

A year in Our Life

Our Life Annual
Review 2009/10

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Thoughts from the Chair

Sir David Henshaw
Chair, Our Life



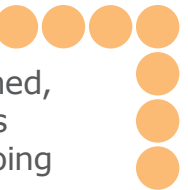
Our Life has had a very successful first year, making a significant impact working with people and organisations who want to make a difference to wellbeing and health in the North West.

During the year Our Life has delivered key regional campaigns involving public engagement and advocacy. Around alcohol harm we have galvanised support for a new code of practice for the sale of alcohol to outlaw irresponsible and excessive drinks promotions. We have also built significant support for a minimum price per unit of alcohol – a logical continuation of Our Life’s work during the Big Drink Debate, the largest ever survey of how people in the North West view alcohol. Our Life has also started work on the issue of food via a region-wide deliberative consultation exercise and is working closely with stakeholders to deliver this.

Our Life’s work has been recognised as highly valuable by its stakeholders across the region and has also been picked up nationally as innovative and leading the agenda for better health.

Since Our Life was established, the economic landscape has changed considerably. Ongoing recessionary pressures in the UK, and government action to address the budget deficit are all heavily influencing the health environment. Public sector spending has also decreased and there is a greater emphasis on community involvement and on prevention as ways to reduce demand on public services.

However, the coalition government has signalled its strong intention to give citizens and communities greater opportunity to shape policy and deliver solutions. Given that Our Life was established to engage and involve the public on wellbeing and health issues and advocate for change to support healthy lifestyles, I believe that the organisation is well placed to respond to this new agenda.



Viewpoint

from the Chief Executive

Dr Alison Giles
Chief Executive, Our Life



Although Our Life works closely with the health sector, we sit outside of the NHS. This independence enables us to 'do things differently', while still complementing the work of NHS North West and other health stakeholders who want to achieve the real and lasting changes that will make the North West a healthier place to live.

Our activities this year have focused on wellbeing and health challenges and include delivery of public engagement projects, support with PR, the development of public affairs and advocacy skills and knowledge, and provision of up-to-the-minute public affairs intelligence.

At Our Life we take pride in our strong, evidence-based approach to campaigning. That's why we collect robust and accessible evidence and information to support our work and help our members. We also bring public opinion to bear in support of this evidence and work with citizens who want to achieve change.

Our Life is central to region-wide advocacy for alcohol. Without the work we have undertaken this year, there would be no robust region-wide statistics on public

opinion around alcohol to inform local activities. By producing policy analyses and model consultation responses and by stimulating coordinated activity on a wider geographical footprint, we have enabled our members to punch above their weight and achieve greater impact for the North West.

Working together we are able to challenge current policy and business practices that encourage unhealthy choices and we can give residents the opportunity to shape the solutions and the power to influence public policy that will achieve change to benefit the whole region.

During the year, we have also contacted all our key partners in the region to undertake an evaluation into people's awareness of Our Life, what we do and our activities. The feedback we have gathered is vital and we are using it to help evaluate what we do, whether we are doing it well, and where we need to improve to make Our Life even more effective.



Working Together

Working together to make a difference

Our Life's vision is clear – for the North West to be one of the healthiest regions in the UK. To achieve this vision it works together with people and organisations who want to make a difference, raising issues and championing the views of citizens to people in positions of power in government, business and the media to break down the barriers to better wellbeing and health.

The North West has a number of socio-economic challenges including significant deprivation and child poverty. However, some of the social and health concerns across the region persist beyond these socio-economic factors and are deemed to be 'cultural'. For example the heavy consumption of alcohol is attributed to our culture and is seen across all socio-economic groups.

There is now an increasing urgency to tackle this culture around health and lifestyle choices. It is clearly evident that just providing information and seeking to change attitudes is not enough to change our lifestyle culture.

Engaging and involving

Our Life was set up to engage and involve the public and organisations in a debate on

how to improve health in the North West and to confront the obstacles and barriers to better health that prevent people from reaching their full potential.

The external barriers to wellbeing and health that Our Life has focused on to date are those that directly influence people's health behaviours, such as the pricing of alcohol and the food supply chain. However, removing such external barriers, promoting health education and ensuring access to prevention and clinical services, together are not sufficient to reduce health inequalities. Where we live, the quality of jobs, schools, housing, and our material wealth all affect our wellbeing and the extent to which we can exert control over our lives. This has a direct and significant impact on our lifestyle choices and on our health.

Our Life continues to believe that by uniting individuals and organisations to work together, we can create, challenge or change the significant policies and business practices that have influence over people's behaviour, health and wellbeing.

Our Life is becoming the North West's mechanism to enable coordination, collaboration and impact to occur at the scale required to achieve this change.

Highlights of the year



Compared to many organisations in the wellbeing and health sphere, Our Life is a relatively young organisation. Despite its youth however, Our Life has made a very significant impact to date, and its achievements over the year under review are testament to that.



- To deliver its ambitious agenda for change, Our Life launches as an industrial and provident society, a co-operative for the benefit of the community.

In partnership with Cumbria and Lancashire Public Health Network, Our Life delivers two successful Big Drink Debate summits and campaigns development workshops.

- Building on the success of the Big Drink Debate and working with stakeholders across the region, Our Life launches the *Stop Excessive Alcohol Promotions* campaign to win public and professional support for the government's draft code of practice for alcohol retailers.



- Our Life launches survey to garner North West residents' views on the government's proposals for the code of practice on alcohol sales and on the broader impacts of current alcohol consumption. The survey shows strong public support for new measures to protect local communities from the impacts of alcohol misuse.

- Our Life launches survey for North West public sector professionals based on key elements of the proposed code for alcohol retailers and on a minimum price per unit of alcohol. The survey shows strong backing for government action on excessive alcohol promotions.

Our Life calls on stakeholders to highlight the need for action on minimum price per unit of alcohol in organisational responses to the government's draft consultation on a new code of practice on alcohol sales, something that the consultation omitted.



- Our Life's campaigning sees over 3,500 people back tough measures to stop drinks retailers selling alcohol irresponsibly.

Our Life submits formal response to the government's draft consultation on a new code of practice for the alcohol industry capturing this support.

Data from the Big Drink Debate appears in a BBC *Panorama* programme looking at the UK binge-drinking culture. The statistics highlight the huge numbers of people avoiding their town centres at night due to the drunken behaviour of others.

- Our Life gives evidence in a review commissioned by regional leaders' forum 4NW on the extent to which agencies delivered actions identified in the 2006 *Regional Economic Strategy*.



- Our Life publishes *Supermarket Scandal* report, on sale and promotion of cheap alcohol by supermarkets in the North West.

Our Life provides project management services for Smoke & Mirrors, a young people's engagement project for Smokefree North West. Includes a campaign weekend for 100 young people and film competition. Winning short-film entry *TRD* is screened as a trailer in North West cinemas in December 2010.

Our Life debates "Is alcohol too cheap?" with politicians at the Conservative party conference, North West Liberal Democrat conference and the North West Labour conference.



- Our Life responds to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) consultation on food labelling.

Our Life presents its response to the FSA consultation on saturated fat and added sugar reductions, and on portion size availability.



- Our Life publishes briefing on legality of a minimum price per unit of alcohol to help PCTs and local authorities counter claims this is illegal.

Our Life publishes first local alcohol factsheets based on Big Drink Debate findings to help regions address alcohol harm.

Our Life polls 1,000 North West parents to help stop proposed introduction of junk food and alcohol product placement on TV. Findings used in government consultation response and alongside other campaigners are instrumental in defeating proposals.

Our Life moves to new offices in Northern Quarter, Manchester.



- Our Life delivers communications and media relations strategy for the launch of the *North West Mental Wellbeing Survey* findings.

Our Life, North West Development Agency and Department of Health North West publish joint study, *Health and Wellbeing Industries: Exploring the Potential*.

Our Life helps Dr Brian Iddon, MP for Bolton South East table an early day motion calling on the government to tackle deep discounting and below-cost selling in the off-trade.

Highlights of the year



- Our Life, NHS North West and Pfizer Ltd publish *Reaching Out* the results of a collaborative survey into the attitudes to health of 'harder to reach' groups in the North West.

Our Life carries out evaluation survey to inform its approach over the period 2010-2011 and any strategic changes that need to be made.



- Our Life submits a consultation response to *RS2010*, the regional strategy for the North West of England, calling for wellbeing and health to be placed at the heart of economic development.

“The Big Drink Debate summit enabled us to further develop our thinking about the strategic influence we can have in working to shift our unhealthy alcohol culture.”

John Ashton

Director of Public Health, NHS Cumbria

The region’s alcohol advocacy has been extremely effective for two reasons: the strong partnership between Our Life and its member primary care trusts (PCTs); and because Our Life brings public opinion to bear in support of the evidence for action. For these reasons, Our Life has enabled the region to punch above its weight and achieve national recognition for its leadership around combating alcohol harm.

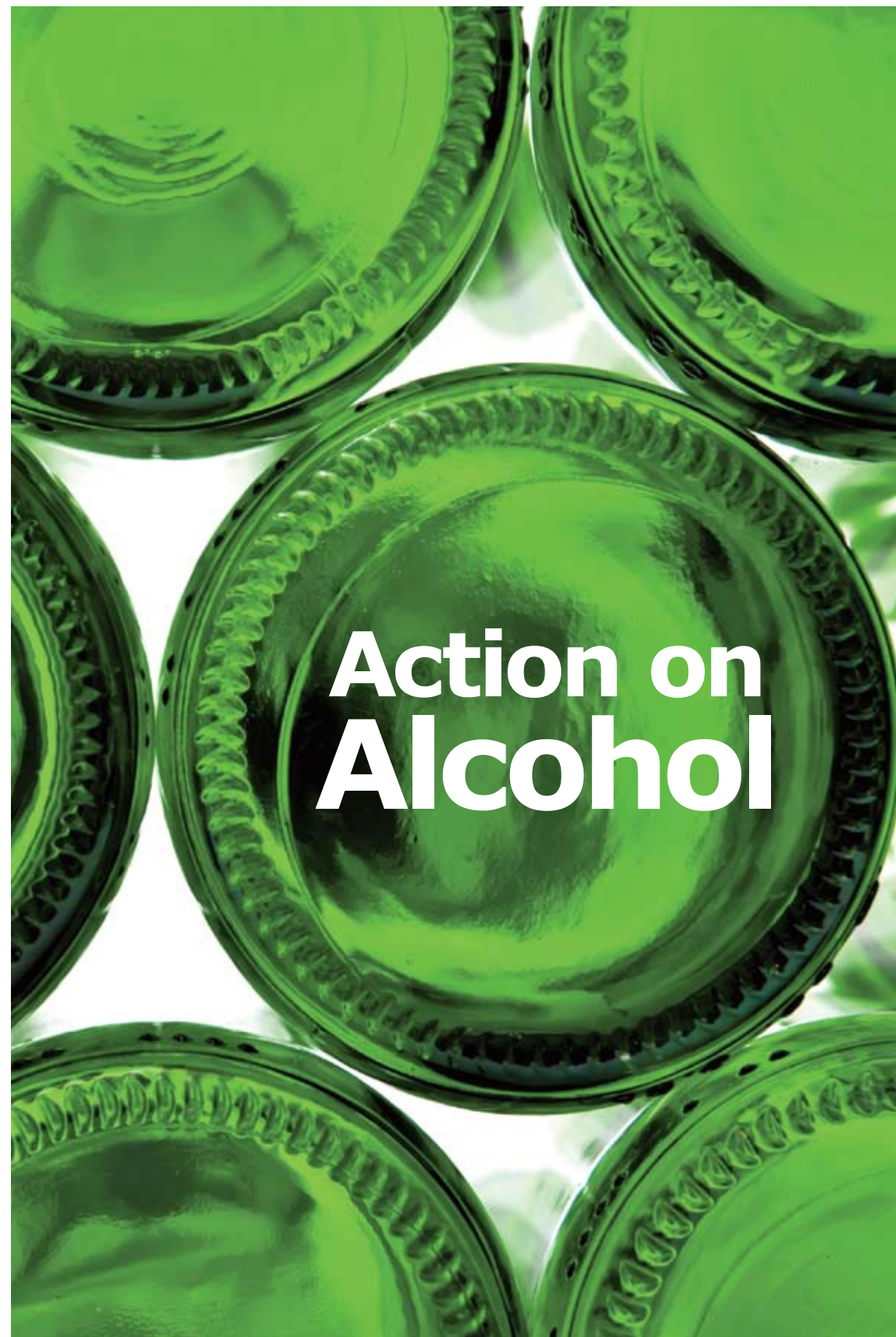
Building on the success of the Big Drink Debate, which charted the views of 30,000 people across the North West on alcohol and alcohol harm, Our Life partnered with the Cumbria and Lancashire Public Health Network in April 2009 to deliver two summits and campaigns development workshops. The events challenged the audience to consider the issues around changing a culture in which regular excessive drinking is considered the norm and gave Our Life the opportunity to share the success of the Big Drink

Debate and present partnership actions and ideas to engage local people in campaigns.

Tackling excessive alcohol promotions

The next few months were an exciting time for Our Life, with the launch of the “Stop Excessive Alcohol Promotions” campaign in May 2009 to drive a significant positive response from members of the public and the public sector to the government’s draft consultation on a new code of practice for the alcohol industry.

Activities consisted of developing a campaign postcard and working in partnership with stakeholders across the region including NHS, fire and rescue and police to capture public and stakeholder responses to the code; a poll of 1,000 North West residents on the proposed regulatory conditions contained within the code and on the broader impacts of current alcohol consumption; an online opinion survey targeted





at professionals in the public sector based on key elements of the proposed code and on a minimum price per unit of alcohol; circulating a brief to guide stakeholders' own formal responses to the consultation and carrying out extensive public affairs and advocacy activity in ten key geographical areas identified based on the findings of the Big Drink Debate.

3,500 people used the surveys and postcard campaign to back tough measures to stop drinks retailers selling alcohol irresponsibly – showing that there is real and tangible public support for action to reduce alcohol harm.

Our Life then submitted a formal response to the consultation that captured the support generated for the code of practice – with calls for further tough measures to force the drinks industry to behave more responsibly.

This work enabled Our Life to forge stronger relationships with local partners. The results were used to inform the organisation's ongoing campaign strategy and advocacy work around raising the profile of alcohol harm and the need for the mandatory code among elected members across the North West.



At the party conferences

The code of conduct campaign was quickly followed by Our Life holding fringe debates at the Conservative party conference, the Liberal Democrats' North West conference and at Labour's North West conference. The debate asked the question: "Is alcohol too cheap?" and was a fantastic opportunity to engage politicians on the issues that matter to their constituents.

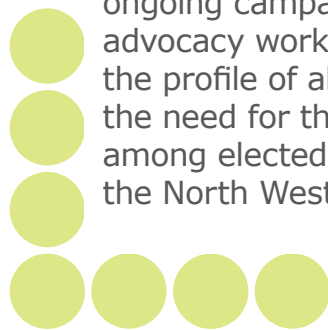
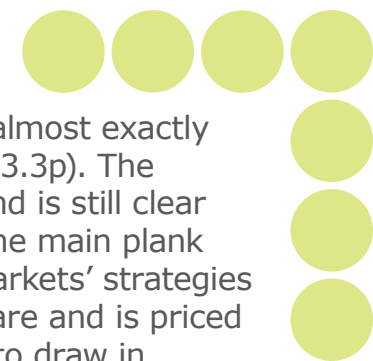
Supermarket Scandal report

Alcohol Awareness Week in October 2009 was the perfect opportunity to draw attention to the grave consequences that the supermarkets' headlong rush to outdo each other in selling cheap alcohol is having on the region's health. And in the report, *Supermarket Scandal: Super-cheap alcohol sales in the North West*, Our Life revealed the staggering pocket-money prices at which alcohol is being promoted and sold. The findings showed just how easy these super-cheap deals can make it for people to drink at harmful levels, with alcohol routinely being sold for as little as 14p per unit! To put alcohol affordability in context, Our Life found that the cheapest 330ml can of Coca-Cola was available for a cost of 32.7p and a 440ml can of 5.3% ABV Strongbow cider could

be purchased at almost exactly the same price (33.3p). The conclusion was and is still clear – alcohol forms the main plank of all the supermarkets' strategies to win market share and is priced aggressively low to draw in the consumer.

Letter to the prime minister

At the same time, as part of another regional initiative coordinated by Our Life, 19 of the 24 directors of public health in the North West put their names to an open letter addressed to the prime minister. This called for the government to take action by bringing forward legislation to introduce a minimum price per unit of alcohol of 50p. The public health directors argued that the introduction of a minimum price would potentially save 3,000 lives each year, cut crimes by over 45,000 and save the country £1 billion every year in alcohol-related costs. The letter was published in *The Times* and widely reported in the local and national media. Bringing together public health leaders in the North West in this way sent a powerful message and also made opinion formers sit up and take notice.



“We believe this co-ordinated approach towards minimum pricing could bring about real health and social benefits to our region as well as impact on the levels of violent crime.”

Councillor Andrew Knowles

Chair of the Cheshire & Warrington Health & Wellbeing Commission and Cheshire East's Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Minimum price bylaw

Also in October 2009, Our Life sought advice from its legal representatives and prepared a paper outlining the legal status of minimum price using the proposed minimum pricing policy in Scotland as an example. The legal advice obtained from Cobbetts LLP refuted the claim that minimum pricing imposed at the sole instigation of a public authority would be an infringement of national and EU competition law.

Campaign success

Our Life's campaigning and that of many other organisations proved successful when, in January 2010, the government announced its new mandatory code for alcohol retailers. While Our Life warmly welcomed this, it was disappointing that the government did not bring forward any measures to tackle the role of the supermarkets who continue to act irresponsibly by selling alcohol at pocket-money prices.

Our Life's campaigning work on alcohol continues apace and it will carry on sharing alcohol intelligence with stakeholders through its alcohol bulletins via its links with national organisations and advocacy bodies. Our Life will continue to support local minimum price

initiatives and to develop the legal 'road map' to minimum price policy implementation.

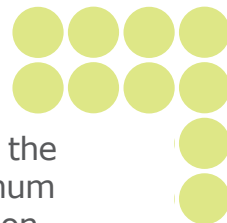
Press releases issued in response to media stories about the price of alcohol have generated significant media interest both nationally and locally and led to numerous media opportunities for the region's PCTs.

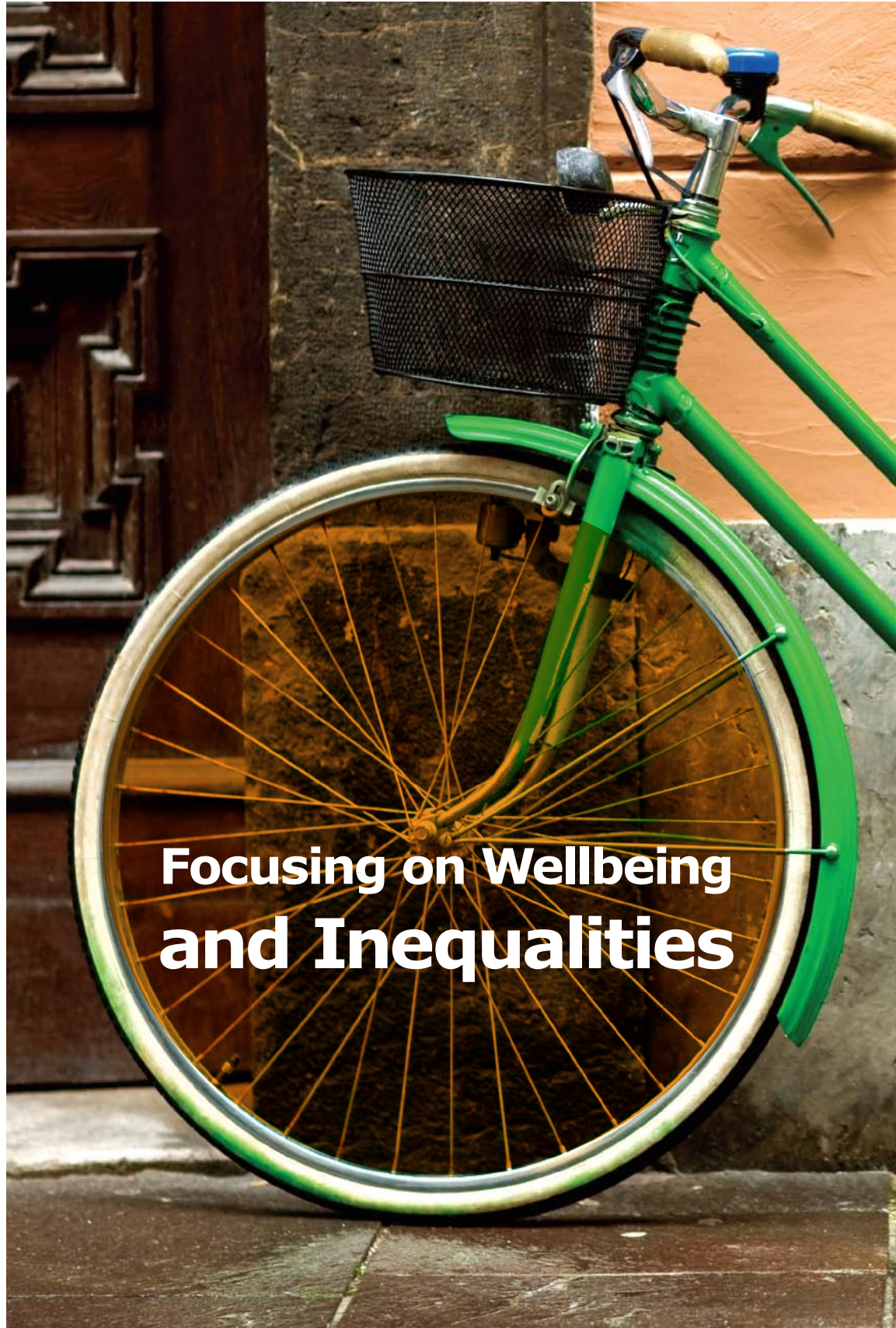
Our Life's growing reputation on alcohol issues with the media is evidenced by the increasing number of unprompted enquiries received from local and national press seeking Our Life comment.

“All the signs are that all sorts of other options have now been explored and a bylaw is now considered the best route for tackling this problem.”

Kevin Jaquiss

Partner, Cobbetts LLP





Focusing on Wellbeing and Inequalities

As a wellbeing and health campaign organisation, Our Life recognises that wellbeing influences people's decision-making on lifestyle issues so it is important to promote it. Positive wellbeing is central to both community and individual resilience, our ability to function well, be productive, healthy and cope with adversity and change.

Closing the gap between the health and wellbeing of those who are the most and the least well off in communities throughout the North West has proved difficult even when the financial environment appeared more favourable than it is now. Many of the decisions taken in the past have inadvertently created some of the health problems that we face today, so closing this gap is a major challenge.

Health and the North West economy review

It was a mark of how far Our Life had come in such a small space of time when, in September 2009, the organisation was asked to participate in a strategic review of health and the North West economy. The review, commissioned by 4NW, the regional leaders' board for the North West, focused on the extent to which regional agencies have

delivered the actions identified in the *Regional Economic Strategy* 2006; the impact of alcohol on the North West economy; and the impact of health-related worklessness on the North West economy.

Health and wellbeing industry report

Following a joint commission by Our Life, the North West Development Agency and the Department of Health North West, Adroit Economics and GH Regeneration published their report, *Health and Wellbeing Industries: Exploring the Potential* in January 2010. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate that health can be a driver of the economy and not just a drain on resources and to encourage greater synergy across public health policy and economy policy. Our Life's interest in the research was to understand to what extent the economy could drive greater provision of wellbeing and health services and to complement the work Our Life is undertaking to drive consumer demand.



Marmot Review

Professor Sir Michael Marmot's *Fair Society, Healthy Lives: A Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England Post-2010* was published in February 2010. Throughout 2009, Our Life had been involved in a number of workshops and groups contributing to and looking at how the North West can use the review to implement new thinking and actions to tackle inequality.

Reaching Out report

How can the health service and others in the public sector better connect with excluded populations? That was one of the questions posed by Our Life's *Reaching Out* report, launched in March 2010.

The launch was the culmination of a two-year partnership between Our Life, Pfizer Ltd and NHS North West to examine the attitudes to health of 'harder to reach' groups in the North West. The collaborative survey was commissioned to inform Our Life's campaigning activities, by understanding the best mechanisms for communicating with excluded population groups about health issues. The report also had significant implications for how the NHS commissions services and disseminates information to its local population and Mike Farrar, chief executive of NHS North West, was a keynote speaker at the report's launch in Wythenshawe.

Regional economic strategy

In February 2010, Our Life put forward its views on the region's approach to reducing health inequalities, calling for more emphasis on wellbeing and health objectives in its consultation response to *RS2010*, the North West's new integrated Regional Strategy.

Our Life also put together a briefing note for stakeholders on the *Giving Children a Healthy Start* report from the Audit Commission released in February 2010 which highlighted the need to reduce inequalities from an early age. The focus was on children under five and suggested that children living in a deprived area are 54% more likely to live in workless households and experience worse health inequalities.



“Instead of preaching or blaming people, Our Life is there as a partner with people. Because it's not part of the NHS, it can do things differently.”

Mike Farrar

Chief Executive, NHS North West



Campaigning on Food

Food and diet is an area of concern in the North West because of rising numbers of people who are overweight or obese, living with diabetes, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

In November 2009, Our Life formally responded to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) consultation on draft voluntary recommendations for the food industry that would help consumers eat less saturated fat and sugar. The FSA suggested that the food industry reduce the amount of saturated fat and sugar in cakes, pastries, biscuits, buns, chocolate confectionery and soft drinks. It also recommended a smaller standard single-portion size for chocolate confectionery. Given that so much of what we eat is driven by what the food industry puts into our food, Our Life saw these recommendations as very important and believed that they could have a massive influence on our diets for the better.

At the same time, the FSA also consulted on recommendations for the front-of-pack labelling of food products, with recommendations that should help consumers better understand portion sizes and also help them make healthier choices concerning the salt, sugar and saturated fat content of food.

Our Life very much welcomed the proposed scheme to provide a consistent approach to nutritional labelling and Our Life and others can complement this initiative by raising public awareness of the benefits of using food labels to guide healthy choices.

Product placement

In December 2009, when the government published a consultation proposing a rethink of their stance on product placement on TV, Our Life immediately sprang into action. Although the government's proposals wouldn't include children's TV, it was Our Life's concern that this measure would expose children to marketing messages from junk food and alcohol companies through advertising during family entertainment programmes such as *X Factor* and *Coronation Street*. Our Life believed that these proposals would only add to the factors that perpetuate the region's diet and alcohol-related problems.

In a bid to increase responses to the government's consultation, Our Life called upon its stakeholders to send their views to the government. It also pressed the case to politicians on the issue and raised awareness where possible. Our Life then conducted

“There is a lot of value in what we are doing with Our Life. It is a refreshing way of taking an issue to the community but putting them in the driving seat.”

Abdul Mulla
Manager, Blackburn with Darwen Healthy Living

an opinion poll of parents' views into the government's proposals. The poll informed Our Life's response to the consultation and demonstrated overwhelming concern among parents about the proposals.

In February 2010, Our Life heard the welcome news that the government had watered down its plans to allow products to be marketed through television programming. This decision was in no doubt due to the pressure exerted on ministers by campaigners – including those in the North West and Our Life – and was a great accomplishment which should now ensure that children are protected from product placement of junk food as well as promotions which glamorise alcohol.

Talking Food Taking Action

By the end of February 2010, Our Life had completed the first planning phases of its next public campaign, Talking Food: Taking Action. The region-wide project in conjunction with local community-based partners aims to chart and build a clear understanding of what concerns people about food and will engage communities to better understand how the food system affects their health outcomes. It presents a fantastic opportunity to engage the region's

more marginalised communities who are less able to get the best out of the existing food system.

By linking the problems people have with food and diet to the wider food supply system, it will help identify solutions to the North West's food issues, from obesity to access to healthy food, to sustainability. Our Life plans to work with local people to develop and implement campaign actions which will effect change. Earlier in the year, a stakeholder group, comprising Heart of Mersey, the Food Standards Agency and regional and sub-regional public sector food leads, met to consider the campaign approach. Our Life will continue to work with the stakeholder group to identify local partners who will manage the deliberative events which will be delivered from late spring 2010 through to December 2010.





Branching Out Our Life Consultancy Work

Our Life's knowledge of the wellbeing and health sector, allied with the skills and experience of its professional staff, means that it is able to carry out consultancy projects for a range of clients in the public, private and third sectors. Our Life's consultancy services are focused on high quality public affairs, public relations, public engagement and research projects that complement its key aims of tackling barriers to wellbeing and health.

Services provided in 2009/10 are outlined below.

Smoke & Mirrors

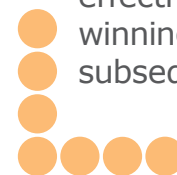
In May 2009, Smokefree North West (SFNW) wanted to develop a youth advocacy programme, Smoke & Mirrors, aimed at raising young people's awareness of the negative practices of the tobacco industry and commissioned Our Life to lead the work. This included designing and delivering the youth engagement work, comprising of a film competition, a school and youth club resource pack and a campaign design weekend for 100 young people aged 14-18 from across the region. Our Life also laid the foundations for ongoing advocacy work with the campaign weekend participants and advised SFNW on how they should most effectively take this forward. The winning short-film entry *TRD* was subsequently shown as a trailer

in North West cinemas in December 2009 and won a prestigious Roses design award.

North West Mental Wellbeing Survey

Building on the region-wide PR success with the Big Drink Debate and the media contacts it has built, Our Life was commissioned by the North West Public Health Observatory to deliver the communications and PR around the launch in January 2010 of the *North West Mental Wellbeing Survey* findings. This involved the coordination of press releases across the region, and the delivery of media training to key spokespeople. The initiative saw the communication of the results to over 1,000 separate stakeholders and 52 separate pieces of media coverage with a total circulation of over 1,000,000.

Undertaken in 2009, the survey of 18,500 North West residents was carried out in response to a growing need to understand more about positive mental health and wellbeing and highlighted the crucial role of mental wellbeing in improving people's lives. This work tied-in to the Year of Wellbeing being run in Liverpool in 2010 and provided an ideal opportunity to begin engaging the public on the issue of inequalities, but in a language that is largely positive and solution-oriented rather than the more traditional focus on the problem.





In March 2010, Our Life carried out the first strategic review of its activities since it became an independent organisation in February 2009. The organisation contacted all its key partners in the region to formally collate, process and feedback stakeholder opinions of Our Life's operations, with the purpose of improving how the organisation is perceived and to inform future initiatives. The study combined an online survey of all its stakeholders and a series of face-to-face and telephone interviews with senior and non-senior personnel.

The findings showed that over 85% of Our Life's funders and members are satisfied with Our Life across all areas of activity. Typically less than 5% of respondents overall indicated any dissatisfaction. The findings also showed that 57% of respondents deemed Our Life's activities to be effective in addressing public health issues in the North West. So, Our Life can be confident that it is being recognised for its work.

There was a clear correlation between awareness of Our Life's activities and satisfaction with Our Life's work and the findings highlighted the need to increase awareness of Our Life among people working in local authorities.

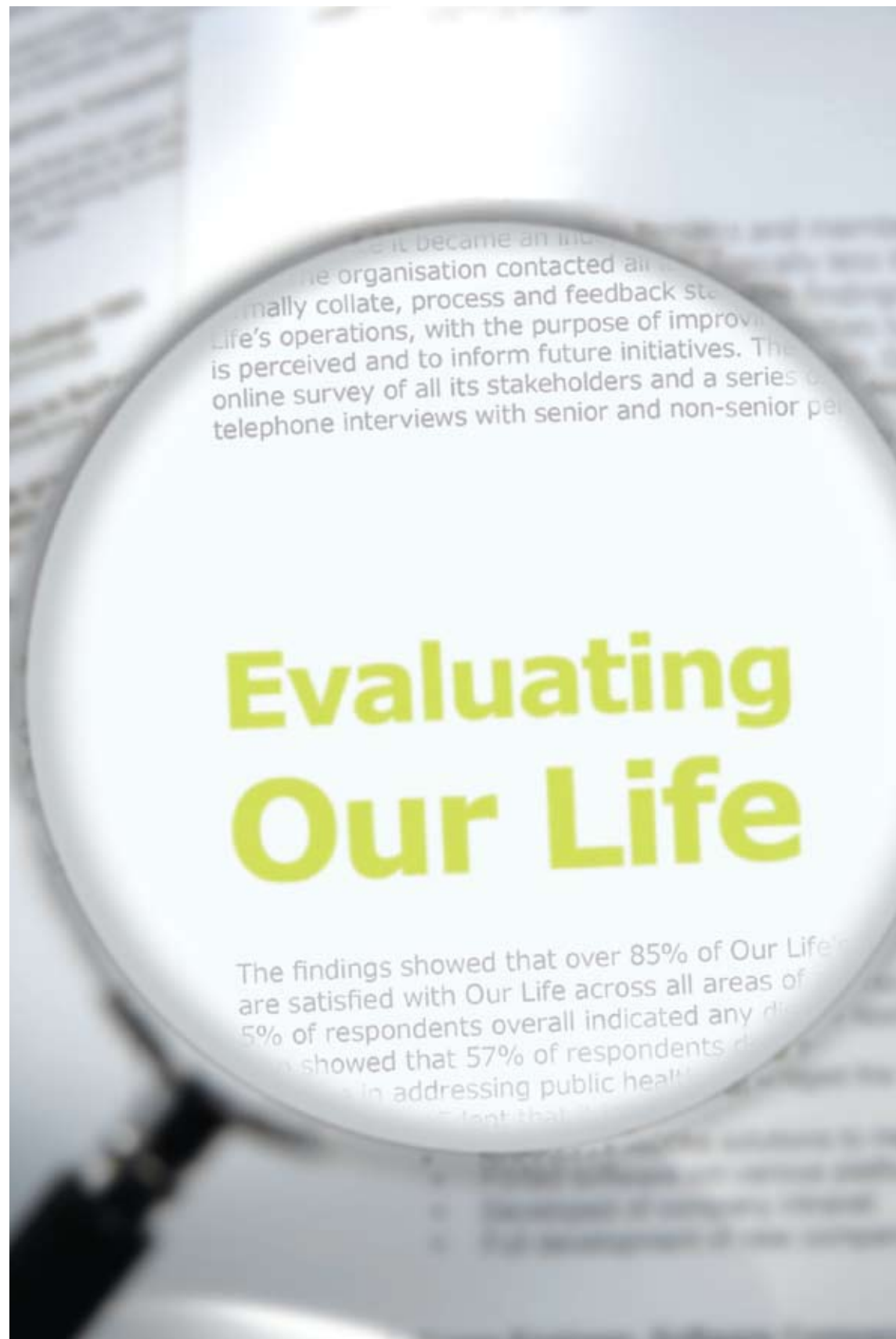


The findings also indicated that members feel they have adequate opportunities to engage in campaigns and media work.

The assessment is also encouraging for Our Life's membership. 31% of respondents indicated a desire for themselves or their organisation to become a member of Our Life.

The stakeholder survey has given Our Life information on the types of activities that its members value. It will look to use this information to develop a stronger membership offer in the future.

To improve on its online presence and promote its campaigning message to a much wider audience, Our Life has recently launched its new website. A range of interactive features will enable better communication, interaction and collaboration between Our Life and its rapidly expanding stakeholder base.





Board Members' Report



The Board present their report and company financial statements for the period 9 February 2009 to 31 March 2010, prepared in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is an industrial and provident society for the benefit of the community, incorporated with the Financial Services Authority on 9 February 2009. The company was established under rules that establish the objects and powers of the organisation and how it will be governed. Our Life is an exempt charity.

Our Life is governed by its board who meet quarterly. Board Membership is representative of organisations that make up Our Life membership. Our Life reports annually to members and stakeholders through an annual report, audited annual accounts, an AGM and other meetings as appropriate.

Our Life is not involved as a legal entity with any other parties except by membership and through contracts for services. It is an independent membership organisation. Voting rights are extended to all members.

Board members serving during 2009-10

- Sir David Henshaw (Chair)
- David Parr

- Mike Burrows
- Rosemary Hawley
- Kate Vokes
- Paul Horrocks
- Ken Perry
- Bernard Hogan Howe (resigned Aug 2009)
- Trevor Purt (resigned Mar 2010)
- Sue Page (resigned Mar 2010)

Organisational structure

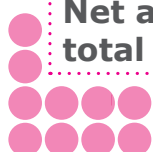
Our Life employs nine full-time members of staff and one part-time member of staff: one chief executive, four heads of department, four officers, and an office manager. The management team consists of the chief executive and the four heads of department. They report to the Our Life board at its quarterly meetings. During the accounting period Our Life employed one full-time member of staff on a fixed term contract to provide communications services to the Department of Health North West, and a temporary campaigns officer.

Risk statement

Board Members have reviewed the risks faced by the organisation and put in place systems to mitigate risk. A comprehensive register of Our Life business risks has been produced which is reviewed quarterly by the finance subcommittee of the Board and is available on request from the Our Life registered office, 4th Floor, Dale House, 35 Dale Street, Manchester, M1 2HF.



Income	£
Turnover	1,117,928
Total income	1,117,928
Expenditure	
Administrative expenses	865,188
Total expenditure	865,188
Net increase in funds	252,740
Balance sheet summary as at 31 March 2010	
Fixed assets	51,874
Net current assets	200,866
Net assets and total funds	252,740



These summarised financial statements contain information from both the Income and Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet for the period 9 February 2009 to 31 March 2010, but are not the full statutory report and accounts. The full financial statements were approved by the Board Members on 22 July 2010. They received an unqualified audit report and copies may be obtained from the Our Life registered office, 4th Floor, Dale House, 35 Dale Street, Manchester, M1 2HF.

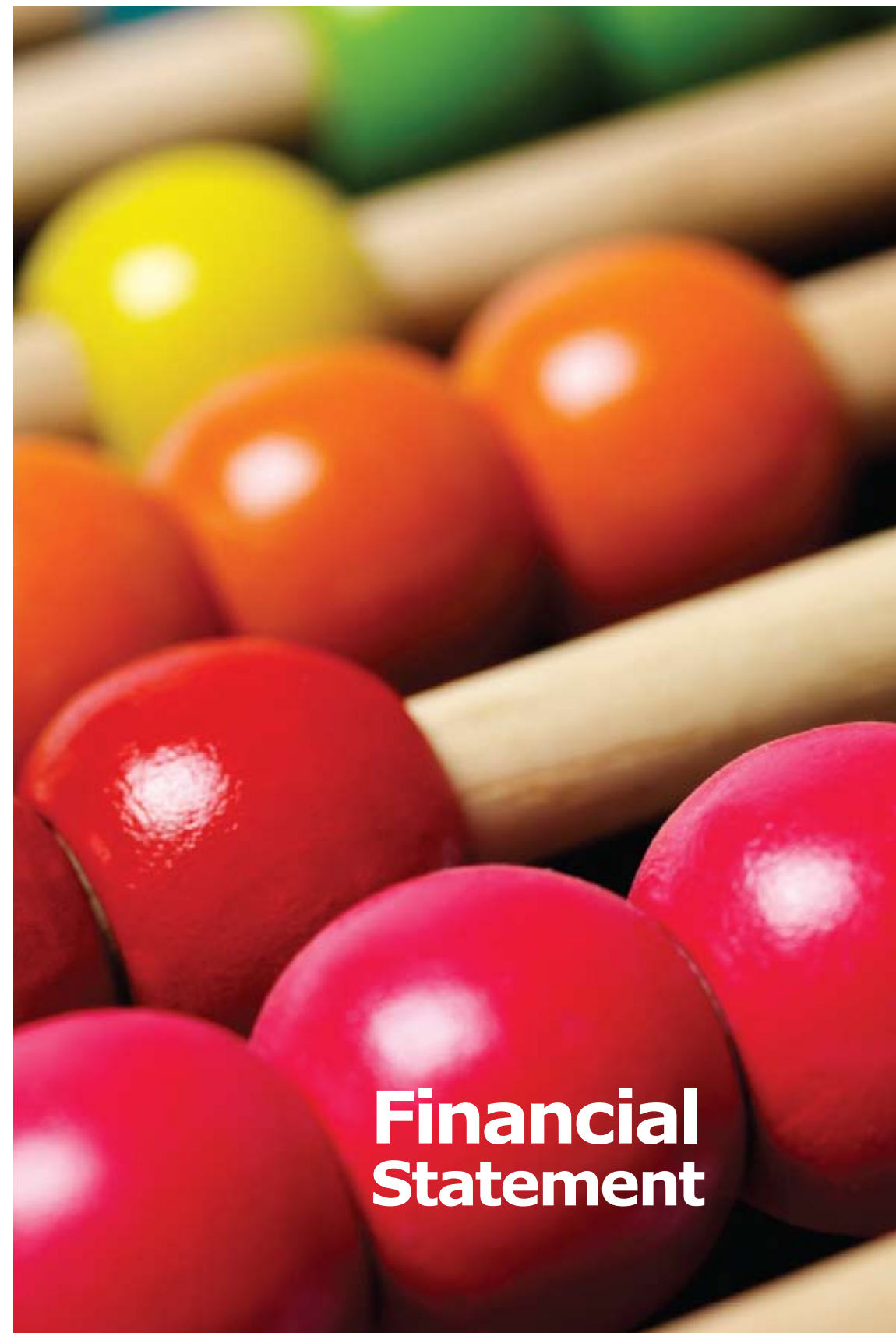
Signed on behalf of the Board Members.

Summary income and expenditure account and balance sheet for the period 9 February 2009 to 31 March 2010.

Sir David Henshaw
Board member (Chair)

David Parr
Board member

22 July 2010



Financial Statement



Next Steps

Since Our Life was established, it has made a significant impact. The work that has been delivered has been recognised as highly valuable by the primary care trusts (PCTs) in the region and has also been picked up nationally as innovative and leading the agenda for better health.

However, the economic landscape has changed considerably, with the private sector being hard hit during the recession. This has significantly reduced the ability of Our Life to attract private sector funding to support its activities. In light of this, Our Life has been largely dependent on membership funding from its key stakeholders, the PCTs, and the grant it received from the Strategic Health Authority (SHA).

The public sector landscape is now changing too. The SHA is being abolished in 2012 and the PCTs are to be abolished in 2013, with responsibility for public health shifting to the local authorities. The role of the North West as an administrative region is being much reduced, with a greater focus now on city regions, and localism.

However, the wellbeing and health challenges remain, with life-expectancy lagging behind and high rates of preventable ill-health and death in more deprived areas. Although funding for public health

will be ring-fenced, demand for services is outstripping supply and other local authority funding that pays for the services underpinning wellbeing and health is being reduced. There is therefore an even greater need to engage the public in their own health and in activities to support and grow the wellbeing and health of their communities.

The coalition government has recognised that a significant lever to change are the public themselves supported by communities and social business. Our Life is well-placed to respond to this invigorated agenda and support local areas in achieving sustainable improvement.

Given that the government has signalled its strong intention to offer citizens and communities greater opportunity to shape policy and deliver solutions in their local areas, Our Life is well placed to take further strides forward as community engagement takes centre stage in the months and years ahead.

Details of the activities planned for 2010–2011 can be found in the *Our Life Business Plan 2010–2011* available on request from the Our Life registered office, 4th Floor, Dale House, 35 Dale Street, Manchester, M1 2HF.

Thank you to all those member organisations who have helped Our Life to make a real difference to wellbeing and health in the North West over the past year.



Our Life Member Organisations 2009-2010

- Central and Eastern
- Cheshire Primary Care Trust
- Heart of Mersey
- Liverpool Primary Care Trust
- NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan
- NHS Blackburn with Darwen
- NHS Blackpool
- NHS Bolton
- NHS Bury
- NHS Central Lancashire
- NHS Cumbria
- NHS East Lancashire
- NHS Halton and St Helens
- NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale
- NHS Knowsley
- NHS Manchester
- NHS North Lancashire
- NHS North West
- NHS Oldham
- NHS Salford
- NHS Sefton
- NHS Tameside and Glossop
- NHS Warrington
- NHS Western Cheshire
- NHS Wirral
- Smokefree North West
- Stockport Primary Care Trust
- Trafford Primary Care Trust



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