church-based organisation offering emergency shelter to 13 people nightly from January to March. The ROBES Project was formed out of the need to have a night shelter locally. Until it came into existence, there was only one Churches run Winter Shelter south of the River Thames, in Croydon. We have helped both with the planning and with the fundraising needed to run such a Winter Shelter. I have been the main link between the ROBES Project and the Manna Society, managing our relationship with them.

3. Partnering with Church Action of Poverty (CAP)

Through our involvement with CAP, we have taken part in campaigning nationwide about issues that affect people who live in poverty. Issues such as; predatory lending, the destitution that asylum seekers face when they are refused asylum and all support is withdrawn, and advocating for greater participation in decision-making of people affected by poverty.

II. Planning the Year Ahead

Four areas will be the focus of our campaigns in the coming year:

1. Speaking Engagements

When invited to speak, not only will we continue to report on how our activities impact on the lives of our service users but also we will continue to raise ever greater awareness of the plight of people affected by homelessness and poverty. We also hope to encourage churches to take social action conducive to our overall goal of eradicating poverty in the UK.

2. Get Fair

We are taking an active role in launching the Get Fair campaign (to be officially launched on 11 September 2008). Through this campaign, led by Church Action on Poverty and in conjunction with other like-minded organisations, we will be mobilising all our supporters to exert pressure on all political parties to adopt policies that seek to eradicate poverty in the UK before 2011.

3. Task Force

Housing Justice UNLEASH is a membership forum and network for churches, agencies and individuals concerned with housing and homelessness in London. They have formed a group to review and suggest ideas and policies which will benefit homeless people and hopefully take concrete action to prevent any deterioration of the plight faced by them. This partnership, which we are part of will be highlighting good or bad practice through our communications either jointly and/or separately so as to bring about a better deal for all God's children.

Using this three-thronged approach, we hope to go a long way towards achieving our aim of eradicating homelessness and poverty in the UK.



Treasurer's Report

By
Tony Charlton



Pages 14 & 15 of this Annual Report contains a summary of our financial position for the year ended 31.3.08. The full management report and audited financial statement will be available at the annual general meeting.

These accounts show a deficit for the year of £891. However, if the surplus of £12,151 on restricted funds is ignored, there is a deficit for the year of £13,042. It is reasonable to ignore the restricted funds because these funds can only be used for a specific purpose and, if they are not used for that purpose they need to be returned to the original donor. Excluding these restricted funds, the accounts show income of £356,392 and costs of £369,434. So costs are well over £30,000 per month. The income and the costs mentioned above include £26,000 as an estimated value of food and other items donated during the year. So, excluding the goods in kind, it costs around £28,600 per month to run the centre. We have reserves at the year end of £140,463 and this sum is enough to fund slightly less than five months' running costs.

We read regularly at the moment about a down-turn in the economy. This may affect us in two ways. It may be that there will be an increase in unemployment and this would probably lead to an increase in demand for our services. It may also mean that some of our donors feel less able to fund us. In these circumstances, we are grateful to have been able to build up the reserves mentioned above. We are grateful to God for having provided us with so many generous donors and I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of those donors for their past donations and also for the future contributions which we need to receive in order to continue with our work.



The Manna Society

Balance sheet
as at 31 March 2008

	£	2008 £	£	2007 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets		1,282		2,442
Current assets				
Debtors	6,373		3,014	
Cash at bank and in hand	245,560		231,150	
		<u>251,933</u>		<u>234,164</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year				
	(100,601)		(83,101)	
Net current assets		<u>151,332</u>		<u>151,063</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>152,614</u>		<u>153,505</u>
Charity Funds				
Restricted funds		12,151		-
Unrestricted funds		140,463		153,505
Total funds		<u>152,614</u>		<u>153,505</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Management committee on 14 August 2008 and signed on their behalf, by:



The Manna Society

Statement of financial activities
for the year ended 31 March 2008

	Restricted Funds 2008 £	Unrestricted Funds 2008 £	Total Funds 2008 £	Total Funds 2007 £
Incoming resources				
Incoming resources from generated funds:				
Voluntary income	20,000	336,976	356,976	381,617
Investment income	-	19,416	19,416	15,040
Total incoming resources	20,000	356,392	376,392	396,657
Resources expended				
Costs of generating funds:				
Costs of generating voluntary income	-	11,691	11,691	10,073
Charitable activities	7,849	333,939	341,788	334,623
Governance costs	-	23,804	23,804	2,715
Total resources expended	7,849	369,434	377,283	347,411
Net incoming resources / (resources expended) before revaluations	12,151	(13,042)	(891)	49,246
Provision for major works	-	-	-	(50,000)
Net movement in funds for the year	12,151	(13,042)	(891)	(754)
<i>Total funds at 1 April 2007</i>	-	153,505	153,505	154,259
Total funds at 31 March 2008	12,151	140,463	152,614	153,505

All activities relate to continuing operations.