



The  
Listening  
Centre

# Annual Report

APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1098571



**“I had never had counselling before and was a bit apprehensive but the process was so easy. The counselling itself was more than I could ever imagined it could be, genuinely life changing. It helped me with my anxiety and in so many areas of my life. Affordable counselling with incredible counsellors - I recommend The Listening Centre to everyone who is thinking of starting counselling.”**

**CLIENT FEEDBACK**



# Foreword

2023-24 was a landmark year for The Listening Centre, with October marking thirty years since a small group of counsellors launched a drop-in listening service in Blackbird Leys. In the intervening years, TLC has, of course, developed and adapted to changing times, demands, and circumstances, but we're proud to have retained the founding vision of providing an accessible counselling service to those who need it most.

One of the original founders in 1995 was Julian Sharples, who returned to the charity in 2008 to take on the role of Chair of Trustees, and later that of CEO, and was integral to the success of TLC for over fifteen years. TLC trustees, staff, and counsellors gathered to hear Julian's reflections on his time at the charity's helm and to thank him for his contributions at a community meeting in July 2023.

The primary focus of the trustees and interim CEO, Sian Renwick, over the course of 2023-24 was to stabilise the charity's finances, through a combination of identifying potential reductions in expenditure and, crucially, increasing revenue. A standard client fee of £20 was introduced and TLC also invested in specialist fundraising support, developing a robust theory of change and case for support. These measures have already borne fruit, and the charity is delighted to report an annual surplus of £3,115.

For 2024-25, TLC intends to build on this progress and continue to invest in fundraising and partnership opportunities, as well as planning for succession by launching a recruitment drive for additional trustees.



CLAIRE JACQUES  
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

# Our Values

## **affordable**

We believe that psychotherapy and counselling should be available to all those who need it and can benefit from it regardless of their income.

## **inclusive**

We want everyone to feel welcome, enabled and supported to achieve their potential without discrimination. We are committed to having a diverse range of clients, therapists, trustees and associates.

## **safe**

We provide clients with a safe space in which to develop and grow at their own pace, by providing suitable counsellors or psychotherapists who adhere to strict codes of ethics and safeguarding that are aligned with recognised accrediting bodies.

## **supportive**

We nurture and encourage mutual support and self-care among all members of the organisation.

## **innovative**

We embrace change and aim to continually improve our service through listening, learning, and innovating.



# Organisational Overview

Across 2023/24, the core work of The Listening Centre was delivered by a dedicated team of volunteer counsellors. We're committed to providing opportunities for counsellors in training to gain experience and clinical hours through placements, as well as welcoming qualified counsellors who wish to support our mission by volunteering. Essential clinical supervision was provided by our experienced associate supervisors, while an increased number of client enquiries, assessments, and allocations were managed by Kay Tillyer.

## COUNSELLORS



Peak of 22 Counsellors | 10 Qualified

## SUPERVISORS



Flora Winchester / Dr Carole Blythe  
Melanie Kay / Sarah Oak / Sarah Burnet

## TRUSTEES



Claire Jacques / Liz Tapper / Chris Graham

## OPERATIONAL / SUPPORT ROLES



Sian Renwick / Kay Tillyer / Naomi Garrido

## ADDITIONAL CONSULTANT / AD HOC ROLES

Anne Timpson / Clare Patterson / Admin Team

This year saw a focus on establishing sustainable fundraising processes and networks. Internal policies and controls were also reviewed and updated. A pilot was introduced to begin an agency-style counselling model to provide qualified counsellors, especially those who had trained with us, paid opportunities beyond qualification. This new model also enables us to expand our reach as we now have more options to match clients with more complex needs with more experienced therapists.



# Our Clients

The need for TLC's services continues to grow, with initial enquiries up 21% in 2023/24 compared to the previous year.



**200**

TOTAL CLIENTS SEEN (146 last year)

**2003**

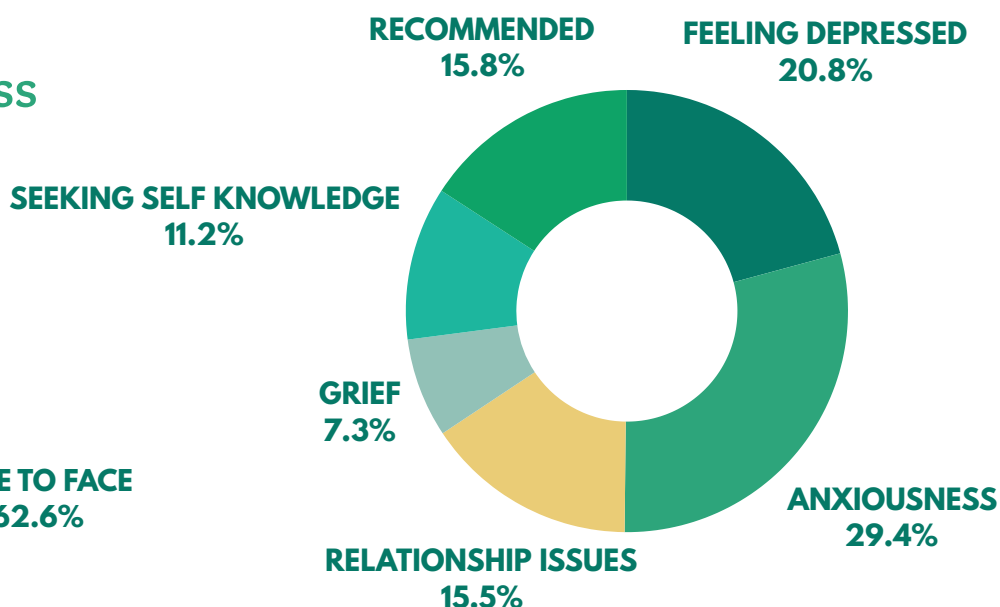
NUMBER OF HOURS DELIVERED (1571 last year)

**139**

NUMBER OF ASSESSMENTS (126 last year)

## What led clients to seek counselling?

### How did clients access their counselling?



# Financial Overview

**£49,075.92**

CLIENT FEES (£29,691.07 last year)

**£2,986.24**

DONATIONS (£1,227.56 last year)

**£7,250.00**

GRANTS (£2,000 last year)

**£3,115**

SURPLUS

## MAIN EXPENSES



Income in 2023/24 outstripped costs, due to increases in the number of counsellors, clients, and our £20 minimum fee. Client contributions remained the primary source of income. Although investment in fundraising also saw a significant increase in grants. We remain committed to providing truly affordable counselling to those who would otherwise not be able to access it and, despite increases, client contributions still didn't cover the true cost of a session (c. £28). Some clients continue to pay as little as £5 per session. Developing our agency-style model to broaden our reach remains a priority.

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**THE LISTENING CENTRE  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Mercer Lewin Ltd  
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors  
6-7 Citibase, New Barclay House  
234 Botley Road  
Oxford  
OX2 0HP



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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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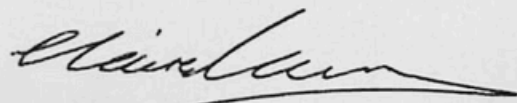
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Trustees: Chris Graham  
Elizabeth Ann Tapper  
Claire Ann Jacques

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The charity offers, and has offered since 1993, a regular, low-cost counselling service, provided by trainee counsellors under supervision. This supervised counselling also helps the trainee counsellors to attain the necessary experience required for their professional qualifications.

TLC provides regular group supervision sessions for its volunteers, and has an ongoing programme of professional development for its counsellors through the delivery of workshops and training sessions.



Claire Jacques

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LISTENING CENTRE**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet appended to this report.

### **Respective responsibilities of Committee of Management and Examiner**

The committee of management are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; they consider that the audit requirement of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility, without performing an audit, to carry out an examination of the accounts and to report to you.

### **Basis of Examiner's statement**

My report is in respect of an examination carried out under s145 of the Act and in accordance with directions given by the Charity Commissioners under subsection 5(b) of that section. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the committee of management and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records which is primarily limited to analytical procedures and to the making of such enquiries of the committee of management as was necessary for the purposes of this report. The procedures undertaken do not constitute an audit.

### **Examiner's statement**

Based on my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s130 of the Act, or that the accounts presented do not accord with those records or comply with the accounting requirements of the Act. No matter has come to my attention to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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14th January 2025

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**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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<b>Income</b>				
Bank interest	201	-	201	71
Client contributions	49,076	-	49,076	29,691
Donations and other income	2,971	-	2,971	1,228
Grants	7,265	-	7,265	2,000
Workshops	-	-	-	-
	<u>59,513</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>59,513</u>	<u>32,990</u>
<b>Direct charitable expenditure</b>				
Administration expenses	11,711	-	11,711	7,770
Advertising expenses	922	-	922	-
Bank charges	60	-	60	72
Bookkeeping fees	315	-	315	433
Co-ordination fees	5,980	-	5,980	7,860
DBS checks	420	-	420	-
Donations and grants costs	1,446	-	1,446	533
Independent examiner's fees	1,158	-	1,158	437
Insurance/BACP membership	240	-	240	1,779
Recruitment expenses	-	-	-	-
Room and office hire	14,146	-	14,146	9,592
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	897
Supervision, clinical and consultancy	10,144	-	10,144	11,027
Telephone	1,125	-	1,125	1,029
Assessment Fees & Expenses	2,700	-	2,700	-
Volunteer expenses and travel	1,172	-	1,172	-
Website and internet	144	-	144	535
Counsellor Payments	1,130	-	1,130	-
CEO Fees	3,585	-	3,585	-
	<u>56,397</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>56,397</u>	<u>41,965</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>3,115</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,115</b>	<b>(8,975)</b>
Balance brought forward	15,757	-	15,757	24,732
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b><u>£18,872</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>£18,872</u></b>	<b><u>£15,757</u></b>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	2024 £	2023 £
Bank current account	7,512	1,086
Bank deposit account	11,360	14,563
Prepayments	-	108
	<u>18,872</u>	<u>15,757</u>
Accounts payable	-	-
<b>Balance of funds</b>	<b><u>£18,872</u></b>	<b><u>£15,757</u></b>

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