

**Freeflow Counselling Services**

**Charity Number 1077053**

**Annual Report and  
Financial Statements**

**Year ended 31st August 2023**

## **Freeflow Counselling Services**

### **Reference and administrative details**

#### **Trustees**

Mr Gordon Howley  
Mrs Lindsay Cunningham  
Miss Mahvish Ayaz  
Ms Kirsty Street

#### **Chief Executive Officer**

Ms Edel McGinn

#### **Principal address**

BPRCVS  
62-64 Yorkshire Street  
BURNLEY  
Lancashire  
BB11 2BT

#### **Bankers**

Unity Trust Bank PLC  
Nine Brindleyplace  
Birmingham  
B1 2HB

#### **Registered Charity Number**

1077053

#### **Independent Examiner**

M R Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA  
KM  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Block C  
The Wharf  
Manchester Road  
Burnley  
Lancashire BB11 1J

## **FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023.

### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

To provide emotional and mental health support by the provision of counselling and supportive help to those in need. To empower people to take control of their own lives and to make choices about their own direction. To give support and information to those who ask for help. To recruit and maintain appropriately trained counsellors and offer ongoing support and liaison with other training and supervision agencies.

### **PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The trustees confirm that we have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

### **REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

Freeflow continues to provide a free, confidential counselling service for men and women aged 16+. The service is going from strength to strength, and we are having excellent feedback from both service users and professionals.

We continue to take many referrals from various organisations throughout the community but encourage more self-referrals as this encourages the client to take responsibility for their therapy and reduces the amount of DNA's.

We currently have 2 bilingual counsellors and a team of 17 volunteer counsellors. We continue to see a huge increase in requests for placements as we are the only local service offering face to face counselling for 12 sessions and above. At the end of August 2023 we had 72 clients on our waiting list - significantly higher than previous years due to an increased demand as the stigma of accessing counselling diminishes.

### **Our main achievements during the year include:-**

The ongoing attainment of the Schools Counselling Service. We have Counselling contracts with 19 local primary and secondary schools. These contracts range from 3 hrs per week to 46 hrs per week, combined we offer over 160 hours per week. This work continues to subsidise Freeflow, pay the school counselling team and their manager/supervisor. We contracted with new schools due to our commitment to face to face work. Our manager, Edel, continued to adapt risk assessments to enable this work to continue. We also continued to offer the free service face to face throughout the year. Again, Edel continued to adapt and monitor risk assessments to support this work.

We continue to offer IAPT work to support the local ICS in partnership with Lancashire Women Centre. Despite the continued impact of covid closure we surpassed the target set for the year. We saw a total of 420 clients rather than the agreed 275. The ICS commended this achievement as did our partners. Subsequently they agreed to recontract for 2 years and increased our target for 2023 -2025

## **FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**

This is of huge importance as it enables Freeflow to continue offering the free service to the community.

We currently have a passionate and committed team of 10 school counsellors and an equally dedicated hardworking team of 17 volunteer counsellors. Each of these counsellors deserve praise and recognition for the way they have continued to adapt their work during the continued restrictions. Freeflow continues to thrive due to this admirable commitment.

Edel continues to review and update our policies and procedures to ensure Freeflow works within the expected guidelines of the NHS. This has been more significant post pandemic to alleviate client anxieties.

Edel and Judith continually develop new assessment/monitoring sheets to help acquire the necessary data for the NHS for every client we complete a client assessment form which informs us: age, location, ethnicity, referral source, GP, physical and emotional health, dependent children/ older relatives, financial situation, employment, issues with drugs/alcohol and indication of issues. We also have a system in place to evaluate the counselling from the client's point of view; each client is asked to provide feedback on the service received, with the option of complete anonymity. These feedback sheets are closely monitored by the manager and are used to improve the service. These evaluations indicate that the service is highly appreciated and beneficial to the service users. Edel continues to maintain close links with other counselling services throughout the district.

We continue to be the longest established counselling and mental health charity in the area consistently supporting members of the community aged 5 upwards. On average we offer counselling and mental health support to approximately 1200 members of the community each year. We now have 2 satellite services - one in Padiham and one in Clitheroe. This makes the service more accessible to those relying on public transport. We hope that in time we will be able to do this in each area we support.

We know that our work makes a difference not only to the children and adults who access our support but also their families and the wider community. We are immensely proud of the amazing referral network that we've established over the last 26 years. It is our collaboration with local authorities, schools, Gp's and other residents within BPRCVS that enables us to reach those most in need.

We think you will agree that 26 years is an amazing achievement worth recognising.

Our Chair Kathryn Addison tendered her resignation in January 2023 due to family reasons and I, Gordon Howley was appointed as Chair until a time that she can return.

As always, I would like to take this opportunity as chairperson to thank everyone who is involved with Freeflow for all their hard work and continued support, it is greatly appreciated. Special thanks must go to Edel for her continued dedication to the charity, the team, school contracts and clients. Each year she reviews, evaluates and improves the service where necessary. This ensures each school renews their contract so the school team continue to get paid and Freeflow continues to thrive. She continues to support the entire team, including the committee when needed. The charity would not be where it is today without unwavering dedication. I'd also like to thank Judith for her ongoing support to Edel to achieve the IAPT contract which enables the service to grow.

## **FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**

Freeflow will continue to offer young people adults, couples and families, the excellent, confidential service it is renowned for. Well done and thank you to everyone involved with Freeflow.

### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The receipts and payments account is on page 9. This shows an excess of receipts of £19,518. Unrestricted fund balances are £102,963 at the year end. The charity's reserves policy is to maintain three months expenditure, which equates to approximately £54,000. The excess is held to further the work of the charity.

### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The charity is controlled by its constitution and is an unincorporated charity. The board of Freeflow Counselling Services are elected from the membership organisations which make up the network. The board meets on a regular basis to conduct the business of the Charity.

#### **Risk management**

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The charity ensures that all staff and counsellors comply with its safeguarding policy and appropriate DBS checks carried out.

Approved by the trustees on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr Gordon Howley – Trustee

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

M R Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA  
KM, Chartered Accountants  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Block C,  
The Wharf  
Manchester Road  
Burnley  
Lancashire  
BB11 1JG

26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES****RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT****Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

	<b>Unrestricted funds (£) 31.8.23</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds (£) 31.8.22</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Donations	2,460	4,806
School Income	150,175	133,288
Miscellaneous	943	151
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies	81,354	76,412
Total Receipts	234,932	214,657
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Staff costs (inc Employer NI, Pensions)	47,553	46,347
Supervision	8,595	8,300
Counselling fees	<u>135,262</u>	<u>108,735</u>
	191,410	163,382
Donation	114	663
Operating costs	22,552	17,938
Accountancy fees	1,110	1,080
Payroll fees	228	216
Total payments	215,414	183,279
Net of receipts (payments)	19,518	31,378
Cash funds brought forward	83,445	52,067
Cash funds carried forward	<b>102,963</b>	<b>83,445</b>

**FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**As at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

<b>CASH FUNDS</b>	<b>31.8.23</b>	<b>31.8.22</b>
Bank current account	102,963	83,445
	<hr/>	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Independent examination/accountancy	1,000	1,000
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These accounts were approved by the trustees on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024

Trustee



**FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

- 1      Basis of preparation  
These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.
- 2      Fund Accounting:  
  
Unrestricted funds are those that can be expended at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity
- 3      Taxation  
The charity is not liable to tax on its charitable activities.  
The charity is not registered for VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the expense to which it relates.
- 4      Transactions with trustees  
No remuneration nor expenses were paid to trustees or any persons connected with them during the year or previous year.