



Bereavement Support for the Borough of Ealing

Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts

for the year ended
31st March 2025

Registered Charity Number 1077140

Suite 11, Central Chambers
The Broadway
Ealing
London W5 2NR

Phone: 020 8896 2800

Email: bereftbereavementsupport@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.bereftbereavementsupport.co.uk

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Bereft's governing document is the Model Constitution for an Unincorporated Charitable Association which was adopted on the 4th June 1999

OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY

Bereft's object is to provide a service of support and counselling to bereaved people in the London Borough of Ealing; thereby alleviating distress and suffering and helping in the avoidance of future mental health problems.

SPECIFIC INVESTMENT POWERS

Bereft's investment powers are conferred by the Trustees' Act 2000

BANKERS

Charities Aid Foundation Bank Limited 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr Stephen Dover
2 Castlebar Road
Ealing
London
W5 2DP

TRUSTEES AND GOVERNANCE

TRUSTEES

Trustees who served throughout the period of this report unless otherwise indicated, were as follows:

Lucas Dawe
Stuart Derbyshire
Katherine Elks (resigned 14th October 2025)
Rosaleen Gallen
Lisa Langley-Jones (resigned 16th October 2025)
Deirdre McLellan (Secretary)
Jacek Opienski (resigned 14th October 2025)
Kevin Scott (Chairman)
Kevin Stinton
Christopher Wickenden (Treasurer)

Trustees are elected or re-elected annually by the members in General Meeting.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY – DEIRDRE McLELLAN

APRIL 2024 TO MARCH 2025

“My counsellor J was amazing and an absolute credit to this charity. She helped me immensely and I really looked forward to our sessions as I always felt a weight had been lifted afterwards”

I almost always start these reports with a quote from the feedback of one of our clients to show that, while there've been quite a number of developments in Bereft since we set up in 1999 as a service for Ealing borough, the need for our service never abates. Indeed, demand tends to increase most years. And this has required some streamlining. Our very capable Manager, Jennifer, comments:

“When I joined Bereft as a trainee counsellor in 2002, I quickly figured out that I was part of a respected and established organisation that was small but perfectly formed to deliver caring bereavement counselling to any bereaved resident of Ealing borough over the age of sixteen.”

Fast forward to 2025, Bereft remains a small charity (though slightly larger now) and continues to do what it says on the tin! And this is in spite of the myriad challenges faced over our 25 years, be it the pandemic and its aftermath, financial uncertainty or having to find new premises.

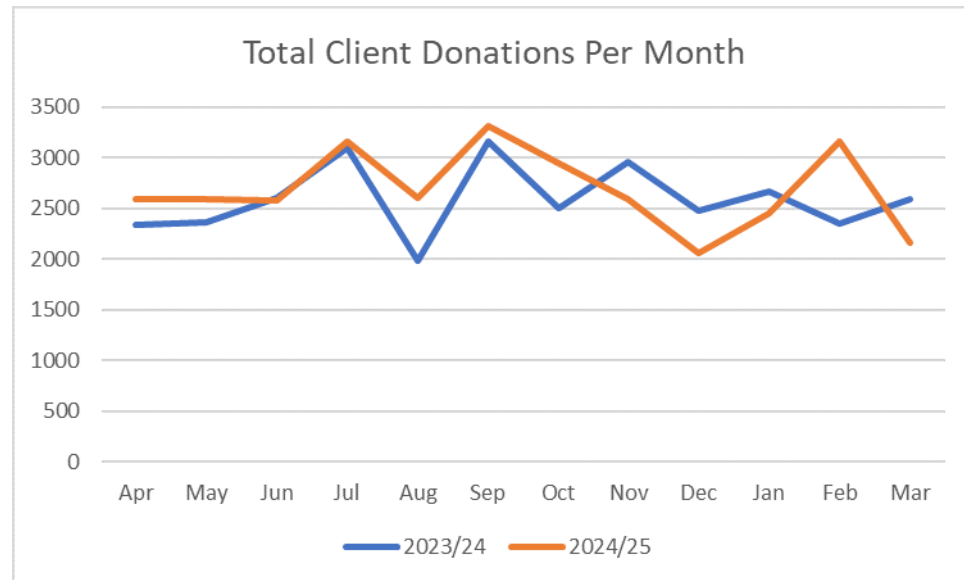
We've lost some much-loved colleagues along the way, but also gained new counselling supervisors and trustees, a number of whom are past counsellors who have since qualified after a placement within thus and pleasingly, want to continue to support us. These days Bereft - in line with changes in need and expectation, offers the flexibility of on-line or phone counselling if preferred to face-to-face in our counselling room as before. Additionally, our website now offers an online self-referral form as well as more flexibility for clients to donate to us.”

DONATIONS

Our excellent and tech-savvy Finance and Client Administration Manager, Jo Houghton has enabled a variety of methods to donate to Bereft; from BACS to a card-reader or directly through the website. As before, there is a secure system for cash donations, which a number of clients prefer. Donations are essential for us to continue the service, and to support those clients whose financial circumstances are such that they can contribute little or nothing. No-one is turned away because of inability to donate. The average donation per client was down from last year to £9.70, reflecting that 17% were unable to make any financial contribution. 16%, however, made regular donations of £30-£60 per session. We are also benefitting from a number of regular donors, together with significant donations including over £1,000 raised through sponsorship at a charity sports event.

A modest Health and Social Care grant also helps with the ever more expensive renting of a counselling room, conveniently situated opposite Ealing Broadway station. Our Trustees continue searching for other sources of funding in these difficult times.

DONATIONS GRAPH



“Very happy with the counselling I received and felt I was in a safe space - no judgement and allowed me to express myself, cry and be angry without any judgement”

“My counsellor C was wonderful - please thank her for me”

CLIENTS

The number of enquiries for the Bereft service (269) was identical to last year. Each client has up to 24 sessions arranged for them, (though this can be extended if the Supervisor agrees it is necessary to complete the work), so the 2,352 sessions delivered this year was spread between 213 clients (229 last year). Only 12% of clients needed the offered allocation - the average number being static at 11 sessions during the past few years.

Our counselling room is conveniently situated opposite Ealing Broadway station, and we also hired rooms at CAPE in North Ealing. We again offered a “hybrid” service, this year seeing 65% of clients in person, and the remainder online or on the phone. This can be a boon if a client has physical problems reaching our counselling room. Matching client and counsellor availability is something of a logistical feat, and experienced Bereft part-time staff Sam Miller, our super-efficient Client Assessor/Client liaison, Jennifer Pitt and Jo Houghton work to keep the waiting list to a minimum, while supporting those waiting. Male to female split was 16% to 84% (23% to 77% last year), of which 86% were aged 18-64 and 9% were 65-74. Many had a role as a carer for the person who died, or who have others to care for.

We know from their postcodes that our clients are widely spread throughout the Borough and we are under pressure to take on client from the surrounding Boroughs where there is no similar service.

Ethnicity. Clients came from a diverse range of 30 different stated backgrounds: 40% white British (44% last year) and everyone else of mixed heritage, Asian, African, European, American, Australian and South American.

How clients hear of us. As in previous years, the majority of clients hear of us through their GP, Social prescriber or other NHS mental health services. We do not discriminate against clients with a mental illness diagnosis as long as they are able to benefit from our counselling. Some find us online or by word of mouth in the community.

COUNSELLORS

Most are drawn from a number of training organisations, individually applying to us for a placement once in their second year of training (or later). They are carefully interviewed for their suitability to counsel our bereaved clients, and if accepted (not all are) are well supported by our experienced staff and, in nine groups of four - on zoom - by Counselling Supervisors. This ensures the quality of our service, as well as giving much-needed support to counsellors doing emotionally demanding work. Of these, the male to female ratio is 28% to 72%. We ask for a commitment of a year, but many stay on after they qualify, which we hugely value.

TRAINING

Another aspect of our commitment to quality and support is the free training sessions we offer to counsellors during the year. This year online topics were “Rupture and Repair” and “Monitoring Clients’ Wellbeing”. We also held an in-person gathering to which past ‘alumni’ were invited to celebrate our 25 Years and share experience and encouragement. The guest speaker was Sophie Samuel, who talked about 1) growing up with a famous therapist mother, and 2) how she has seen the change in the need for counselling in that those presenting are more unwell.

SUPPORTING THE SERVICE

We run nine Supervision Groups - essential to ensure good quality, ethical counselling by counsellors, and we are grateful to our Counselling Supervisors for the work they put in to support the Bereft Service. Behind it all are our Trustees, some pleasingly long-serving and some more recent loyal and committed people joining who were Bereft counsellors themselves. Our Honorary Treasurer, Chris Wickenden, needs a special mention for the amazing amount of work he does for us.

So, in spite of increasing financial worries, we have every reason to hope this worthwhile charity will continue to provide such a good service to the many bereaved people of Ealing who need help to get through the pain and distress of the (often) worst times of their lives.

“Bereft was a godsend”

“This compassionate service is vital and (I think) shows humanity at its best”

REPORT OF THE TREASURER – CHRISTOPHER WICKENDEN

The trustees acknowledge the small deficit for the current year (£1,430) but are confident that the plans that they have in place to develop additional as well as existing sources of income, coupled with the current level of reserves will enable BEREFT to continue to provide the service it is committed to, into the foreseeable future. Going forward the trustees are developing a sustainable financial model that will enable BEREFT to operate an annual surplus sufficient to restore BEREFT’s reserves to an appropriate level in accordance with Bereft’s reserves policy (note 7).

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2025

	Undesignated		Designated		Total	
	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year
RECEIPTS						
Donations	39,177	32,124	-	-	39,177	32,124
Gift Aid (Note 4)	1,788	1,983	-	-	1,788	1,983
Grant (Note 6)	22,250	3,750	-	-	22,250	3,750
Legacy (Note 2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment Income	1,087	1,241	-	-	1,087	1,241
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£64,302	£39,098	-	-	£64,302	£39,098

PAYMENTS

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Combined Commercial Insurance	554	568	-	-	554	568
Counsellors' Supervision	6,424	5,610	-	-	6,424	5,610
Manager & Assessor	16,017	17,581	-	-	16,017	17,581
Administrator & Assistant	23,573	22,934	-	-	23,573	22,934
Volunteers' Expenses	116	433	-	-	116	433
Room Hire	4,566	3,733	-	-	4,566	3,733
Training	765	681	-	-	765	681
Counsellor support (Note 2)	-	-	-	-	-	-

SUPPORT COSTS

Office Rent, Service Charge & Premises Insurance (note 5)	8,238	10,051	-	-	8,238	10,051
Office Light & Heat	523	444	-	-	523	444
Phone & Broadband	2,726	2,511	-	-	2,726	2,511
IT Costs including support & hosting	1,364	1,384	-	-	1,364	1,384

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

Printing, Postage & Stationery	-	495	-	-	-	495
Sundry Admin & Office Costs	555	909	-	-	555	909
Bank & JustGiving Charges	276	277	-	-	276	277
Legal & Professional charges	35	683	-	-	35	683
Rental Deposit on Central Chambers	-	1,503	-	-	-	1,503

TOTAL PAYMENTS	£65,732	£69,797	-	-	£65,732	£69,797
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NET CASH INFLOW / OUTFLOW (-)

-£1,430	-£30,699	-	-	-£1,430	-£30,699
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OPENING BALANCES 1st APRIL 2024

CLOSING BALANCES 31st MARCH 2025

£45,182	£75,881	£394	£394	£45,576	£76,275
£43,762	£45,182	£394	£394	£44,146	£45,576

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND
LIABILITIES AT 31st MARCH 2025**

	Undesignated This Year	Last Year	Designated This Year	Last Year	Total This Year	Last Year
FIXED ASSETS						
Computer equipment – Laptop & Printer purchased in 2016/17 for £1,189 – net book value at year end >>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Computer equipment - Laptop & Printer purchased in 2018/19 for £1,029 net book value at year end >>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office Furniture - purchased in 2016/17 for £306 net book value at year end >>	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	-	-	-	-	-	-
CURRENT ASSETS						
Gift Aid Claim outstanding	283	471	-	-	283	471
Rent Deposit	1,503	1,503	-	-	1,503	1,503
Cash & Bank Balances as per page 7						
CAF Gold Account	40,614	43,381	394	394	41,008	43,775
CAF Current Account	3,130	1,793	-	-	3,130	1,793
Cash in hand	8	8	-	-	8	8
Total cash at bank & in hand	43,752	45,182	394	394	44,146	45,576
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	45,538	47,156	394	394	45,932	47,550
CURRENT LIABILITIES						
NEST Pension Liability	37	-	-	-	37	-
Accrued Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	37	-	-	-	37	-
NET ASSETS	£45,501	£47,156	£394	£394	£45,895	£47,550

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

- The accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.
- The charity has used fund accounting principles in the preparation of these accounts.
 - Funds
 - All funds are unrestricted
 - The charity received a legacy from the estate of Catherine Fowler, a former Chairwoman of Bereft during the year ended 31st March 2022. The trustees resolved to designate this legacy to be used to provide additional support for our volunteer counsellors. No payments were made out of this fund during the year (2023/24 - £NIL)
- The trustees consider that no capital commitments have been entered into other than shown in the financial statements (2023/24 - £Nil).
- Receipts from HMRC in respect of Gift Aid claimed on donations received are included in the Receipts and Payments account in the year in which they are received. Any Gift Aid due to the charity for the current financial year but not received by the year end, is shown in the statement of assets and liabilities above.
- On 12th April 2023, the trustees entered into a Lease of Suite 11, Central Chambers, Ealing, London W5 2NR for two years at an annual rental of £5,010 + VAT. This lease expired on 11th April 2025 and is currently being renegotiated.

6. During the year 2023/24 BEREFT was awarded a grant of £14,500 per annum for 4 years from 1st October 2023 until 30th September 2027 by the London Borough of Ealing. The grant is conditional on various clauses in the agreement, including one which stipulates the grant is only payable “...subject to the necessary funds being available when payment falls due”. Income from the grant is therefore included as and when it is received.

7. **POLICIES**

RESERVES POLICY

Bereft ensures that it maintains cash reserves sufficient to cover an appropriate level of operating expenditure together with any anticipated downturns in income. This level of reserves is reviewed annually by the trustees.

RISK REGISTER

Bereft maintains a risk register that is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary.

SAFEGUARDING

Bereft’s safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and is available to view on the charity’s website www.bereftbereavementsupport.co.uk

SIGNATURES AND DECLARATION

DECLARATION

Signed on behalf of the trustees by:

Kevin Scott

KEVIN SCOTT - CHAIRMAN

Deirdre McLellan

DEIRDRE McLELLAN – SECRETARY

Christopher Wickenden

CHRISTOPHER WICKENDEN - TREASURER

16th October 2025

REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES & MEMBERS OF BEREFT IN RESPECT OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31st MARCH 2025 AS SET OUT ON PAGES 6 - 8

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

Bereft's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. Bereft's trustees consider that an audit is not required this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is the examiner's responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Charities Act)
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act and to state whether particular matters have come to the examiner's attention.

BASIS OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by Bereft and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st March 2025

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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

Stephen Dover

2 Castlebar Road
Ealing
London W5 2DP

16th January 2026