



The Coroners' Courts Support Service

Here for you

ANNUAL REPORT

1st APRIL 2023 – 31st MARCH 2024

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Introduction

It has been another busy and challenging year for the Coroners' Courts Support Service (CCSS). The current economic climate continues to exert pressure on our finances, further challenging our ability to deliver on our charitable objectives. Despite these difficulties, the Board remains committed to ensuring the sustainability and growth of our services.

Financial Overview

As detailed in the CEO's report, the financial landscape presents significant challenges. The Board is actively exploring a number of initiatives aimed at providing long-term solutions to these financial pressures. Among these initiatives are proposals to increase fees and enhance our fundraising efforts. The Board fully supports these efforts, recognising their importance in maintaining and expanding our services.

Looking Forward

I am hopeful that the current measures being undertaken by the CEO, with the full support of the Board, will enable us to expand our services into the remaining courts where we are not yet present. We are committed to continuing our mission and making our services accessible to more people in need.

Acknowledgments

At the AGM in September, we bid farewell to Rashid Teladia, who stepped down from his position as Chairman of the Board of Trustees after 18 years of dedicated service. His leadership and contributions have been invaluable to our organisation. We welcomed Christopher Blue as the new CCSS Chairman. We also welcomed two new Trustees at the September AGM, Wesley Lau and Kim Chudley. Wesley brings experience in business development and fundraising, while Kim is a successful senior HR leader with extensive experience across all aspects of HR and organisational development.

I would like to express my thanks to all our staff, volunteers, fellow trustees, funders, sponsors, Coroners and Patrons—HHJ Mark Lucraft KC and Lady Emma Barnard—for their unwavering support. This year also marked a transition within the Office of the Chief Coroner. I wish to extend our gratitude to the outgoing Chief Coroner, HHJ Tommy Teague, for his support to The CCSS and we extend our best wishes to him. The Board warmly welcomes HHJ Alexia Duran, the newly appointed Chief Coroner; and we look forward to building a productive and collaborative partnership with as we continue our vital work.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge our volunteers, whose dedication and commitment are invaluable to the CCSS. Their ongoing support is greatly appreciated, and we are grateful for their continued involvement in our mission.

This report underscores the resilience and dedication of the CCSS community in the face of ongoing challenges. The Board remains optimistic about the future and is committed to steering the organisation towards continued success and growth.

Maggie Frost
Interim Chairman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Finances

This financial reporting year has again been challenging and the Coroner's Court Support Service (CCSS) continues to face significant financial difficulties. Our financial support comes from two primary sources: fee income from Local Authorities and fundraised income. The combination of potential fee increases and increased momentum within fundraising is crucial to our financial security.

In response, the Board of Trustees and I have taken proactive steps to address these issues. One of those steps to address a shortfall in income is that I will be initiating joint meetings with Coroners and Local Authority budget holders to discuss potential fee increases. These meetings are scheduled to commence in the new financial year and will continue throughout 2024.

Despite the ongoing challenges, the dedication and efforts of our volunteers and staff are a source of inspiration and hope. Their unwavering commitment is the backbone of our organisation, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

Volunteer Engagement

As of 31st March 2024, the CCSS had 352 volunteers actively engaged in service, with an additional 72 individuals in training. These volunteers are supporting 49 courts across 44 coronial areas. The dedication of our volunteers is truly remarkable, and they remain the backbone of our organisation.

Statistics

Despite the financial challenges the CCSS has had a year of interesting developments that reaffirm the importance and relevance of the services the charity provides. Highlights include:

Comparing 2022/23 activity with 2023/24, there has been:

A 35% increase in the number of individuals directly supported.

A 19% increase in volunteer days.

A 29% increase in the number of inquests attended.

Detailed information can be found in the attached charts. A big thank you to Robina Bush who volunteers to compile our monthly and annual statistics.

Training

We successfully delivered seven new volunteer training courses along with Helpline training and Telephone Support Service training. Following feedback from our volunteers we launched a new training format in January spanning 2 consecutive days instead of the previous 3 days, including three one hour stand-alone sessions making a more streamlined and efficient process and a better on boarding experience to volunteers.

Helpline services

The Helpline continues to be a success. Since last year there has been an overall growth of 6.4% in users contacting the helpline, this varies by month. Since February when we started to collect geographical data, we have received calls relating to cases in almost all coronial areas in which we have a court team. We have also supported callers from areas that do not have a court team as well as those that do.

CEO Open Door Sessions

The CEO Open-Door Sessions, introduced in 2023 and open to all volunteers, provide an opportunity for me to get to know our volunteers better, hear first-hand how things are progressing in their areas, and for us to learn from each other. They are an invaluable means of communication.

Old Bailey Event

In September we hosted an awareness-raising event at the Old Bailey. I am grateful to our CCSS Patrons, HHJ Mark Lucraft and Lady Emma Barnard, for their support of this event. This evening was generously sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers.

Engagement with Research and Policy Projects

The Operations & Training Manager and I, met with representatives from “Voicing Loss” a research and policy project on the role of bereaved people in coroners’ investigations and inquests. The Voicing Loss project examined the role of bereaved people in coroners’ investigations and inquests. We were delighted to take part in their research.

Justice Committee Engagement

Together with Roey Burden, Founder Trustee, I participated in a face-to-face session with the Justice Committee to provide evidence to their follow up inquiry into the Coroners Service for England and Wales. We received unequivocally positive comments and support for the CCSS.

Recognition and Rewards

I am delighted to report that the High Sheriff of West Sussex selected the CCSS to receive a High Sheriffs recognition award for 2024. An event was held on 21st of March 2024 where the volunteer team in West Sussex received a certificate of recognition and a cash award. This award celebrates the exceptional work and dedication of our volunteers who make a significant impact in their communities.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, while the financial landscape remains challenging, we are actively pursuing solutions through strategic fee increases and enhanced fundraising efforts. The dedication of our volunteers and the collaborative efforts of our team give us confidence in navigating these challenges successfully.

I extend my gratitude to our volunteers, for the generosity of their time and to our donors whose contributions make our work possible, to our Trustees for their unwavering guidance and support and to our staff, for their dedication and hard work.

Together, we make a difference in the lives of many, and together, we will continue to build a brighter future.

Angela Geer
CEO

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

Our annual accounts show that we operated more efficiently than in the previous year and we are carefully managing expenditure while ensuring that we provide high quality services to our courts.

Income

During the year, we received £220,780 from private donations, local authorities and government grants. A list of donors is included in our Annual Report. We continue to provide our services without central government support.

Expenditure

Total costs for the year were £299,530 which included expenditure of £208,414 on staffing. This is significantly lower than last year because we have restructured how we operate. Consequently, expenditure on volunteer recruitment, training and expenses of £39,604 was also lower than last year. Other costs included £19,604 for fundraising.

Summary

We begin the new financial year with restricted reserves of £7,498 and total reserves of £104,322. We continue to seek opportunities to provide our services more efficiently given recent fundraising challenges while seeking new sources of funding.

Once again, I thank Margaret Bayman for her continuing support with our financial reporting and our team and volunteers, and my fellow trustees given the significant changes during the year.

Chris Peaker, Hon. Treasurer

Charity Number: 1105899

THE CORONERS' COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Coroners' Court Support Service

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on the pages following this report.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed. The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b)) of the Charities Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity 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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Karen Bunyan FCCA
Hargreaves Owen Ltd
Red Sky House
Fairclough Hall
Halls Green
Weston
Herts, SG4 7DP

The date upon which my opinion is expressed is: 15th August 2024

THE CORONERS' COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

Charity
No: 1105899

Incoming resources	Notes	31st March 2024			31st March 2023		
		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Donations	2	51,873	6,150	58,023	51,440	37,350	88,790
Local authorities		155,648	0	155,648	159,312	0	159,312
Income tax recovered		582	0	582	652	0	652
Interest received		6,527	0	6,527	4,860	0	4,860
Total incoming resources		214,630	6,150	220,780	216,264	37,350	253,614
Resources expended							
Staff costs	3	197,493	10,921	208,414	225,226	75,026	300,252
Volunteer recruitment		310	0	310	1,117	0	1,117
Volunteer training		4,908	78	4,986	8,214	15	8,229
Volunteer expenses	4	34,135	173	34,308	31,913	527	32,440
Fundraising costs		19,604	0	19,604	25,338	0	25,338
Accountancy		11,040	0	11,040	10,546	0	10,546
Administration		11,964	2,203	14,167	13,288	2,203	15,491
Insurance		2,372	0	2,372	1,823	0	1,823
Marketing costs		823	0	823	951	0	951
Helpline costs		33	2,864	2,897	9,068	0	9,068
Independent examiner's fee		324	0	324	348	0	348
Bank charges		285	0	285	282	0	282
Total resources expended		283,291	16,239	299,530	328,114	77,771	405,885
Net incoming resources		(68,661)	(10,089)	(78,750)	(111,850)	(40,421)	(152,271)
Brought forward		165,485	17,587	183,072	277,335	58,008	335,343
Total funds		£96,824	£7,498	£104,322	£165,485	£17,587	£183,072

THE CORONERS' COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE
BALANCE SHEET
as at 31st MARCH 2024

Charity Number:
1105899

	Notes	31st March 2024		31st March 2023	
		£	£	£	£
Current assets					
Debtors	5	5,402		4,220	
Cash at bank and in hand		173,762		283,735	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		179,164		287,955	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	1,544		1,749	
Deferred income		73,298		103,134	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		74,842		104,883	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net current assets			104,322		183,072
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Net assets			£104,322		£183,072
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Funds					
General funds		96,824		165,485	
Restricted funds	7	7,498		17,587	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		£104,322		£183,072	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

CJ Peaker
Trustee

The attached notes form part of these accounts

**THE CORONERS' COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE NOTES
FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024**

Charity No:
1105899

1 Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared on the accruals basis and in accordance with the Charities Act 2022.

a Restricted funds have been allocated to the period to which they relate and costs allocated to each particular fund.

b Unrestricted funds are incoming resources received without specified purpose and are available as general funds.

c Donations are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

e No provision for taxation is included in the financial statements as the Charity is entitled to exemption under section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

2 Restricted Donations over £5,000

31st March 2024

31st March 2023

	£	£
The Batchworth Trust	0	10,000
Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust	0	5,000
Heart of Bucks Community Foundation	0	5,850

3 Staff costs and numbers

31st March 2024

31st March 2023

	£	£
Salary	183,512	256,221
Social security costs	13,107	14,872
Pension costs	2,065	3,716
Staff travel	1,719	12,267
Other costs	8,011	13,176
	<u>£208,414</u>	<u>£300,252</u>

There were 8 employees in the year (2023 = 12). None of the Trustees was directly or indirectly remunerated in any way.

4 Volunteer expenses

It is the policy of the Charity to reimburse expenses properly incurred by its volunteers in connection with its charitable activities. During the year, the total reimbursed to volunteers in respect of travel and sundry costs amounted to £39,604 (2023 = £41,786), which included £0 to trustees (2023 = £0).

5 Debtors

31st March 2024

31st March 2023

	£	£
Expenditure prepayments	3,275	3,358
Accrued income	1,413	100
Income tax repayment	582	750
Other debtors	132	12
	<u>£5,402</u>	<u>£4,220</u>

6 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

31st March 2024

31st March 2023

	£	£
Expenditure accruals	1,544	1,749
Other creditors	0	0
	<u>£1,544</u>	<u>£1,749</u>

7 Reserves policy

Our unrestricted reserves reflect the need to sustain our commitment to the courts where we currently operate and provide our services to new courts, when the courts cannot be funded from restricted reserves.

VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2023

Ruth Pressley – London, South and East

Volunteer Teams covered: Brighton, Chelmsford, City of London, Fulham, Hatfield, Huntingdon, Ipswich, Maidstone, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Norwich, Plymouth, St. Pancras and Poplar, Southwark.

I am pleased to report another year with no real issues within the teams. As Toni Owens has taken over from Julie Wood it has given an opportunity to revisit the areas we cover in order to make more geographical sense. The courts I now deal with are listed above and I look forward to returning to some of them, who I covered historically. I have conducted 3 exit interviews this year which is less than previously and a good sign that things are settling down following the Pandemic and the reorganisation of some of the courts.

As mentioned in the reports from my colleagues John and Julie, we have been reviewing our roles as Regional Representatives and I feel that we have worked well together to suggest ways to enhance our involvement in CCSS.

I have particularly enjoyed delivering training to new volunteers, as I think it is very important that we enthuse people at an early stage of their volunteering experience. I look forward to continuing to be involved with these sessions, which give people an insight into court attendance, the Helpline and TSS service.

I would like to thank Julie for all her input during her time as Regional Rep. She arrived like a breath of fresh air and came up with new ideas that I found encouraging. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

I look forward to working alongside Toni and wish her all the best in her new role

Julie Wood– Central, South and West

Volunteer Teams covered: Ampthill, Beaconsfield, Bournemouth, Chichester, Croydon, Exeter, Flax Bourton, Leicester, Milton Keynes, Newport, Northampton, Oxford, Plymouth, Reading, Shrewsbury, Woking.

I have continued to contribute to the regular online training of new volunteers, usually alongside Ruth Pressley. The feedback shared with us by the staff team indicates that new volunteers appreciate hearing from experienced volunteers about their experiences in court and on the Helpline and I am pleased that the review of the training offered to new volunteers has retained our input.

I have conducted seven exit interviews in the last year, which is fewer than the previous year and may be a sign that the higher turnover experienced as teams adjusted to new ways of working after the pandemic is now returning to pre-pandemic levels. Some leavers have continued to mention less regular and predictable shifts as a frustration but the overwhelming feedback from leavers concerns how much they have enjoyed their CCSS volunteering, with a particular focus on the support of their colleagues and Lead Volunteers.

I have completed three years in the role of Volunteer Representative and decided that the time was right for me to step down at the end of March 2024. Undertaking the role has given me an insight into the diversity of the experience of being a CCSS Court Volunteer in different courts across England and Wales, the incredible life experiences and amazing talents of CCSS volunteers and also the common values that bind those who offer their time to support anyone who finds themselves touched by the inquest process.

I am grateful in particular to Ruth who helped me so much when I first took on the role and to both Ruth and John for their advice and support as fellow Volunteer Representatives. Working with them has been a privilege.

John Pattison - Northwest

Volunteer Teams covered: Blackpool, Stafford, Coventry, Leicester, Liverpool, Morpeth, Stockport, Stoke, Warrington.

- During the period covered by this report I have undertaken 20 exit interviews. Five of these related to issues at one court which I am pleased to report have been resolved and volunteers are continuing. Otherwise as in previous years, volunteers have left the service for personal reasons and were highly positive of their experience in CCSS. Again, a small number of volunteers gave as their reason for leaving the lowering of their involvement the new operational developments in their courts which they felt restricted the amount and nature of contacts with families and witnesses
- The Leicester court is now part of the Northwest Region and I have written to the Lead Volunteer introducing myself and offering to attend meetings.
- The Regional Representatives developed a new outline of the role which was adopted in January. Consequently, I have written to the Lead Volunteers in the region highlighting the new developments.
- I have taken part in two of the on-line training sessions for new volunteers and intend to take part in the other scheduled events this year.

John Pattison Northeast (Acting)

Volunteer Teams covered: Bradford, Lincoln, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Northallerton, Sunderland.

- As the post of Northeast Regional Representative has remained vacant, I have served in a 'caretaker' capacity for this region.
- I have undertaken several exit interviews with Northeast volunteers. Their reasons for leaving and feedback were very similar to those of their Northwest counterparts.
- I was contacted by a Northeast court team and met with them to discuss operational issues. I raised points arising from the meeting with management who are working to resolve them

As the only Regional Representative operating in the North, I have worked closely with the Area Manager responsible for the North region, Gwen Wild. Her enthusiasm and commitment in dealing with new developments has been outstanding. I would also like to thank Julie Wood the retiring Regional Representative for the Central, South and West region; it has been a real pleasure working with her.

COURTS WHERE THE CCSS IS HELPING AS AT 31st MARCH 2024

Coronial Area (44)

Avon
Bedfordshire & Luton
Berkshire
Blackpool & Fylde
Buckinghamshire
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Cheshire
City of Brighton & Hove
City of Liverpool & Wirral
City of London Area
City of Sunderland
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
County Durham & Darlington
Coventry
Dorset
East London
Essex
Exeter & Greater Devon
Gwent
Hertfordshire
Inner London North
Inner London South
Kent – Mid Kent & Medway
Leicester City & South Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
Manchester South
Milton Keynes
Newcastle upon Tyne
Norfolk
Northamptonshire
Northumberland
North Yorkshire & York
Oxfordshire
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
South Devon
South London
South Staffordshire
Stoke on Trent & North Staffordshire
Suffolk
Surrey
Teesside
West London
West Sussex
West Yorkshire (West)

Courts (49)

Flax Bourton
Ampthill
Reading
Blackpool
Beaconsfield
Huntingdon & Peterborough
Warrington
Brighton
Liverpool
City of London
Sunderland
Truro
Crook
Coventry
Bournemouth
Walthamstow
Chelmsford
Exeter
Newport
Hatfield
St. Pancras, Poplar
Southwark
Maidstone
Leicester
Lincoln, Boston
Stockport
Milton Keynes
Newcastle upon Tyne
Norwich
Northampton
Morpeth
Northallerton, Harrogate
Oxford
Shrewsbury
Plymouth
Croydon
Stafford
Stoke on Trent
Ipswich
Woking
Middlesbrough
Fulham
Chichester, Horsham
Bradford

CORONER'S COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE
REPORT ON VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY 2023/24

At financial year-end, there were 43 Coronial areas returning statistical information pertaining to their courts.

Activity in all areas continues to increase, following the dramatic fall in activity 4 years ago caused by the Covid epidemic. Whilst some courts are back to pre-Covid levels of activity, many others are increasingly relying on technology, with hearings being held via video link. This has resulted in some courts only calling volunteers in when family and witnesses are attending in person.

That said, comparing 2022/23 activity with 2023/24 there has been:

- 35% increase in number of individuals directly supported.
- 19% increase in volunteer days.
- 29% increase in the number of inquests attended.

Detailed information can be found in the attached charts showing overall numbers by month and activity by individual Coronial area.

As ever, I would like to thank the volunteers who send in the monthly returns to me for their time and effort in collating their local data.

Robina Bush
May 2024

CORONERS' COURT SUPPORT SERVICE STATISTICS 2023/2024 BY CORONIAL AREA

	Sittings	Volunteer	Openings	PIRs	Inquests	Family	Friends	Witnesses	Others	Total Individuals	Signposted	Signposted
		Attendances								Supported	CCSS Helpline	Other
Amptill	121	137	2	27	145	417	62	197	480	1189	1	2
Beaconsfield	77	83	1	65	156	457	71	65	331	969	0	0
Blackpool	186	377	10	63	179	736	60	256	535	1657	0	1
Bournemouth	150	243	0	1	185	603	75	271	88	1037	201	85
Bradford	182	165	0	18	343	952	126	344	624	2101	0	6
Brighton	96	96	3	16	126	341	122	66	101	644	7	3
Cannock	98	148	0	8	214	595	48	131	105	916	0	0
Chelmsford	175	176	4	5	118	513	144	356	164	1164	1	3
Chichester	134	124	5	16	191	513	57	66	177	831	49	0
City of London	3	3	0	0	3	7	3	0	0	10	0	0
Coventry	56	88	0	1	61	194	40	47	49	330	9	8
Crook	209	327	46	98	337	1208	104	257	395	2047	15	155
Croydon	99	179	0	19	116	367	27	24	54	472	13	7
Exeter	142	223	0	6	197	654	78	133	24	929	46	1
Flax Bourton	197	215	13	19	299	820	131	189	178	1318	22	80
Fulham	197	192	1	4	136	552	43	269	429	1325	0	5
Hatfield	157	159	0	2	285	799	93	221	114	1268	0	0
Huntingdon	29	30	0	1	21	117	16	29	12	192	0	0
Ipswich	137	148	0	16	134	459	69	215	171	944	3	7
Leicester	92	99	0	5	88	291	26	228	443	1006	0	1
Lincoln	71	88	0	0	74	255	33	13	13	330	4	5
Liverpool	204	224	2	21	184	564	49	215	451	1122	0	4
Maidstone	125	164	1	48	495	1322	173	191	257	2019	20	160
Middlesborough	31	37	0	1	56	237	32	64	129	467	0	0

	Sittings	Volunteer	Openings	PIRs	Inquests	Family	Friends	Witnesses	Others	Total Individuals	Signposted	Signposted
		Attendances								Supported	CCSS Helpline	Other
Milton Keynes	79	152	4	4	71	254	36	88	243	629	0	0
Morpeth	100	170	0	0	86	250	79	285	344	974	0	1
Newcastle	144	185	0	11	145	498	47	377	613	1566	0	3
Newport	52	63	0	1	53	76	1	52	5	151	0	3
Northallerton	165	190	0	7	257	694	66	195	367	1384	19	35
Northampton	107	140	1	1	332	589	77	270	236	1224	96	10
Norwich	187	295	4	40	349	954	131	134	452	1709	14	27
Oxford	98	117	0	2	166	457	84	46	40	627	3	20
Plymouth	71	117	0	8	81	237	45	44	47	373	9	0
Reading	244	273	51	31	299	847	97	336	761	2041	74	14
Shrewsbury	69	128	0	13	111	369	51	81	501	1002	0	1
St. Pancras	136	142	0	0	81	328	29	348	641	1346	0	0
Southwark	115	121	2	8	151	384	49	20	36	489	4	9
Stockport	167	184	6	39	305	1071	131	387	339	1928	1	5
Stoke on Trent	131	153	54	14	373	879	37	254	257	1427	6	2
Sunderland	23	31	0	1	22	67	1	47	126	241	0	1
Truro	210	355	0	10	234	626	137	149	436	1348	2	4
Warrington	269	381	0	21	237	898	78	536	1449	2961	2	2
Woking	218	190	12	57	249	844	63	28	25	960	20	27

CORONERS COURT SUPPORT SERVICE STATISTICS 2023/24

		CORONERS COURT SUPPORT SERVICE STATISTICS 2023/24											
	Sittings	Volunteer Attendances	Openings	PIRs	Inquests	Family	Friends	Witnesses	Others	Total Supported	Signposted Helpline	Signposted Other	Total since 2003
April	405	514	16	38	557	1574	207	460	773	3014	52	55	
May	443	543	19	56	626	1877	203	578	848	3506	21	37	
June	484	620	23	47	692	1923	248	609	1030	3810	56	58	
July	437	578	37	56	646	1966	241	614	1057	3878	43	46	
August	419	512	5	54	611	1806	225	462	671	4122	43	55	
September	465	616	23	60	638	1865	245	663	1005	3674	59	57	
October	490	620	18	74	707	2110	318	652	1286	4366	82	74	
November	551	696	18	84	728	2269	289	785	1261	4500	62	64	
December	302	375	13	36	427	1343	179	444	610	2576	37	49	
January	512	649	14	71	656	2062	250	792	1270	4374	48	66	
February	527	656	17	77	726	2282	227	769	1345	4623	70	69	
March	518	633	19	76	714	2177	299	694	1108	4227	61	67	
Total	5553	7012	222	729	7728	23254	2931	7522	12264	46670	634	697	526000
22/23 Totals	4477	5884	133	505	6191	17968	2131	5519	8938	34556	754	437	

HELPLINE STATISTICS APRIL 2023 to MARCH 2024

KEY POINTS TO NOTE

1. Since last year there has been an overall growth of 6.4% in users contacting the helpline. This varies by month, for example, in May last year the increase was 44% over the number of contacts in May 2022.
2. Since February when we started to collect geographical data we have received calls relating to cases in every coronial area in which we have a court team except for Avon – although we had a call in January about a case in this area. This is an indication of the importance of the helpline in supporting people in a rounded way – through our court teams but also by providing support and information earlier in the inquest process, and often after the case has been concluded.
3. The range of people who contact the helpline includes family and friends of the deceased, witnesses, people called for jury service, professionals (legal, medical, support organisations, insurers, MP assistants, Embassy staff etc), and people affected by the death such as landlords, care home staff and funeral directors. Whilst most of these people are based in the UK, we also get calls from Europe, America, Australia and elsewhere.
4. About 16% of contacts over the last year have been via email. These generally take longer to respond to than a phone call and are often more frequent on a Monday morning due to the helpline being closed on Saturday and Sunday.
5. Many of the calls we receive are from people who have been very recently bereaved (often in the past day or so) who can be very upset. This is different to supporting in court, where people may be upset but are unlikely to still be dealing with the immediate aftermath of the death. Consequently, many of our calls relate to what to do when someone dies, particularly where the death has been referred to the coroner. This is something that will be more obvious from the new contact record we are using, but the fact that across the year about a fifth of the contact records mentioned death certificates is an indication of the relative frequency of such calls.
6. Volunteers are clear about the limits of our expertise so although there were 166 occasions when legal matters were brought up, legal advice is not given. Often these calls refer to whether legal representation is needed for an inquest, if funding is available, or such things as whether personal effects can be returned to a family.
7. Many callers find our number through the gov.uk website, coroners' websites, and coroners officers' letters/emails to family members, and through referral from other support organisations. These referrals from other organisations seems to have increased over the past year, partly due to the efforts made over time by those members of CCSS staff who work with the helpline volunteers and who have made contacts outside of CCSS.

At the beginning of 2024 the helpline team started using a different contact record. The first table is similar to the one presented a year ago. The second shows the greater detail which will appear going forwards. The reason for the change in contact record is to simplify the completion process as the helpline shifts get busier.

Month	CR	Email	Phone	Voicemail	Emotional	Inquest process	Legal	PM	Disclosure	Jury	Support at court	Complaint	IDC/DC	Contact details	Historical case	Other	Signposted	TSS Referral
2023																		
Apr	196	45	130	18	18	58	12	8	5	0	17	14	48	21	5	74	122	1
May	249	35	168	42	20	68	13	9	16	0	29	19	40	28	9	87	160	5
June	198	29	140	27	19	50	13	6	6	0	19	7	38	34	0	83	116	5
July	190	22	140	28	18	57	9	6	12	1	15	15	32	25	6	59	121	3
Aug	216	31	140	45	24	64	17	5	12	0	23	11	35	29	8	63	134	10
Sept	193	38	128	27	17	65	11	11	13	0	26	10	32	27	6	57	104	5
Oct	286	47	205	34	31	79	16	12	10	1	44	18	67	40	8	84	180	9
Nov	201	38	113	48	18	71	12	9	4	2	29	6	50	24	4	59	116	4
Dec	170	31	96	42	11	40	13	11	4	2	13	3	41	27	3	56	95	1
2024																		
Jan	286	41	186	57	40	93	27	12	7	2	43	19	63	49	10	66	170	9
Feb	224	28	146	48	25	33	16	15	20	3	26	10	56	73	5	51	145	9
Mar	230	29	160	40	26	23	7	15	9	1	27	17	52	53	4	45	122	6
Totals	2639	414	1752	456	267	701	166	119	118	12	311	149	554	430	68	784	1585	67

The TSS referral figures reflect how often people wish to have a call from a local volunteer. In addition to this, contact is frequently made with local teams to check that support will be available for a particular inquest or to answer a specific question, but without the need for the local volunteer to call the user.

Month	CR	Email	Phone	Voicemail	Emotional	Family Support	PM	IDC/DC	Open – PIR - Inquest	PIR purpose/nature	Disclosure/bundle	Purpose of inquest	Evidence/questioning	Conclusions/R of I	Death registration	Remote/hybrid	Jury	Inquest other	Complaint	Support at court	Legal	Historic case	Press/public	Actions following death	TUO	Funeral details	Probate	Family dispute	Repatriation	Contact details coroner	Contact details reg	Contact details other	Other	Signposted	TSS Referral?
2024 Jan	286	41	186	57	40	0	12	63	0	0	3	76	0	1	2	0	1	1	19	43	27	10	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	45	0	0	66	170	9
Feb	224	28	146	48	25	8	15	56	6	9	20	33	26	9	17	4	3	22	10	26	16	5	5	4	11	12	3	5	6	59	8	6	51	145	9
Mar	230	29	160	40	26	9	15	52	6	2	9	23	12	1	26	1	1	19	17	27	7	4	3	5	10	5	6	7	0	48	4	1	45	122	6
Total	740	98	492	145	91	17	42	171	12	11	32	132	38	11	45	5	5	42	46	96	50	19	9	11	22	18	9	13	6	152	12	7	162	437	24

In addition, in January 2023 we started to compare historical data. As per our data protection procedures this is only held for two years. Consequently, the data for the first two months of 2021 was not available for comparison.

The shaded columns represent the number of contact records. The other columns give percentage increase over time.

	2021	2022	% increase from 2021	2023	% increase from 2021	% increase from 2022	2024	% increase from 2021	% increase from 2022	% increase from 2023
Jan		218		277		27	286		31	3
Feb		173		246		42	226		31	-8
Mar	158	210	33	283	79	35	246	56	17	-13
Apr	165	151	-8	197	19	30				
May	130	165	27	237	82	44				
Jun	150	190	27	211	41	11				
Jul	129	151	17	209	62	38				
Aug	161	219	36	188	17	-14				
Sep	175	250	43	204	17	-18				
Oct	168	201	20	260	55	29				
Nov	192	190	-1	226	18	19				
Dec	121	182	50	176	45	-3				
		2300		2714						

To support future fundraising we have also been recording geographical information since February relating to where an inquest is held or where the deceased lived. The intention is to try to give a sense of how financial support may help people in a particular area through the helpline in much the same way as the statistics collected for each court. The highlighted cells show the top 10% of locations in terms of service users by category, i.e. Counties, London Boroughs, Wales. Please note, it is not possible to identify location for all users, particularly when contacted by email.

Counties

BEDFORDSHIRE	1
BERKSHIRE	3
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	2
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	4
CHESHIRE	8
CORNWALL	4
COUNTY DURHAM	2
CUMBRIA & ISLE OF MAN	2
DERBYSHIRE	5
DEVON	17
DORSET	5
DURHAM	1
EAST SUSSEX	5
EAST YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE	2
ESSEX	8

GLOUCESTERSHIRE	12
GREATER MANCHESTER	17
HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT	8
HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE	2
HERTFORDSHIRE	8
KENT	26
LANCASHIRE	4
LEICESTERSHIRE	9
LINCOLNSHIRE	6
MERSEYSIDE	3
MIDDLESEX	2
NORFOLK	11
NORTH YORKSHIRE	9
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	12
NORTHUMBERLAND	1

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	5
OXFORDSHIRE	3
SHROPSHIRE	3
SOMERSET	5
SOUTH YORKSHIRE	3
STAFFORDSHIRE	3
SUFFOLK	5
SURREY	7
TYNE AND WEAR	5
WARWICKSHIRE	8
WEST MIDLANDS	18
WEST SUSSEX	10
WEST YORKSHIRE	13
WILTSHIRE	8
Total	295

N.B. Where there have been no identified instances from a particular area, these places have been omitted from the data for brevity.

London Boroughs

Barking and Dagenham	0
Barnet	12
Bexley	0
Brent	0
Bromley	0
Camden	6
Croydon	13
Ealing	4
Enfield	0
Greenwich	0
Hackney	2

Hammersmith and Fulham	22
Haringey	3
Harrow	3
Havering	0
Hillingdon	6
Hounslow	5
Islington	0
Kensington and Chelsea	0
Kingston upon Thames	0
Lambeth	3
Lewisham	3

Merton	1
Newham	0
Redbridge	3
Richmond	0
Southwark	19
Sutton	1
Tower Hamlets	7
Waltham Forest	7
Wandsworth	8
Westminster	26
Total	154

Wales

Cardiff Council (Cyngor Caerdydd)	4
Newport City Council (Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd)	2
Pembrokeshire County Council (Cyngor Sir Penfro)	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf)	1
Total	9

Glasgow	1
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