

Freeflow

Counselling Service

Charity Number 1077053

**Annual Report and
Financial Statements**

Year ended 31st August 2024

Freeflow Counselling Services

Reference and administrative details

Trustee	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 3BT
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank PLC Nine Brindleyplace Birmingham B1 2HB
Registered Charity Number	1077053
Independent Examiner	M R Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA KM 1 st Floor, Block C The Wharf Manchester Road Burnley Lancashire BB11 1JG

FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The charity's objects as per its constitution are:

1. To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of all women who live or work in the burnley district of Lancashire, and surrounding areas.
2. The preservation and protection of good health, by the provision of a free and confidential counselling service.

The objectives are:

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 3 bilingual counsellors and a team of 18 volunteer counsellors. We have seen a huge increase in requests for placements as we are the only local service offering face to face counselling. At the end of August 2024 we had 39 clients on our waiting list - significantly lower than previous years due to an increase in our volunteer workforce.

FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

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 168 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 Talking Therapies to support the local ICS in partnership with Lancashire Women Centre. We are proud to have surpassed the target set for the year. We saw a total of 412 clients rather than the agreed 250. The ICS commended this achievement as did our partners. Subsequently they agreed to recontract and increased our target for 2023-2024.

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 11 school counsellors and an equally dedicated hardworking team of 18 volunteer counsellors. Each of these counsellors deserve praise and recognition for their commitment to our charity and the professional way in which they work. 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.

Edel and Judith Watson 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 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 27 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 27 years is an amazing achievement.

FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

THANKS

We are blessed to have fantastic and loyal volunteers supported by our CED and service manager Edel – a highly motivated and very talented team leader. As Chair, I would like to thank them and I also wish to recognise the wonderful support of the schools who buy in our service the NHS and the wider community. As we look back on a very worthwhile and successful year it seems as if the coming twelve months will be even more challenging for many and our strategy is to ensure that we are best placed to react accordingly. I know that we can rely on the teams support to help us deliver what is needed for those who turn to us for help.

Finally our thanks to 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 keeping Freeflow going throughout the most difficult time. She ensured all the schools honoured their contracts and in doing so the school team continued to get paid and Freeflow continued to thrive. She continues to ensure the charity grows and supports those in need. I'd also like to thank Judith for her ongoing support to Edel to achieve the Talking therapies contract which enables the service to grow.

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 are on page 6. This shows an excess of receipts of £5,967. Unrestricted fund balances are £108,930 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 dated 27th October 1999 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 23rd June 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr Gordon Howley Chair of Trustees

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 31st August 2024.

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
1st Floor, Block C,
The Wharf
Manchester Road
Burnley
Lancashire
BB11 1JG

23rd June 2025

FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

Year ended 31st August 2024

	Unrestricted funds (£) 31.8.24	Unrestricted funds (£) 31.8.23
RECEIPTS		
Donations	2,861	2,460
School Income	144,279	150,175
Miscellaneous	155	943
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies	81,899	81,354
Total Receipts	229,194	234,932
PAYMENTS		
Staff costs (inc Employer NI, Pensions)	51,692	47,553
Supervision	11,318	8,595
Counselling fees	<u>136,913</u>	<u>135,262</u>
	199,923	191,410
Donation	750	114
Operating costs	21,054	22,552
Accountancy fees	1,260	1,110
Payroll fees	240	228
Total payments	223,227	215,414
Net of receipts (payments)	5,967	19,518
Cash funds brought forward	102,963	83,445
Cash funds carried forward	108,930	102,963

FREEFLOW COUNSELLING SERVICES
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

As at 31st August 2024

CASH FUNDS

Bank current account

31.8.24

108,930

31.8.23

102,963

LIABILITIES

Independent examination/accountancy

1,000

1,000

PAYE, NIC & Pension

3,176

-

Approved by the trustees on 23rd June 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr Gordon Howley Chair of Trustees

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.
- 5 Related parties
There were no related party transactions during the year.