WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales · Charity number 1152724

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2013-07-04
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Office Suite 2 The Crossing At St. Pauls Darwall Street Walsall WS1 1DA
Phone	01922724841
Email	admin@wbss.org.uk
Website	www.wbss.org.uk

Activities

Objects: 1) TO HELP RELIEVE HARDSHIP, DISTRESS AND POOR HEALTH AMONG PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED BEREAVEMENT THROUGH THE DEATH OF A CLOSE RELATIVE OR FRIEND, BY PROVIDING SERVICES SUCH AS LISTENING, BEFRIENDING, ADVICE, INFORMATION, COUNSELLING, PRACTICAL HELP ON AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP BASIS IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE, SEX, DISABILITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR SOCIAL CLASS.2) TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE NEEDS OF BEREAVED PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE SHARING OF INFORMATION ON GOOD PRACTICE WITH OTHER AGENCIES.

Activities: To help relieve distress and poor health amongst bereaved people by listening, individual counselling, peer support and information sharing; without distinction of age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or social class; to advance the education of the public to understand the needs of bereaved people including the sharing of information on good practice with other helping agencies.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Walsall

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£106,131	£155,269	-	-
2024-03-31	£100,429	£177,398	-	-
2023-03-31	£179,624	£225,653	-	-
2022-03-31	£293,064	£163,004	-	-
2021-03-31	£168,021	£158,673	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Jim Green	Chair	2013-11-19
Alexandra Louise Smith		2024-02-05
Alyson Green		2019-03-07
Frances Brant		2025-12-15
Joanne Emma Barlow		2025-12-15
Linda Ann Dines		2025-09-17

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WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales - Charity number 1152724

Accounts

WBSS

Registered Charity Number: 1152724

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Trustee Annual Report & Accounts

2024 - 2025

Supporting adults, children, and young people of Walsall in their times of need.

Trustee's Annual Report And Financial Statements

1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service (WBSS) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2025.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act, the Charity's Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

Our Charitable Objectives

provide caring and sensitive support that is free, confidential, and open to all residents of Walsall, irrespective of their relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the time that has elapsed since the death.

reduce the potential negative long-term impact that bereavement can have on a person's physical/mental wellbeing, education or employment, by providing appropriate support to enable each person to cope with their loss and begin to rebuild their lives.

prevent the effects of bereavement from damaging family cohesion through developing understanding and improving communication within the family unit.

Our Strategic Aims

- To establish WBSS as the local provider in the field of emotional bereavement support
- To raise awareness about the impact that bereavement has on a person's emotional and physical health and where and when to seek support and advice
- To provide and promote high quality support services to the bereaved in the borough of Walsall
- To raise awareness among the general public about 'Dying Matters' to help reduce the negative stigma that is attached to death and dying

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'. In the opinion of the trustees, the objectives of the charity as detailed on the previous page are for the public benefit.

The support offered by Walsall Bereavement Support Service is currently available free of charge to bereaved children, young people, and their families who live within the Walsall borough or those registered at a Walsall GP surgery or educated within a Walsall school. Support is offered irrespective of the relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the length of time that has elapsed since the death.

Chair's Report

2024-25 proved to be another challenging year for WBSS. One of our trustees, Sandev Panaser, left his role as Interim Service Lead and Ian Davies, Let's Talk Service Lead, took over aspects of this role. At the time of writing this report we have two people who are interested in becoming trustees; to date they have attended a couple of meeting before committing themselves fully to the role.

Referrals for support continue to be received for both our adult and child bereavement projects. During the year, WBSS has supported 859 bereaved adults, children and young people and has provided 2,908 hours of specialist bereavement support.

To ensure WBSS can best support our clients, we continue to deliver counselling sessions from a number of locations throughout the Walsall borough. Additionally, we continue to provide a blended support approach by offering clients face to face and on-line support.

In 2024/25 we continued to receive funds from The Henry Smith Charity and BBC Children in Need, both supporting The Swing as well as funding from Walsall Council which enabled us to deliver support to bereaved adults at various locations throughout the borough. We are extremely grateful to these, and other funders, for their continued support.

The main focus for the Trustees over the forthcoming year is to secure both short- and long-term funding. A funding strategy is being developed which will help the organisation focus on funding application priorities in order to maximise the number of applications for short term funding. Obviously, having to seek funds every year is not sustainable, therefore WBSS will be approaching larger grant awarding bodies, Trusts and Foundations in the hope that it can secure multi-year funding.

Whilst the future may appear a little uncertain, I continue to take positives from the fact that, over the years, we have had much success through our grant funding programme and have built up many positive relationships with our funders. By diversifying its income streams, I feel confident that we can be successful in achieving our goals to ensure that the charity will continue to grow and prosper over the coming years, thus ensuring that it can continue to deliver support to every Walsall resident who requires it.

Jim Green
Chair of Trustees

Our Support is provided through 3 projects:

'Let's Talk' - Bereavement support for adults

The Swing - Bereavement support for children, young people, and families

Community Project - Community support and engagement

Our support is tailored to the specific needs of our service users and includes:

One-to-one face to face and on-line counselling

Family and Sibling support

Out of Hours daytime service on Saturdays

Support in schools

Outreach work in the community

Our Services are available to everyone

WBSS wants its projects and services to be open to as wide a range of people as possible and as such, we do not discriminate clients by age, race, gender, sexual orientation, relationship to the bereaved person, the time elapsed since the death, or cause of death.

We utilise the skills of staff and volunteer counsellors from different backgrounds and ethnicities, to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate support to each individual client.

We work with schools across the borough, many of whom have high levels of students who have additional support needs such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome etc. To help support these potentially challenging students, counsellors have all undergone specific training relating to supporting this client group.

Our Projects - 'Let's Talk'

The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Many of our clients have anxiety, depression, and more complex issues that have developed as a result of how they feel. For adults this can include dependency upon substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, or cigarettes. Some are unable to work, have withdrawn from family and social life, and are less able to take care of themselves.

Over the past 12 months 'Let's Talk' received 418 referrals during the year, supported a total of 641 clients and delivered 2,391 hours of support.

Profile of the adults we have supported.

- 76% of adults supported were females, 24% male.
- 79% were White British, 9% British Asian or Asian, 5% Black British, Black African or Caribbean, 1% European or Irish, 2% were mixed heritage. 4% did not give their ethnicity.
- 34% were under the age of 40, 42% aged 40–60, the remaining 24% were over the age of 60.
- 89% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK.
- Just over a third of all adults, 35%, requested support following the death of a parent, 17% the death of a spouse or partner, 8% a sibling and 17% their own child.
- For clients who presented with one loss, the main cause of death was cancer, with 22% of adults losing a loved one to this disease; 14% of deaths were heart related; 8% lost a loved one in an extremely tragic circumstance such as murder, manslaughter, suicide or a road traffic collision. 16% were referred for several or multiple losses.
- For clients who presented with one loss 5% sought support within the first 6 months following their bereavement and 23% between 6 and 12 months of bereavement; however, we support people whenever they need our help and during this period 9% of service users sought our help 5 years or more after their bereavement.
- 6% of adults required urgent support as they felt suicidal at the point of referral.
- 35% of adults supported had complex grief needs and/or had a mental health diagnosis.
- 18% of adults were recommended our service by their GP or another member of staff at their practice; 23% by NHS Talking Therapies, 10% by a Social Prescriber; 18% by a psychiatrist, secure mental health unit, community psychiatric nurse or mental health worker and 13% by another counselling service.

Outcomes reported following support.

- 56% of adults reported that their emotional difficulties such as anger, guilt, anxiety etc had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 66% reported that their physical difficulties such as relying on prescribe medication, smoking or drinking more, being unable to sleep and feeling unwell had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 75% felt more able to cope with day-to-day tasks such as attending work, college or volunteering and daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing etc.
- 66% said that their support and social network had improved and felt less lonely, more supported and able to socialise more.

Written feedback received from some adults we supported

What Helped the most….

- Learning to think differently, to love myself and that it's OK to let go of some of my pain.
- Processing of emotions and being able to understand why I felt the way I did without judgement has been huge!
- Thank you for all the understanding and being there when I was at my lowest.
- Having a supportive, helpful listener that enabled me to talk through my feelings without judgement.
- This was my first therapy and the fact that it helped me in a matter of 6 weeks shows that is doing the right thing.
- Thank you for all your help/guidance to make me feel I can tackle life going forward.
- Having someone to talk to about what has been going on in my life and hearing it from a different perspective.
- Support was very individualised and meet my needs every week.
- My counsellor was excellent; she made me look at things from my past that I had not thought of as grief. I'm looking at things head on now rather than putting things off. Every time we talked she came forward with exactly how I was feeling.
- Talk to non-family without judgement.
- Being able to understand emotions and think in a different way.
- Thank you for listening to my troubles and helping me to look at them in a different way, I've enjoyed coming to speak with you each week

How do you feel the support you received has made a difference to how you feel now….

- Sleeping better, meeting people again. Being able to talk about how my grief has felt.
- Not as angry or hurt, not crying all the time, don't feel alone.
- I can see things differently; I can look at my feelings.
- I feel a bit more content with talking to other people who have been through the same as me.
- Very influential, made me think about who I want to be. Best decision I ever made.
- I have felt a lot better since having support.

- I've been helped to understand my thoughts and feelings which has helped me to feel more positive
- I have been able to talk through all of the bereavements I have had which have profoundly affected me and my mental health but especially relating to my husband
- Thank you so much for helping me to improve the quality of my life and the lives of my children, it's been invaluable and essential! Life-changing, life affirmation, transformational support. Much needed and appreciated.
- Just a massive thank you for the continued support during the sessions and for gently encouraging me to change my perspective on small things that have made a world of difference. I've taken a lot from the sessions that I will continue to use in my daily ways now. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Our Projects – The Swing

Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological/physiological difficulties.

Without appropriate support, these issues can spiral out of control and, in the worst cases, we see service users excluded from school for behavioural issues, and family breakdown due to misunderstood grief/poor communication.

Over the past 12 months The Swing received 178 referrals, supported a total of 218 clients and offered 517 hours of support.

Profile of the children and young people we have supported.

- 54% of children and young people supported were female and 46% male.
- 79% were White British, 7% British Asian or Asian, 3% Black British, Black African or Caribbean 2% European and the remaining 9% were mixed heritage.
- 26% were under the age of 10, 66% aged 10-15, the remaining 8% were 16-18.
- 73% had experienced a significant family death such as a parent/carer, sibling, or grandparent. 18% had experienced multiple bereavements.
- 84% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK.
- 14% were defined as having additional support needs such as health issues, speech, cognitive, learning or physical disabilities and 3% required Specific Educational Needs.
- 8% were diagnosed with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia or other medical conditions, whilst 1% were awaiting the outcome of a possible diagnosis.
- 20% were referred through Social Services with many having an allocated Social Worker.

The impact of our work

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluation because it enables us to hear and respond to the views and experiences of our beneficiaries. The learning that we gain from evaluating our work informs the development of any of our new work streams.

We measure success by evaluating improvements made by each client against the issues affecting them due to their bereavement. At the onset of support, we undertake an assessment and record the issues facing each person via a questionnaire. We then monitor change under four main categories: emotional, behaviour, physical, and social/educational. These are broken down further

into specific issues that include anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance/alcohol misuse, mental/physical health, etc. In doing this, we are able to gain an overall picture of the difficulties each person is experiencing and create a support plan tailored to their specific needs.

We monitor the progress of clients throughout their support and adjust their support plan if necessary. Finally, we ask all clients to complete an end of support questionnaire to compare where they were at the start of their support to the end. This determines our outcomes.

For children/young people we also ask parents to complete a similar questionnaire, enabling us to compare the child's view of their progress with their parents. This helps us to measure outcomes more accurately.

Our monitoring system is designed using guidance from the National Child Bereavement Network. This enables us to analyse information and provide statistical evidence about the impact of our work.

Outcomes reported following support, the clients' perspective.

- Physical Difficulties – clients reported that the following had improved or were no longer a problem for them; eating 44%, sleeping 29%, aches and pains 35%, doing more 38%
- Emotional Difficulties – clients reported that the following: felt happy 44%, felt less sad 26% less angry 25%, more in control 50%, less confused 47%.
- Education and school attendance – 38% liked school again, 29% were getting into trouble less, 24% could focus more in class, break times was better for 40%.
- Friends and social life – 40% could relax more, 31% were less bored, 75% went outside more, 63% played with friends more, 53% were happy to mix with others again.
- Family life - 44% felt happier at home, 44% felt safe at home, 23% got less angry at home.

Outcomes reported following support, the parents' perspective.

- 53% reported an improvement in their child's physical wellbeing.
- 74% reported an improvement in their child's emotional wellbeing.
- 49% reported an improvement in their child's education.
- 74% felt that their child socialised with friends more.
- 90% felt that family relationships had improved.

Written feedback received from some children we supported

What Helped the most….

- Just ranting and getting things out of my system.
- Talking about my thoughts and doing things I enjoy a lot.
- Having someone external to talk to, I felt like my feelings weren't burdening anyone.
- Speaking about my grandad and speaking about anything and everything.
- Helped me with self-harm.
- Calming mechanisms, breathing practice, in general talking.
- Talking about good stuff helps get worries off my mind.
- Having somewhere to talk about how I feel and about dad helps.

Written Feedback Received from some of the Parents/Carers

- The overall experience for L has helped her realise there are many ways to experience and express her emotions.
- She is more able to express her feelings and has not lashed out anywhere near as much. She is better at recognising when she is feeling sad about grandad and telling me.
- Less outbursts at home. Able to talk about feelings.
- She's opened up more about how she feels
- Counselling highlighted things we can do/talk about at home. How it can impact all aspects - interest in things, sleep, routine.

Challenges

During 2024/25 WBSS experienced several fundamental changes in structure and personnel, from ongoing changes to Service Lead position and reduction in employed counsellors, to changes in process for provision of support and funding for the support WBSS provides. Each has presented challenges. However, due to the resilience and determination of staff, volunteers, and trustees, WBSS has continued to provide best quality support to the bereaved of Walsall and to the counsellors providing this support.

We are currently facing challenges of funding, due to bid writers leaving. We are now recruiting for a new bid writer to enable us to secure longer term funding grants to reestablish a secure financial base for our service to enable us to move forward with plans to develop the support we offer.

The ability of WBSS to continue as a charity is due in part to the dedication of our volunteers, whose commitment to WBSS is very much appreciated. Also, again after a year of change, WBSS Trustee Board has worked diligently to support volunteers, staff, and the incoming Service Lead, to enable a clearer vision of our future to be gained.

The future for WBSS holds ongoing changes to meet the challenges of a changing funding landscape, and to futureproof the support we provide as far as we are able. A part of this change has been to focus on bringing volunteers onto The Swing project to provide support for children and young people, which will allow us once more to provide in school support as well as support at our Centre in Walsall.

WBSS has also developed its training base and now offers training to support professionals as well as non-support based professionals, such as retail and corporate professionals. We have also continued to develop our network and collaborative practices. This has resulted in WBSS working more closely with service users in community settings.

Therefore, despite several significant challenges WBSS continues to work toward a future where we can continue to be a positive force in enabling residents of Walsall to achieve better quality lives.

Our Projects – Community Project

SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY– We understand that some people may be unwilling or unable to travel into Walsall to attend counselling sessions. We therefore hire rooms at a number of locations throughout the borough thus making it easier for people to attend.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – Although being in Walsall for over 25 years, we recognise that many people may be unaware of our support or are unable to access support for various reasons such as illness, disability, cultural difficulties etc. Where appropriate, we engage with local organisations to provide bereavement awareness support with the community.

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are our most important asset. During 2024/25, they provided 1,198 hours of support. Since WBSS started to provide placement opportunities, it has trained in excess of 200 counsellors to help provide bereavement counselling.

WBSS continues to provide placements for counsellors in training and in February 2024 6 new volunteers successfully completed their initial training to become counsellors. Following this, in November 2024 8 more new volunteers successfully completing their initial training.

However, due to cost-of-living difficulties, WBSS no longer has a base of volunteers achieving more than two years of working with our service. Therefore, this presents ongoing recruiting needs for WBSS, as currently we have a reduced body of 16 volunteers providing support for adults, and 3 volunteers providing support for children and young people.

Our Notable Achievements during 2024 - 25

- Developed an in-house training package for safeguarding
- Recruited14 new volunteers, each received 12 hours of bereavement training.
- Assisted Walsall Rotary Club with their Santa Sleigh collection.
- Introduced a refreshed logo to modernise WBSS's image and increase visibility
- Undergone a comprehensive restructuring to create a more relevant and appealing proposition for funders while increasing organisational capacity. This included internal changes to improve cost efficiency and enhance support for staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Strengthened the focus on community support by operating in six locations: Willenhall, Darlaston, Pleck, Brownhills, Pelsall, and two sites in Bloxwich, ensuring services are more accessible to diverse local populations.
- Delivered a presentation on Walsall Bereavement Support Service to colleagues across charities and statutory services, in school, at numerous network events, and to university cohorts
- Achieved approved placement provider status with Warwick, Keele, and Birmingham City Universities
- Redeveloped access criteria for young people and adults to improve clarity and ease of access for service users.
- Worked in collaboration with Walsall Council to establish bereavement peer support services for older adults.
- Provided 5 hours of bereavement awareness training in collaboration with NHS Recovery College and Mindkind Projects.
- Complete redesign of www.wbss.org to include interactive support information, links to WBSS PayPal and Just Giving Accounts, and direct contact links for WBSS and other services
- Began offering training and supervisory support to community groups, further extending WBSS's impact within the local area.
- Established a coproduction community fundraising team.

Our networking and partnership working….

- Continued to strengthen connections with key local organisations such as the NHS, One Walsall, and religious organisations, re-establishing partnerships and collaboration.
- Attended the Black County Healthcare Co-Production Network and Black County Evidence Repository.
- Developed partnerships with organisations such as Mandem Meetup, MindKind, Aldridge Bereavement Café, St Giles Bereavement Support, and Rethink Supporting Mental Health, significantly broadening WBSS's organisational and community network.
- Worked closely with the NHS involvement specialist in Walsall to share feedback and insights on local needs, ensuring alignment with community-specific challenges and priorities.
- Continue to participate in several Walsall Multi-agency network meetings, including a Suicide Prevention Steering Group, Walsall Multi-agency Mental Wellbeing Stakeholder Partnership. and Walsall Men's Wellbeing Strategic Development Group

Our plans and goals moving forward

2024-25 proved to be another busy year supporting individuals in whichever way best suited them. Whilst this continues to be our main focus, during 2025-26 we also plan to achieve the following;

- Secure funding to provide financial stability
- Focused recruitment of volunteers for our children and young people service
- Development of wellbeing support and creation of Wellbeing Support Worker roles
- Provision of administrative and IT work experience for 6th form, college, and university students
- Development of a strategic plan to increase WBSS fundraising capability
- Increase the delivery of our bereavement support training programme for school staff
- Explore the possibility of organising memorial services at local places of worship.
- Increase the profile of WBSS across Walsall borough and the Black Country to enable ongoing support for the bereaved
- Continue to network with key local groups and partnerships to seek opportunities for working together and improving support for the bereaved.

Financial Review

We do not charge our clients for our services; however, we do encourage donations if clients feel they are able to support our charity. Grants from our service users, the general public and Charitable Trusts and Foundations are vital in helping us to provide our support.

Income received during this year increased slightly to £106,131 (£100,429 2023/24). Expenditure also decreased to £155,269 (£177,398 2023/24) mainly due to a reduction in counselling staff.

The main source of restricted income for The Swing is through grants and donations from charitable giving organisations with The Henry Smith Charity being our largest donor. We are extremely grateful to them for their continued support. Unrestricted funds received include donations, training support and a variety of online fundraising streams. Funding from Walsall Council continued to fund costs associated with providing support to adults at community outreach locations.

We expect expenditure during 2025/26 to be about £140,000. To meet this demand, we will continue with our grant application programme.

In January 2025 the Trustees produced a three-year Business Plan which identified various income streams for the charity to pursue over the coming years. Key strategies include increasing its grant application programme further by incorporating a wider range of grant making bodies as well as seeking multi-year grants. It will also seek to secure funding from corporate organisations and local businesses. This has recently been reviewed in 2026 and an intense period of fundraising activity is planned to ensure the viability of the charity into 2027. New Trustees and volunteers are in place and bids are in progress to raise funds beyond that currently secured to meet the long terms needs of the charity. Progress will be continually monitored during the coming months and if necessary, action taken to reduce the cost base if sufficient funds are not forthcoming. However, Trustees are confident that sufficient funds can be raised to secure the viability of the Charity over the next 12 months.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees continue to review the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risk to the organisation, that funding to run the organisation is not secure. The trustees have established a policy whereby the reserves in total that are not invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity, should be up to the equivalent of nine months of the total anticipated expenditure of the charity.

This level of these reserves has been determined by the need to meet the working capital requirements of the charity. In addition, due to a massive increase in demand for our service over the past year, this period represents the necessary amount of time required to deliver counselling sessions to all the clients who are on our waiting list for support and for the charity to carry out all its legal obligations.

At the end of March 2025, the total of the charity's reserves stood at £78,183 of which £19,971 was restricted funds.

The financial strategy of WBSS continues to be that of building unrestricted free reserves to meet our nine-month target, through planned cost-effective operational procedures and further fundraising. The Trustees will continue to take all necessary actions regarding the prevailing economic climate. Where surplus funds are available, a percentage will be transferred to the designated fund which will help fund the purchase of premises for the charity.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees are very aware of the need to assess and minimise risks to the operation of the charity. As such, a comprehensive set of policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, and where necessary, updated to comply with changes in legislation and the requirements of funding bodies. Following the guidance of these policies covers the main risks to the operation of the charity.

The risk of being unable to adequately fund projects is our main concern. In order to minimise this risk, the trustees continually look at ways in which the charity can diversify income streams. Expenditure is constantly reviewed in order to ensure that funds continue to be used effectively.

The risk of not supporting clients and volunteers professionally is managed by having a supervision programme in place in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) procedures. It is WBSS's policy that every new volunteer is supported by way of an obligatory training course followed by induction, prior to client contact time. All staff and counsellors must complete on-line safeguarding training annually.

Disclosure and Barring checks are made every three years for all members of staff and volunteer counsellors. General Data Protection Regulation is adhered to as well as policies regarding Safeguarding Adults and Children.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with Health and Safety of all staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the centre. These ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. In addition, the regular meetings of the Trustees at the charity's premises facilitate the constant review of the environment in which the charity exists.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Walsall Bereavement Support Service is a registered charity that aims to meet some of the needs of bereaved people within the Walsall Borough. The charity, originally formed as an unincorporated charity in 1998, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4th July 2013 and is governed by a constitution approved by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

Appointment of Trustees, Induction, and Training

The focus of the charity is that of supporting bereaved adults, young people and children. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of these groups are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees the charity has sought to identify members of the community who are willing to use their own experiences to assist the organisation.

The Trustee Board is well represented by a wide range of individuals from various aspects of the community. Trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees to act jointly with them for all purposes. A trustee whose term of office has expired can be appointed for a further term of office.

Whilst there is no formal induction process in place, all new trustees are invited and encouraged to visit the offices of WBSS in order to familiarise themselves with the organisation and the context within which it operates. The Chair of Trustees will then discuss the following aspects of the organisation with the new trustee and answer any questions arising:

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity.
- The current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future and objectives of the organisation.

In addition, new trustees are given a copy of the latest Annual Report along with a trustee role description, a copy of the constitution, the Charity Commission's Trustee Handbook, the organisation's main policy documents and the latest financial statements.

Organisational Structure

WBSS has a Board of Trustees of at least four members who meet at least quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At the time of signing off this report, there were six trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Trustees are responsible for overseeing and maintaining the operational management of the organisation in line with the constitution and quality procedures.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity's SORP:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf on 19th January 2026

By **Jim Green Chair of Trustees**

Acknowledgements

Walsall Bereavement Support Service would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following Charitable Trusts and organisation for their financial support during 2024 / 2025.

- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant
- BBC Children in Need
- The Albert Hunt Charity
- William Cadbury Trust
- Baron Davenport Charity
- CB & HH Taylor 1984 Charity
- The Eveson Trust
- Harry Payne Heart of England Trust
- The Grimmitt Trust
- The Barbara Ward Children's Foundation
- W.E.D
- The Owen Family Trust
- St Pauls' Church at The Crossing, Walsall
- St Lawrence's Church, Darlaston
- St Matthew's Church, Walsall
- Walsall Rotary Club

And finally, many thanks go to all of the volunteers for the skills, commitment, and time they contribute throughout the year.

Without their support we simply would not be able to provide this valuable service.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number: 1152724

Registered Office: Office Suite 2
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DA

Telephone: 01922 724841 / 01922 645035

Website: www.wbss.org.uk

Trustees:

Chair:	James Green
Treasurer:	Alyson Green
Trustees:	Alexandra Smith
	Akinola Meheux (stepped down 15th May 2025)
	Sandev Panaser (stepped down 23rd Jun 2025)
	Zargul Adil (stepped down 5th Sept 2025)
	Linda Dines (appointed 17th Sept 2025)
	Frances Brant (appointed 15th Dec 2025)
	Joanne Barlow (appointed 15th Dec 2025)

Independent Examiner:

Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited, 1 Saracen Close, Ettington.CV37 7SZ

Banks:

Barclays Bank: 1 Churchill Place, London, E14 5HP

Nationwide: Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon, SN38 1NW

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Walsall Bereavement Support Service ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 17 to 26.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

3) the accounts do 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.

Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales
Karen Hanlan, Independent Examiner Limited
1 Saracen Close, Ettington, CV37 7SZ

Date
19th January 2026

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
Income from:					
		£	£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	16,749	17,950	**34,699**	**25,256**
Charitable activities	2	34,190	34,199	**68,389**	**70,299**
Trading activities	3	422	-	**422**	**1,321**
Investments – bank interest		2,521	-	**2,521**	**3,553**
Other		100	-	**100**	**-**
Total income		**53,982**	**52,149**	**106,131**	**100,429**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		108	458	**566**	**3,788**
Charitable activities		87,282	67,421	**154,703**	**173,610**
		87,390	**67,879**	**155,269**	**177,398**
Net expenditure and net movement in funds for year		(33,408)	(15,730)	**(49,138)**	**(76,969)**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		91,620	35,701	**127,321**	**204,290**
Total funds carried forward		**58,212**	**19,971**	**78,183**	**127,321**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	7	104	483
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	2,250	9,719
Cash at Bank		92,594	136,154
		94,844	**145,873**
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(16,765)	(19,035)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		**78,079**	**126,838**
NET ASSETS		**78,183**	**127,321**
FUNDS	11		
Restricted Funds		19,971	35,701
Unrestricted Funds			
- General		58,212	91,620
TOTAL FUNDS		**78,183**	**127,321**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.
Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Jim Green, Chair of Trustees Date: 19th January 2026

Principal accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Walsall Bereavement Support Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

Going Concern statement

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the Charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations.

The Charity's current business plan alongside its fundraising strategy indicates that the Charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the Trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds

General accumulated funds are unrestricted funds available for general purposes and include funds designated for a particular purpose; the use of such funds remains at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are funds subject to conditions imposed by the donor or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds are raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charity.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of fundraising activity and includes an allocation of staff costs relating to time spent on fundraising activity.

Expenditure on charitable expenditure includes the costs of project delivery to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support and governance costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Interest receivable

Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts received in the year

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets, which is estimated at 4 years.

Fixed assets are capitalised when their value exceeds £500.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on or within a three month notice period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to employees' individual personal pension plans. The employer's contributions to the scheme in 2025 were £2,057 (2024 £2,529) and are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Taxation

As a registered Charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Donations & Legacies

	2025 £	2024 £
Un-restricted:		
Donations	3,122	5,206
Grants	13,627	-
	16,749	5,206
Restricted:		
Donations	-	-
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	-	17,500
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing	17,950	2,550
	17,950	20,050
Total	**34,699**	**25,256**

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Un-restricted:		
Training & Support	4,340	3,360
Walsall Council	29,850	26,888
Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust	-	-
North Smethwick Development Trust	-	1,495
	34,190	31,743
Restricted:		
Children in Need (Emotional Wellbeing Program)	2,766	7,756
The Henry Smith Charity grant 2	31,433	30,800
	34,199	38,556
Total	**68,389**	**70,299**

3. Trading activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Un-restricted:		
Fundraising events	366	676
Fundraising platforms	56	250
	422	926
Fundraising (The Swing)	-	395
	-	**395**
Total	**422**	**1,321**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	54,754	46,160	100,914	121,197
Payroll Costs	238	238	476	418
Fundraising Costs	108	458	566	1,609
Centre Costs	7,954	7,317	15,271	13,542
Unit 3/Office Suite 1 Rent	2,750	500	3,250	3,000
Unit 3 Office Suite 1 Utilities	3,046	292	3,338	1,838
Room Hire	3,404	-	3,404	5,917
IT	1,205	1,205	2,410	2,137
Telephone	766	707	1,473	1,739
Stationery	46	54	100	28
Postage	135	150	285	190
Printing	556	590	1,146	1,006
Office Equipment	152	151	303	302
Materials	-	-	-	1,463
Travel / Parking	-	-	-	723
Training	260	207	467	1,656
Supervision	3,267	960	4,227	5,218
Volunteer Expenses	15	0	15	15
Publicity	71	71	142	-
Insurance	1,662	1,661	3,323	3,213
DBS Checks	321	-	321	1,029
Professional Fees	6,589	6,700	13,289	9,316
Bank Charges	70	70	140	140
Cleaning & H&S Equipment	21	9	30	162
Sundries	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	-	379	379	1,540
	87,390	**67,879**	**155,269**	**177,398**

Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising Costs	108	458	**566**	**3,788**
Direct Costs	45,256	41,421	**86,677**	**106,469**
Support Costs	37,826	21,800	**59,626**	**60,603**
Governance	4,200	4.200	**8,400**	**6,538**
	87,390	**67,879**	**155,269**	**177,398**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Net expenditure/income for year

Net income is stated after charging:	2025 £	2024 £
Independent Examiners fee	1,050	1,050
Depreciation	379	1,540
	1,429	**2,590**

Staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries	95,967	114,196
National Insurance	2,722	4,472
Pensions	2,057	2,529
Total	**100,746**	**121,197**

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2024: nil).

The equivalent of 3.65 full-time members of staff were employed during the year (2024: 4)

Key management personnel comprise the Interim Service Lead whose benefits total £9,600 (2023 £21,386).

The charity does not operate its own pension scheme but contributes towards NEST Pension scheme for all employees.

In the year ended 31 March 2025 £9,600 (2024 £3,600) was paid to Mr Sandev Panaser, a Trustee, for providing the services of Interim Service Lead to the Charity. Remuneration was approved by all other Trustees in his absence and was paid at the going rate for such services in the marketplace. There were no further trustees' remuneration or other benefits in the year ended 31 March 2025. No trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year (2024: None).

There are no further related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	19,924	2,182	22,106
Additions	-	-	-
At end of year	**19,924**	**2,182**	**22,106**
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	19,441	2,182	21,623
Charge for the year	379	-	379
At end of year	**19,820**	**2,182**	**22,002**
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2024	483	-	483
At 31 March 2025	**104**	**-**	**104**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Prepayments	1,750	1,757
Accrued Income	-	7,462
Rental Deposit	500	500
	2,250	**9,719**

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals	6,232	6,003
Deferred Income	10,533	13,032
	16,765	**19,035**

Movements in deferred income are as follows:

At beginning of year	13,032
Released to income in the year	(13,032)
Deferred in year	10,533
At end of Year	**10,533**

Deferred income relates to funding received in advance of project activity.

10. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	104	104
Current assets	62,423	32,421	94,844
Current Liabilities	(4,211)	(12,554)	(16,765)
Total	**58,212**	**19,971**	**78,183**

Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	274	209	483
Current assets	94,786	51,087	145,873
Current Liabilities	(3,440)	(15,595)	(19,035)
Total	**91,620**	**35,701**	**127,321**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Movement in funds

	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
The Swing	10,110	15,950	20,545	-	**5,515**
The Henry Smith Charity	18,580	31,433	37,235	-	**12,778**
BBC Children in Need Wellbeing Programme	5,458	2,766	8,224	-	**-**
Heart of England	-	2,000	1,875	-	**125**
HOPE Group	1,553	-	-	-	**1,553**
	35,701	52,149	67,879	-	**19,971**
Un-restricted funds					
General Fund	91,620	53,982	87,390	-	**58,212**
Total funds	**127,321**	**106,131**	**155,269**	-	**78,183**

The Swing provides counselling support to children, young people and families. Funding is provided by various charitable giving organisations and grant providers.

The Henry Smith Charity grant is year 3 of a three-year grant towards the costs of a counsellor with The Swing and other project costs as agreed with The Henry Smith Charity.

A three-year grant from BBC Children In Need enabled us to pilot an Emotional Wellbeing programme to deliver to groups of children at their school.

HOPE Group (formally the Bereaved by Suicide Support Group) provides monthly support to the families who have lost loved ones as a result of suicide.

General funds consist of unrestricted reserves brought forward, general donations and fundraising; they may be used for any charitable purpose as deemed by the trustees.

12. Controlling Interest

The Charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

13. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
Income from:			
	£	**£**	**£**
Donations & legacies	5,206	20,050	**25,256**
Charitable activities	31,743	38,556	**70,299**
Trading activities	926	395	**1,321**
Investments – bank interest	3,553	-	**3,553**
Total income	**41,428**	**59,001**	**100,429**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	2,287	1,501	**3,788**
Charitable activities	104,121	69,489	**173,610**
	106,408	**70,990**	**177,398**
Net expenditure and net movement in funds for year	(64,980)	(11,989)	**(76,969)**
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds brought forward	156,600	47,690	**204,290**
Total funds carried forward	**91,620**	**35,701**	**127,321**

WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales - Charity number 1152724

Accounts

WBSS

Registered Charity Number: 1152724

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Trustee Annual Report & Accounts

2023 - 2024

Supporting adults, children, and young people of Walsall in their times of need.

Trustee's Annual Report And Financial Statements

1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service (WBSS) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act, the Charity's Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

Our Charitable Objectives

provide caring and sensitive support that is free, confidential, and open to all residents of Walsall, irrespective of their relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the time that has elapsed since the death.

reduce the potential negative long-term impact that bereavement can have on a person's physical/mental wellbeing, education or employment, by providing appropriate support to enable each person to cope with their loss and begin to rebuild their lives.

prevent the effects of bereavement from damaging family cohesion through developing understanding and improving communication within the family unit.

Our Strategic Aims

To establish WBSS as the local provider in the field of emotional bereavement support

To raise awareness about the impact that bereavement has on a person's emotional and physical health and where and when to seek support and advice

To provide and promote high quality support services to the bereaved in the borough of Walsall

To raise awareness amongst the general public about 'Dying Matters' to help reduce the negative stigma that is attached to death and dying

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'. In the opinion of the trustees, the objectives of the charity as detailed on the previous page are for the public benefit.

The support offered by Walsall Bereavement Support Service is currently available free of charge to bereaved children, young people, and their families who live within the Walsall borough or those registered at a Walsall GP surgery or educated within a Walsall school. Support is offered irrespective of the relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the length of time that has elapsed since the death.

Chair's Report

2023-24 proved to be a year of change for WBSS. Our Head of Service left in July 2023 after almost 18 years working for the charity in various roles. We are really pleased that she has been able to continue to support the charity as freelance bookkeeper and financial advisor. Due to his prior experience in leadership, our trustee Sandev Panaser was appointed the role of part time Interim Service Lead.

Three long standing trustees retired from the board and they were replaced by four younger trustees, one of whom is a previous service user. Being from varying backgrounds and experience, they all bring a range of new aspects and fresh views to the board.

The total number of individuals referred for support was similar to the previous year, with 851 referred this year compared to 855 last year. Referral numbers would have been higher had it not been necessary to suspend referrals to The Swing for several months. This said, the total number of individuals supported during the year had increased from 1,083 to 1,167.

To ensure that the service we provide is as inclusive as possible WBSS delivers counselling sessions from a number of locations throughout the Walsall borough. Additionally, to meet the needs of everyone requesting support, we continue to provide a blended support approach by offering clients face to face, telephone or on-line support.

Although the overall cost to run the organisation decreased, some costs such as utility and insurance costs increased considerably due to the national cost of living crisis. Our grant income programme sadly did not raise as much as we had hoped. This is possibly due to a number of reasons such as time constraints, demand for funds from an increased number of organisations and an apparent shift in the criteria for funding from some organisation whose focus was more on grassroot projects. We continue to receive funds from The Henry Smith Charity and BBC Children in Need, both supporting The Swing. We also continue to receive funding from Walsall Council which enables us to deliver support to bereaved adults at various locations throughout the borough.

As the trustees look ahead to the forthcoming year, our main focus is to increase income. To assist us in this quest, a Business Plan has been developed to identify potential fundraising sources and opportunities. A review of expenditure has highlighted areas where current expenditure commitments can be reduced.

Whilst the future may appear a little uncertain at this time, I take positives from the fact that over the years we have had much success through our grant funding programme and have built up many positive relationships with our funders. WBSS are diversifying their income streams, and I feel confident that we can be successful in achieving our goals to ensure that the charity will continue to grow and prosper over the coming years thus ensuring that it can continue to deliver support to every Walsall resident who requires it.

Jim Green

Our Service

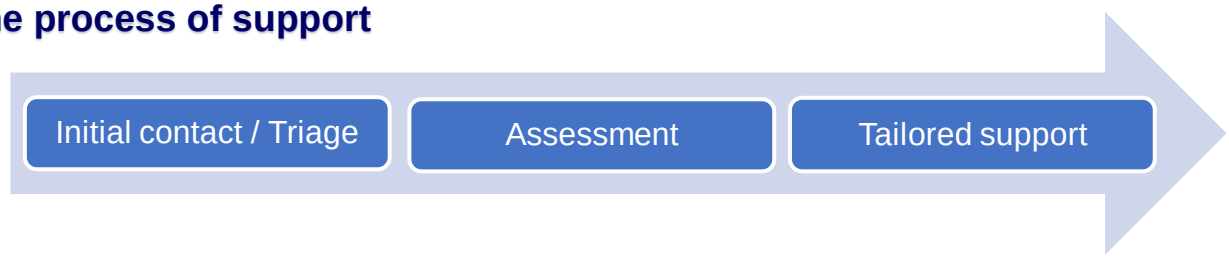
During the year, WBSS have supported 1,167 bereaved adults, children and young people. This is an increase from the previous years' total of 1,083.

In total, 3,334 hours of support was provided to the bereaved during this year. This is a decrease on the previous year of 3,690 hours mainly due to a reduction in the counselling capacity of the charity resulting from staff departures.

The support we provide is tailored to the specific needs of our service users and includes:

- **One-to-one face to face, telephone and on-line counselling**
- **Group Support**
- **Family and Sibling support**
- **Out of Hours service week-day evenings and Saturday mornings**
- **Special Support in schools**
- **Outreach work in the community**
- **Community workshops and activities for children and young people**

The process of support



Our support is provided through 3 projects:

'Let's Talk' - Bereavement support for adults

The Swing - Bereavement support for children, young people, and families

Community Project - Community support and engagement

Our Services are available to everyone

WBSS wants its projects and services to be open to as wide a range of people as possible and as such, we do not discriminate clients by age, race, gender, sexual orientation, relationship to the bereaved person, the time elapsed since the death, or cause of death.

We utilise the skills of staff and volunteer counsellors from different backgrounds and ethnicities, to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate support to each individual client.

We work with schools across the borough, many of whom have high levels of students who have additional support needs such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome etc. To help support these potentially challenging students, counsellors have all undergone specific training relating to supporting this client group.

Our Projects - ‘Let’s Talk’

The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Many of our clients have anxiety, depression, and more complex issues that have developed as a result of how they feel. For adults this can include dependency upon substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, or cigarettes. Some are unable to work, have withdrawn from family and social life, and are less able to take care of themselves.

Over the past 12 months ‘Let’s Talk’ received 641 referrals during the year, supported a total of 860 clients and delivered 2,499 hours of support.

Profile of the adults we have supported.

- 72% of adults supported were females, 28% male.
- 81% were White British, 7% British Asian or Asian, 5% Black British, Black African or Caribbean.
- 31% were under the age of 40, 44% aged 40–60, the remaining 25% were over the age of 60.
- Where client postal addresses were given, 82% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 9% lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas.
- Just over a third of all adults, 39%, requested support following the death of a parent, 20% the death of a spouse or partner, 8% a sibling and 8% their own child.
- For clients who presented with one loss, the main cause of death was cancer, with 18% of adults losing a loved one to this disease; 12% of deaths were heart related; 10% lost a loved one in an extremely tragic circumstance such as murder, manslaughter, suicide or a road traffic collision. 14% were referred for several of multiple losses.
- 36% sought support within the first 6 months following their bereavement and 14% between 6 and 12 months of bereavement; however, we support people whenever they need our help and during this period 15% of service users sought our help 5 years or more after their bereavement.
- 6% of adults required urgent support as they felt suicidal at the point of referral.
- 25% of adults supported had complex grief needs and/or had a mental health diagnosis.
- 15% of adults were recommended our service by their GP or another member of staff at their practice; 8% by a Social Prescriber; 7% by a psychiatrist, secure mental health unit, community psychiatric nurse or mental health worker and 7% by other counselling providers such as Talking Therapies.

Outcomes reported following support.

- 74% of adults reported that their emotional difficulties such as anger, guilt, anxiety etc had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 56% reported that their physical difficulties such as relying on prescribe medication, smoking or drinking more, unable to sleep and feeling unwell had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 56% felt more able to cope with day-to-day tasks such as attending work, college or volunteering and daily tasks such as cooking cleaning washing etc.
- 58% said that their support and social network had improved and felt less lonely, more supported and felt able to socialise more.

Written Feedback Received from some Adults We Supported

What Helped the most….

- Being able to talk open and freely without being judged. Being understood and having someone who cared, listened and supported me with great advice and techniques on coping.
- Declutter of my brain, it had so much going on and it was difficult to know what I was feeling. There's a lot of trauma which came back.
- My counsellor listened to me, understood me and supported me. Made me realise how I am feeling is normal and all part of the process.
- Having someone to talk to about anything that was on my mind, took the weight off.
- Talking to someone disconnected to the problem, outside of the family who can just see outside of the box when you cannot.
- I feel counselling has helped to give some meaning back into life. Just being able to talk has helped my diet and sleep improve.
- Being able to talk to someone about things I feel I can't talk about at home.
- Talking about my feelings and all the situations around the bereavement, not just the bereavement itself.
- Trying to separate what I'm going through into sections and take it step by step.
- My understanding of my grief, that it's okay to feel what I'm feeling - worksheet of process of grief helped.
- An objective listener, a different perspective.

How do you feel the support you received has made a difference to how you feel now….

- When I came, I feel really low and in a dark place but with the support from my counsellor I feel like the light at the end of the tunnel.
- Prior to counselling I didn't feel like I even cared to be alive. With some time and counselling I no longer feel that way.
- It has given me the chance to talk and be listened to, being made to feel comfortable in the process - has helped in my healing process and reflect more positive.
- After each appointment I left thinking about how I could make changes and help myself. This is the most beneficial outcome I needed as it gave me back some control over the events that had affected me and continued to affect me.
- Planning for the future, feeling happier, able to face day to day issues, controlling emotions, understanding myself.
- I am now able to go out, make plans, enjoy the garden and even think about going to the caravan. I couldn't do any of this before.
- I'm not feeling guilty or angry anymore.
- I was given the opportunity to discuss my mental health surrounding the bereavements I experienced.
- Being able to talk got a lot of stress/grief/anger out of my head. I've been able to process a lot better and understand my feeling. Also, ways to manage my anxiety.

100% of adults who shared their views said they would recommend WBSS to others.

Our Projects – The Swing

Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological/physiological difficulties.

Without appropriate support, these issues can spiral out of control and in the worst cases, we see service users excluded from school for behavioural issues and family breakdown due to misunderstood grief/poor communication.

Over the past 12 months The Swing received 210 referrals during the year, supported a total of 307 clients and delivered 835 hours of support.

Profile of the children and young people we have supported.

- 50% of children and young people supported were female and 50% male.
- 79% were White British, 4% British Asian or Asian, 2% Black British, Black African or Caribbean.
- 35% were under the age of 10, 62% aged 10-15, the remaining 3% were 16-18.
- 77% had experienced a significant family death such as a parent/carer, sibling, or grandparent.
- 12% had experienced multiple bereavements.
- 80% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 10% lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas.
- 8% were defined as having a specific learning need or were waiting the outcome of a possible diagnosis. 3% were confirmed as having a diagnosis of either ADHD, Autism or dyslexia.

The impact of our work

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluation because it enables us to hear and respond to the views and experiences of our beneficiaries. The learning that we gain from evaluating our work informs the development of any of our new work streams.

We measure success by evaluating improvements made by each client against the issues affecting them due to their bereavement. At the onset of support, we undertake an assessment and record the issues facing each person via a questionnaire. We then monitor change under four main categories: emotional, behaviour, physical, and social/educational. These are broken down further into specific issues that include anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance/alcohol misuse, mental/physical health, etc. In doing this, we are able to gain an overall picture of the difficulties each person is experiencing and create a support plan tailored to their specific needs.

We monitor the progress of clients throughout their support and adjust their support plan if necessary. Finally, we ask all clients to complete an end of support questionnaire to compare where they were at the start of their support to the end. This determines our outcomes.
For children/young people we also ask parents to complete a similar questionnaire, enabling us to compare the child's view of their progress against their parents. This helps us to measure outcomes more accurately.

Our monitoring system is designed using guidance from the National Child Bereavement Network. This enables us to analyse information and provide statistical evidence about the impact of our work.

Outcomes reported following support, the clients' perspective.

- 63% of children and young people reported that their emotional difficulties such as crying, feeling sad, anger, anxiety being withdrawn, feeling suicidal had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 64% reported that their physical difficulties such as eating, sleeping, nightmares, bed wetting, poor concentration had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 79% felt their behaviour such as bullying, arguments, fighting, self-harm etc had improved or was no longer a problem.
- 70% reported an improvement in their education and school attendance.
- 59% felt that their social life and mixing with friends had improved.
- 54% said their relationship with their parents and siblings had improved or was no longer a problem.

Outcomes reported following support, the parents' perspective.

- 80% reported an improvement in their child's emotional wellbeing.
- 86% reported an improvement in their child's physical wellbeing.
- 64% reported an improvement in their child's behaviour.
- 67% reported an improvement in their child's education.
- 100% felt that their child socialised with friends more.
- 93% felt that family relationships had improved.

Written Feedback Received from some Children We Supported

What Helped the most….

- Being able to talk and let my emotions out on a bad day.
- Having the ability to talk openly in a private and safe place.
- Being able to talk to someone who I won't see outside of the sessions, so it won't be awkward
- Understanding what I feel and how to control them.
- Talking and breathing techniques.
- What helped me the most was making me feel more confident and having someone listen to me and make each week easier.
- Probably the reflections and looking at the past.
- I am more aware about the things and people around me.
- The thing that helped me to most is probably how fun it was or the stages of grief.
- Talking and not being judged.

Emotional Wellbeing Programme

Our *Emotional Wellbeing Programme* consists of three two-hour sessions. Different emotions are discussed each session; worksheets enabled the student to explore how that specific emotion affects them and helps them to learn new ways of coping thus enabling them to support themselves to resolve difficulties they may be experiencing.

Challenges

At the end of 2023, both Swing counsellors left the charity to take up roles as counsellors within local schools. We would like to thank both staff members for all their hard work and commitment they have shown the charity both as volunteers initially and then as paid staff.

These changes resulted in a need for The Swing to suspend referral for a period of 4 months in order for the charity to recruit and induced the new counsellors. Following the change in staff, non-counselling elements of support such as our Emotional Wellbeing Programme, planned child group support/drop-in sessions and recruitment of Swing volunteer counsellors were also all suspended. Relevant funders have been notified of these changes and are happy for funds to be used to support counselling and other core costs of The Swing.

Our Projects – Community Project

GROUP SUPPORT – We recognise that many people benefit from being with others who have lived experience of what they are experiencing and can offer some hope, comfort and hope to them when they are at their lowest. Group support can provide this, and when possible WBSS has facilitated support groups, due to its current situation these groups are currently on hold but the hope is that they can be reinstated as some point.

SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY– We understand that some people may be unwilling or unable to travel into Walsall to attend counselling sessions. We therefore hire rooms at a number of locations throughout the borough thus making it easier for people to attend.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – Although being in Walsall for over 25 years, we recognise that many people may be unaware of our support or are unable to access support for various reasons such as illness, disability, cultural difficulties etc. Where appropriate, we engage with local organisations to provide bereavement awareness support with the community.

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are our most important asset. During 2023/24, they provided 1,220 hours of counselling support to the bereaved. This is an incredible amount given that this was 874 hours last year. Since WBSS started to provide placement opportunities, it has now trained 200 counsellors to help provide bereavement counselling.

Whenever possible, WBSS operates a rolling recruitment programme to attract volunteer counsellors to ensure that we have the staffing resources to provide a high skills base for us to draw from to support our clients. Over the years, we have developed a reputation for providing very good placements for those training to become counsellors and our volunteer mentoring is recognised as being excellent. This is evidenced in our retention rate of volunteers; we currently have one qualified counsellor who has been providing their services on a voluntary basis for over 15 years and another who has provided support for 20 years.

WBSS volunteers, providing support to adults, are all either qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling or are on placement whilst training towards this qualification. Prior to being able to provide support, all volunteers, regardless of qualification and/or experience, must complete our in-house ‘Bereavement and Loss’ 10-hour training programme. Volunteers supporting children and young people must have delivered at least 75 hours counselling support and also complete our ‘Supporting Children and Young People’ 12-hour training programme. All volunteers must complete annual on-line safeguarding training.

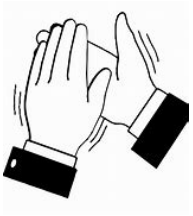
We recognise the importance of continually refreshing and expanding volunteer knowledge and experience and aim to offer additional training whenever opportunities arise.

Our Notable Achievements during 2023 - 24

Our proudest achievement was being invited to be a guest speaker at The Henry Smith Charity Volunteer Conference held in Birmingham in April 2023. We are immensely proud of this and feel honoured to have been asked. Two staff delivered a short presentation about the work of The Swing including some case studies of children supported. Afterwards, the audience of The Henry Smith Charity Trustees, staff and volunteer assessors were invited to ask questions.

Support we provided….

- Received 917 referrals requesting support.
- Supported 1,167 individuals.
- Delivered 2,704 hours of counselling support.
- Delivered 630 additional hours support.



In addition, we have also….

- Completed 36 hours of on-line safeguarding training.
- Recruited 20 new volunteers, each received 12 hours of bereavement training.
- Assisted Walsall Rotary Club with their Santa Sleigh collection.
- Attended a bereavement support awareness coffee morning held at Dean Harper Funeral Directors in Walsall.
- Delivered an introductory support session at three separate residential care homes run by Walsall Housing Group.
- Introduced a refreshed logo to modernise WBSS's image and increase visibility
- Undergone a comprehensive restructuring to create a more relevant and appealing proposition for funders while increasing organisational capacity. This included internal changes to improve cost efficiency and enhance support for staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Strengthened the focus on community support by operating in six locations: Willenhall, Darlaston, Pleck, Brownhills, Pelsall, and two sites in Bloxwich, ensuring services are more accessible to diverse local populations.
- Delivered a presentation on Walsall Bereavement Support Service to colleagues across charities and statutory services at the Black Country Healthcare Stakeholder Meeting.
- Redeveloped access criteria for young people and adults to improve clarity and ease of access for service users.
- Worked in collaboration with Walsall Council to establish bereavement peer support services for older adults.
- Launched a consultation service to support schools by providing assistance to both staff and pupils as well as a consultancy services to support children and parents, enhancing mental health awareness within the school community.
- Began offering training and supervisory support to community groups, further extending WBSS's impact within the local area.

Our networking and partnership working….

- Continue to strengthen connections with key local organisations such as the NHS, One Walsall, and religious organisations, re-establishing partnerships and collaboration.
- Attend the Black County Healthcare Co-Production Network and Black County Evidence Repository.
- Developed partnerships with organisations such as Mandem Meetup, MindKind, Aldridge Bereavement Café, St Giles Bereavement Support, and Rethink Supporting Mental Health, significantly broadening WBSS's organisational and community network.
- Worked closely with the NHS involvement specialist in Walsall to share feedback and insights on local needs, ensuring alignment with community-specific challenges and priorities.
- Continue to participate in several Walsall Multi-agency network meetings, including a Suicide Prevention Steering Group, Walsall Multi-agency Mental Wellbeing Stakeholder Partnership. and Walsall Men's Wellbeing Strategic Development Group

Our Plans and Goals Moving Forward

2023-24 proved to be another busy year supporting individuals in whichever way best suited them. Whilst this continues to be our main focus, during 2024-25 we also plan to achieve the following;

- Secure funding to provide financial stability and enable us to recruit additional staff to help meet increased demand on our service.
- Recruit additional volunteers, specifically ones who can provide support to children and young people.
- Update the five-year Business Plan and fundraising strategy.
- Increase the delivery of our bereavement support training programme for school staff.
- Set up drop-in support sessions for adults, particularly targeting hard to reach groups.
- Increase the group support provided within the community.
- Explore the possibility of organising memorial services at local places of worship.
- Increase the profile of WBSS across the borough to ensure that the bereaved know where and how to contact us, should they need our support.
- Continue to network with key local groups and partnerships to seek opportunities for working together and improving support for the bereaved.
- Undertake four free hours of consultancy support from One Walsall to enhance and strengthen the service's evaluation programme.

Financial Review

We do not charge our clients for our services; however, we do encourage donations if clients feel they are able to support our charity. Grants from our service users, the general public and Charitable Trusts and Foundations are vital in helping us to provide our support.

Due to reduced fundraising capacity, income received during this year decreased to £100,429 (£179,624 2022/23). Expenditure also decreased to £177,398 (£225,653 (2022/23) mainly due to a change in the managerial structure of the charity resulting in fewer staff.

The main source of restricted income for The Swing is grants and donations from charitable giving organisations with The Henry Smith Charity being our largest donor. We are extremely grateful to them for their continued support. Other funding includes BBC Children in Need, Baron Davenport Charity and The Turner Trust. Unrestricted funds received include donations, training, support and a variety of online fundraising streams. Funding from Walsall Council continued to fund costs associated with providing support to adults at community outreach locations.

We expect expenditure during 2024/25 will be about £180,000. To meet this demand, we continued with our grant application programme, which generated almost £30,000 income to date during the year.

In January 2025 the Trustees produced a three-year Business Plan which has identified various income streams that the charity will pursue over the forthcoming years. Key strategies include increasing its grant application programme further by incorporating a wider range of grant making bodies as well as seeking multi-year grants. It will also seek to secure funding from corporate organisations and local businesses.

To increase the amount of funds raised internally, a training package has been developed which will deliver bereavement training to school staff and other organisations. The charity will increase its fundraising efforts and continue to seek the generosity of the clients it supports by asking for voluntary donations where possible.

As a small charity, without a dedicated fundraiser, raising funds remain a challenge, however, we will continue to consider all fundraising options available to us as well as continually review its expenditure and take cost cutting measures if required.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees continue to review the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risk to the organisation, that funding to run the organisation is not secure. The trustees have established a policy whereby the reserves in total that are not invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity, should be up to the equivalent of 9 months of the total anticipated expenditure of the charity.

This level of these reserves has been determined by the need to meet the working capital requirements of the charity. In addition, due to a massive increase in demand for our service over the past year, this period represents the necessary amount of time required to deliver counselling sessions to all the clients who are on our waiting list for support and for the charity to carry out all its legal obligations.

At the end of March 2024, the total of the charity's reserves stood at £127,321 of which £91,620 was general unrestricted funds and £35,701 restricted. Expenditure during the year was £177,398,

The financial strategy of WBSS continues to be that of building unrestricted free reserves to meet our 9-month target, through planned cost-effective operational procedures and further fundraising. The Trustees will continue to take all necessary actions regarding the prevailing economic climate. Where surplus funds are available, a percentage will be transferred to the designated fund which will help fund the purchase of premises for the charity.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees are very aware of the need to assess and minimise risks to the operation of the charity. As such, a comprehensive set of policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, and where necessary, updated to comply with changes in legislation and the requirements of funding bodies. Following the guidance of these policies covers the main risks to the operation of the charity.

The risk of being unable to adequately fund projects is our main concern. In order to minimise this risk, the trustees continually look at ways in which the charity can diversify income streams. Expenditure is constantly reviewed in order to ensure that funds continue to be used effectively.

The risk of not supporting clients and volunteers professionally is managed by having a supervision programme in place in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) procedures. It is WBSS's policy that every new volunteer is supported by way of an obligatory training course followed by induction, prior to client contact time. All staff and counsellors must complete on-line safeguarding training annually.

Disclosure and Barring checks are made every three years for all members of staff and volunteer counsellors. General Data Protection Regulation is adhered to as well as policies regarding Safeguarding Adults and Children. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with Health and Safety of all staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the centre. These ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. In addition, the regular meetings of the Trustees at the charity's premises facilitate the constant review of the environment in which the charity exists.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Walsall Bereavement Support Service is a registered charity that aims to meet some of the needs of bereaved people within the Walsall Borough. The charity, originally formed as an unincorporated charity in 1998, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4th July 2013 and is governed by a constitution approved by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

Appointment of Trustees, Induction, and Training

The focus of the charity is that of supporting bereaved adults, young people and children. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of these groups are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees the charity has sought to identify members of the community who are willing to use their own experiences to assist the organisation.

The Trustee Board is well represented by a wide range of individuals from various aspects of the community. Trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees to act jointly with them for all purposes. A trustee whose term of office has expired can be appointed for a further term of office.

Whilst there is no formal induction process in place, all new trustees are invited and encouraged to visit the offices of WBSS in order to familiarise themselves with the organisation and the context within which it operates. The Chair of Trustees will then discuss the following aspects of the organisation with the new trustee and answer any questions arising.

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity.
- The current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future and objectives of the organisation.

In addition, new trustees are given a copy of the latest Annual Report along with a trustee role description, a copy of the constitution, the Charity Commission's Trustee Handbook, the organisation's main policy documents and the latest financial statements.

Organisational Structure

WBSS has a Board of Trustees of at least four members who meet at least quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present there are six trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Trustees are responsible for overseeing and maintaining the operational management of the organisation in line with the constitution and quality procedures.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity's SORP:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf on 12th February 2025

By **Jim Green (Chair)**

Acknowledgements

Walsall Bereavement Support Service would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following Charitable Trusts and organisation for their financial support during 2023 / 2024.

- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- North Smethwick Development Trust
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant
- BBC Children in Need
- Baron Davenport Charity
- The Turner Trust
- Walsall Rotary Club
- Alumwell Primary School, Walsall
- St Pauls' Church at The Crossing, Walsall
- St Lawrence Church, Darlaston

And finally, many thanks go to all of the volunteers for the skills, commitment, and time they contribute throughout the year.

Without their support we simply would not be able to provide this valuable service.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number: 1152724

Registered Office: Office Suite 2
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DA

Telephone: 01922 724841 / 01922 645035

Website: www.wbss.org.uk

Trustees:

Chair:	James Green
Treasurer:	Neil Simpson (stepped down Dec 2023)
	Alyson Green
Trustees:	Dr Robert Crundwell (stepped down Dec 2023)
	Bev Simpson Stepped down Dec 2023)
	Verity Baker (stepped down Aug 2023)
	Sandev Panaser (appointed Oct 2023)
	Akinola Meheux (appointed Dec 2023)
	Alexandra Smith (appointed Feb 2024)
	Zargul Adil (appointed Feb 2024)

Independent Examiner:

Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited, 1 Saracen Close, Ettington.CV37 7SZ

Banks:

Barclays Bank: 1 Churchill Place, London, E14 5HP

Nationwide: Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon, SN38 1NW

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Walsall Bereavement Support Service ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 18 to 27.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

3) the accounts do 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.

Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales
Karen Hanlan, Independent Examiner Limited
1 Saracen Close, Ettington, CV37 7SZ

Date
12th February 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
Income from:					
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Donations & legacies	1	5,206	20,050	**25,256**	**65,760**
Charitable activities	2	31,743	38,556	**70,299**	**111,820**
Trading activities	3	926	395	**1,321**	**526**
Investments – bank interest		3,553	-	**3,553**	**1,518**
Total income		**41,428**	**59,001**	**100,429**	**179,624**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		2,287	1,501	**3,788**	**9,830**
Charitable activities		104,121	69,489	**173,610**	**215,823**
		106,408	**70,990**	**177,398**	**225,653**
Net (expenditure)/income and net movement in funds for year		(64,980)	(11,989)	**(76,969)**	**(46,029)**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		156,600	47,690	**204,290**	**250,319**
Total funds carried forward		**91,620**	**35,701**	**127,321**	**204,290**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	7	483	2,023
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	9,719	7,657
Cash at Bank		136,154	232,668
		145,873	**240,325**
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(19,035)	(38,058)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		**126,838**	**202,267**
NET ASSETS		**127,321**	**204,290**
FUNDS	11		
Restricted Funds		35,701	47,690
Unrestricted Funds			
- General		91,620	81,600
- Designated		-	75,000
TOTAL FUNDS		**127,321**	**204,290**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.
Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Mr J Green, Chair of Trustees Date: 12th February 2025

Principal accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Walsall Bereavement Support Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

Going Concern statement

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the Charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations.

The Charity's business plan shows that the Charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the Trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds

General accumulated funds are unrestricted funds available for general purposes and include funds designated for a particular purpose; the use of such funds remains at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are funds subject to conditions imposed by the donor or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds are raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charity.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of fundraising activity and includes an allocation of staff costs relating to time spent on fundraising activity.

Expenditure on charitable expenditure includes the costs of project delivery to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support and governance costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Interest receivable

Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts received in the year

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets, which is estimated at 4 years.

Fixed assets are capitalised when their value exceeds £500.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on or within a three month notice period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to employee's individual personal pension plans. The employer contributions to the scheme in 2024 were £2,529 (2023 £4,056) and are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Taxation

As a registered Charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Donations & Legacies

	2024 £	2023 £
Un-restricted:		
Donations	5,206	6,242
Grants	-	-
	5,206	6,242
Restricted:		
Donations	-	218
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	17,500	30,000
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing	2,550	29,300
	20,050	59,518
Total	**25,256**	**65,760**

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Un-restricted:		
Training & Support	3,360	2,405
Walsall Council	26,888	44,250
Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust	-	37,500
North Smethwick Development Trust	1,495	1,375
	31,743	85,530
Restricted:		
Children in Need (Emotional Wellbeing Program)	7,756	5,757
The Henry Smith Charity grant 2	30,800	20,533
	38,556	26,290
Total	**70,299**	**111,820**

3. Trading activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Un-restricted:		
Fundraising events	676	275
Online fundraising	250	251
	926	526
Fundraising (The Swing)	395	-
	395	**-**
Total	**1,321**	**526**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	71,513	49,684	121,197	181,882
Payroll Costs	209	209	418	458
Fundraising Costs	108	1,501	1,609	951
Centre Costs	6,771	6,771	13,542	11,160
Unit 3 Rent	2,250	750	3,000	3,000
Unit 3 Utilities	981	857	1,838	173
Room Hire	5,824	93	5,917	1,900
IT	1,240	897	2,137	1,918
Telephone	984	755	1,739	1,768
Stationery	28	-	28	300
Postage	127	63	190	11
Printing	503	503	1,006	1,256
Office Equipment	163	139	302	760
Refreshments	-	-	-	12
Materials	-	1,463	1,463	2,194
Resources	-	-	-	267
Travel / Parking	84	639	723	1,164
Training	1,464	192	1,656	1,531
Supervision	4,423	795	5,218	6,078
Volunteer Expenses	15	-	15	512
Publicity	-	-	-	626
Insurance	2,006	1,207	3,213	2,516
DBS Checks	1,029	-	1,029	1,014
Professional Fees	5,640	3,676	9,316	1,633
Bank Charges	70	70	140	128
Cleaning & H&S Equipment	114	48	162	103
Sundries	-	-	-	653
Depreciation	862	678	1,540	1,685
	106,408	**70,990**	**177,398**	**225,653**

Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising Costs	2,287	1,501	**3,788**	**9,830**
Direct Costs	61,767	44,702	**106,469**	**159,834**
Support Costs	37,014	23,589	**60,603**	**27,735**
Governance	5,340	1,198	**6,538**	**28,254**
	106,408	**70,990**	**177,398**	**225,653**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Net expenditure/income for year

Net income is stated after charging:	2024 £	2023 £
Independent Examiners fee	1,050	990
Depreciation	1,540	1,685
	2,590	**2,675**

Staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries	114,196	149,821
National Insurance	4,472	8,005
Pensions	2,529	4,056
Staff Settlement Figure	-	20,000
Total	**121,197**	**181,882**

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2023: nil).

The equivalent of 4 full-time members of staff were employed during the year (2023: 5)

Key management personnel comprise the Head of Service and the Interim Service Lead whose employee benefits total £21,386 (2023 £41,266).

The charity does not operate its own pension scheme but contributes towards NEST Pension scheme for all employees.

In the year ended 31 March 2024 £3,600 was paid to Mr Sandev Panaser, a Trustee, for providing the services of Interim Service Lead to the Charity. Remuneration was approved by all other Trustees in his absence and was paid at the going rate for such services in the marketplace. There were no further trustees' remuneration or other benefits in the year ended 31 March 2023. No trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year (2023: None).

There are no further related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	19,924	2,182	22,106
Additions	-	-	-
At end of year	**19,924**	**2,182**	**22,106**
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	17,901	2,182	20,083
Charge for the year	1,540	-	1,540
At end of year	**19,441**	**2,182**	**21,623**
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2023	2,023	-	2,023
At 31 March 2024	**483**	**-**	**483**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	1,757	2,082
Accrued Income	7,462	5,075
Rental Deposit	500	500
	9,719	**7,657**

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals	6,003	1,408
Deferred Income	13,032	16,650
Staff Settlement Figure	0	20000
	19,035	**38,058**

Movements in deferred income are as follows:

At beginning of year	16,650
Released to income in the year	(16,650)
Deferred in year	13,032
At end of Year	**13,032**

Deferred income relates to funding received in advance of project activity.

10. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	274	209	483
Current assets	94,786	51,087	145,873
Current Liabilities	(3,440)	(15,595)	(19,035)
Total	**91,620**	**35,701**	**127,321**

Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	2,023	2,023
Current assets	177,436	62,889	240,325
Current Liabilities	(20,836)	(17,222)	(38,058)
Total	**156,600**	**47,690**	**204,290**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Movement in funds

	Balance at beginning of year	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance at end of year
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Restricted funds					
The Swing	36,391	2,945	(29,226)	-	**10,110**
The Henry Smith Charity	-	17,500	(17,500)	-	**-**
The Henry Smith Charity	6,535	30,800	(18,755)		**18,580**
BBC Children in Need Wellbeing Program	1,123	7,756	(3,421)	-	**5,458**
Tesco Community Grant	210	-	(210)	-	**-**
HOPE Group	1,826	-	(273)	-	**1,553**
Skipton Building Society	1,605	-	(1,605)	-	**-**
	47,690	59,001	(70,990)	-	**35,701**
Un-restricted funds					
General fund	81,600	41,428	(106,408)	75,000	**91,620**
Designated building fund	75,000	-	-	(75,000)	**-**
	156,600	41,428	(106,408)	-	**91,620**
Total funds	**204,290**	**100,429**	**(177,398)**	-	**127,321**

The Swing provides counselling support to children, young people and families. Funding is provided by various charitable giving organisations and grant providers.

The first Henry Smith Charity grant is year 3 of a three-year grant towards The Swing project costs. The second is year 2 of a three-year grant for the costs of a counsellor with The Swing.

A three-year grant from BBC Children In Need has enabled us to pilot an Emotional Wellbeing programme to deliver to groups children at their school.

Tesco Community Grant supported the pilot Emotional Wellbeing programme.

HOPE Group (formally the Bereaved by Suicide Support Group) provides monthly support to the families who have lost loved ones as a result of suicide.

Skipton Building Society funds the costs of materials and resources to help support children and young people.

General funds consist of unrestricted reserves brought forward, general donations and fundraising; they may be used for any charitable purpose as deemed by the trustees.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been ringfenced towards the cost of purchasing premises from which the charity can operate and provide support.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

12. Controlling Interest

The Charity is controlled by the Trustees.

13. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
Income from:			
	£	**£**	**£**
Donations & legacies	6,242	59,518	**65,760**
Charitable activities	85,530	26,290	**111,820**
Trading activities	526	-	**526**
Investments – bank interest	1,518	-	**1,518**
Total income	**93,816**	**85,808**	**179,624**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	4,918	4,912	**9,830**
Charitable activities	122,677	93,146	**215,823**
	127,595	**98,058**	**225,653**
Net expenditure and net movement in funds for year	(33,779)	(12,250)	**(46,029)**
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds brought forward	190,379	59,940	**250,319**
Total funds carried forward	**156,600**	**47,690**	**204,290**

WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales - Charity number 1152724

Accounts

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Reg. Charity No. 1152724

Trustee Annual Report & Accounts

2022 - 2023

Providing emotional support to help local people cope with the impact of bereavement and loss.

Trustee's Annual Report And Financial Statements

1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service (WBSS) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act, the Charity's Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

Our Charitable Objectives

provide caring and sensitive support that is free, confidential, and open to all residents of Walsall, irrespective of their relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the time that has elapsed since the death.

reduce the potential negative long-term impact that bereavement can have on a person's physical/mental wellbeing, education or employment, by providing appropriate support to enable each person to cope with their loss and begin to rebuild their lives.

prevent the effects of bereavement from damaging family cohesion through developing understanding and improving communication within the family unit.

Our Strategic Aims

To establish WBSS as the local provider in the field of emotional bereavement support

To raise awareness about the impact that bereavement has on a person's emotional and physical health and where and when to seek support and advice

To provide and promote high quality support services to the bereaved in the borough of Walsall

To raise awareness amongst the general public about 'Dying Matters' to help reduce the negative stigma that is attached to death and dying

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'. In the opinion of the trustees, the objectives of the charity as detailed on the previous page are for the public benefit.

The support offered by Walsall Bereavement Support Service is currently available free of charge to bereaved children, young people, and their families who live within the Walsall borough or those registered at a Walsall GP surgery or educated within a Walsall school. Support is offered irrespective of the relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the length of time that has elapsed since the death.

Chair's Report

To continue to meet the needs of everyone requesting support, WBSS continues to provide a blended support approach by offering clients face to face, telephone or on-line support.

Referrals for support continue to rise year on year, with the charity receiving 855 requests for support this year compared to 641 during the same period last year. The total number of clients receiving direct support this year rose by 27% from 856 to 1,081. The number of support hours provided increased by an incredible 40% from 2,327 to 3,690. This is a tremendous achievement, and I would like to thank all the staff and volunteer counsellors for their hard work and continued commitment to the work of the charity and the people we support.

To help cope with this increase, funding secured from The Black Country Healthcare Trust enabled us to temporarily increase staff hours and, in the summer of 2022, we were able to recruit two new counsellors to help support children and young people through *THE SWING*, one of which was funded by a three-year grant from The Henry Smith Charity. We also trained and recruited 18 new volunteer counsellors to assist with supporting adults through *'Let's Talk'*.

Support for adults continues to be offered at community locations through the borough, the number of different locations increased to 6 with two of those having two counsellors providing support. We have successfully secured three-year funding from Walsall Council which enables us to continue to deliver our support in the community. We were delighted to work in partnership with North Smethwick Development Trust by providing a counsellor to support some of their service users at the Brasshouse in Smethwick. We are hopeful to continue this relationship in the future.

Our Head of Service left July 2023 and I would like to thank Bev for all that she has achieved with the charity during her almost 18 years with WBSS. She continues to support the charity as freelance bookkeeper and financial advisor. The Head of Service position remains vacant whilst the trustees consider a restructure of staff roles. At the end of December 2023, three long standing trustees stepped down from the board. Bob Crundwell had been a trustee (including over 10 years as chair) since 2006. Neil Simpson became Treasurer in 2016. Bev Simpson initially started as a volunteer counsellor in 2007, then later became a trustee in 2016. I would like to thank all of them for the commitment and dedication they have provided over the years.

As we start 2024, we begin a new chapter. We welcome two new trustees to the board so far and have another two applicants who have shown interest. Additionally, a charity consultant who will be assisting the charity for 6 months. Our main focus is to secure funding to enable us to be able to deliver the quantity of support required whilst also looking at new opportunities to expand the support provided. Our long-term goal is to purchase our own premises.

Whilst the future may appear a little uncertain at this time, I feel confident that the charity will continue to grow and prosper over the coming months, years and into the future.

Jim Green

Our Service

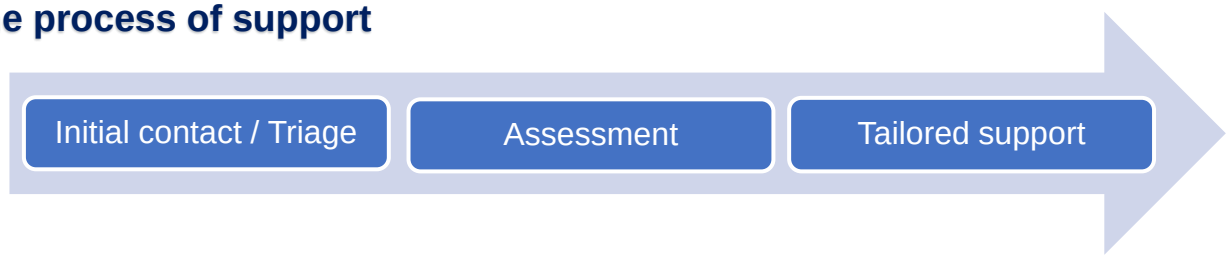
During the year, WBSS have supported 1,083 bereaved adults, children and young people. This is an increase from the previous year total of 856.

In total, 3,690 hours of support was provided to the bereaved, compared with 2,625 during 2021-22.

The support we provide is tailored to the specific needs of our service users and includes:

- **One-to-one face to face, telephone and on-line counselling**
- **Group Support**
- **Family and Sibling support**
- **Out of Hours service week-day evenings and Saturday mornings**
- **Special Support in schools**
- **Outreach work in the community**
- **Community workshops and activities for children and young people**

The process of support



Our support is provided through 3 projects:

'Let's Talk' Bereavement support for adults.

Group Support HOPE - Specialist support for adults bereaved by suicide.
Complex Grief - Specialist support for adults experiencing complex grief.
Parental Grief - Specialist support for parents bereaved of a child.
Community Support - Supporting people within their community.

THE SWING Bereavement support for children, young people, and families.

Our Services are Open to Everyone

WBSS wants its projects and services to be open to as wide a range of people as possible and as such, we do not discriminate clients by age, race, gender, sexual orientation, relationship to the bereaved person, the time elapsed since the death, or cause of death.

We utilise the skills of staff and volunteer counsellors from different backgrounds and ethnicities, to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate support to each individual client. We work with schools across the borough, many of whom have high levels of students who have additional support needs such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's etc. To help support these potentially challenging students, counsellors have all undergone specific training relating to supporting this client group.

Our Projects - 'Let's Talk'

The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Many of our clients have anxiety, depression, and more complex issues that have developed as a result of how they feel. For adults this can include dependency upon substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, or cigarettes. Some are unable to work, have withdrawn from family and social life, and are less able to take care of themselves.

Over the past 12 months 'Let's Talk' received 572 referrals during the year, supported a total of 709 clients and delivered 2,327 hours of support.

Profile of the adults we have supported.

- 73% of adults supported were females, 27% male.
- 80% were White British, 10% British Asian or Asian, 5% Black British, Black African or Caribbean.
- 31% were under the age of 40, 44% aged 40–60, the remaining 25% were over the age of 60.
- Where client postal addresses were given, 81% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 17% lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas.
- Just over a third of all adults, 36%, requested support following the death of a parent, whilst 22% requested support following the death of a spouse or partner.
- The main cause of death was cancer, with 18% of adults losing a loved one to this disease; 11% of deaths were heart related; 8% lost a loved one in an extremely tragic circumstance such as murder, manslaughter, suicide or a road traffic collision.
- 36% sought support within the first 6 months following their bereavement and 12% between 6 - 12 months of bereavement; however, we support people whenever they need our help and during this period 6% of service users sought our help 5 years or more after their bereavement.
- 7% of adults supported felt suicidal at the point of referral.
- 27% of adults supported had complex grief needs.
- 19% of adults were recommended our service by their GP or another member of staff at their practice; 15% by a Social Prescriber; 10% by a psychiatrist, secure mental health unit, community psychiatric nurse or mental health worker and 10% by other counselling providers such as Talking Therapies.

Outcomes reported following support.

- 75% of adults reported that their emotional difficulties such as anger, guilt, anxiety etc had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 55% reported that their physical difficulties such as relying on prescribe medication, smoking or drinking more, unable to sleep and feeling unwell had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 74% felt more able to cope with day-to-day tasks such as attending work, college or volunteering and daily tasks such as cooking cleaning washing etc.
- 64% said that their support and social network had improved and felt less lonely, more supported and felt able to socialise more.

Written Feedback Received from some Adults We Supported

What Helped the most….

- It was helpful speaking to someone that I don't know. I can talk to my family but if I talk to them and they're having a good day I don't want to upset them. I could say how I felt to my counsellor and knew that afterwards she could go about her day as normal etc.
- Being able to talk freely without putting any barriers there, I didn't want to open up so much to my family in case I upset them so being able to talk freely and open was a great help.
- Talking through the past and future has reduced my awful nightmare.
- Opening up. I still have anxiety, but I feel less anxious about death.
- Being able to share exactly what was on my mind in a safe space.
- The support made me feel less isolated. I couldn't talk to family and friends at the time. I am starting to sleep better and become more active. Having the space to speak truthfully and openly about how felt without being judged.
- Knowing someone was there for me.
- Empathy - being listened to, being asked questions, being perceptive of my body language etc and 'feeding back'.
- Talking and strategies to improve wellbeing.
- Being able to confide in someone about your innermost feelings without being judged.
- My counsellor was so supportive. I felt that I could tell her anything and everything. She convinced me to have self-worth. I am a strong and independent person and so I felt dubious about counselling at the start but being able to tell someone who is not family/friend and them listening without judgement was so helpful.

How do you feel the support you received has made a difference to how you feel now….

- I got in touch with WBSS straight away, in the same week after he passed away which was a good thing to get the support sooner rather than leaving it. Also, it was good speaking to a friendly person.
- It was an amazing experience and was so beneficial to me. I'm sad for other people who might not try bereavement counselling.
- Ability to understand loss and how I was, and feeling is completely normal.
- Has helped me to see things from a different perspective.
- I feel less alone with my feelings and more understood. I feel like the load has become lighter and I'm able to carry the loss better.
- My feelings have been 'normalised'. I am able to move on, even if I have other issues to 'deal with'. I have a clearer picture of what I need to do.
- No longer crying or tearful, being able to process things. To be heard and have someone else try to understand how I felt and not be dismissed was really important.
- I can talk to my partner a lot more now about our son and my Mom, we even have a laugh and joke about things. It has improved our relationship no end.
- I feel less burdened as I have been able to offload my thoughts. I now feel able to look forward and plan for the future.
- More open to trying talking therapies for other issues.

Our Projects - *THE SWING*

Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological/physiological difficulties.

Without appropriate support, these issues can spiral out of control and in the worst cases, we see service users excluded from school for behavioural issues and family breakdown due to misunderstood grief/poor communication.

Over the past 12 months *THE SWING* received 283 referrals during the year, supported a total of 372 clients and delivered 1,363 hours of support.

Profile of the children and young people we have supported.

- 50% of children and young people supported were female and 50% male.
- 77% were White British, 5% British Asian or Asian, 2% Black British, Black African or Caribbean.
- 29% were under the age of 10, 61% aged 10-15, the remaining 10% were 16-18.
- 80% had experienced a significant family death such as a parent/carer, sibling, or grandparent.
- 17% had experienced multiple bereavements.
- 78% lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 8% lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas.
- 8% were defined as having a specific learning need or were waiting the outcome of a possible diagnosis. 6% were confirmed as having a diagnosis of either ADHD, Autism or dyslexia.
- 4% were defined as having Safeguarding needs.
- 3% were living in one adult household and 4% in other care.
- 40% had specific support needs (emotional, health, physical, behavioural, speech and language).

The impact of our work

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluation because it enables us to hear and respond to the views and experiences of our beneficiaries. The learning that we gain from evaluating our work informs the development of any of our new work streams.

We measure success by evaluating improvements made by each client against the issues affecting them due to their bereavement. At the onset of support, we undertake an assessment and record the issues facing each person via a questionnaire. We then monitor change under four main categories: emotional, behaviour, physical, and social/educational. These are broken down further into specific issues that include anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance/alcohol misuse, mental/physical health, etc. In doing this, we are able to gain an overall picture of the difficulties each person is experiencing and create a support plan tailored to their specific needs.

We monitor the progress of clients throughout their support and adjust their support plan if necessary. Finally, we ask all clients to complete an end of support questionnaire to compare where they were at the start of their support to the end. This determines our outcomes.

For children/young people we also ask parents to complete a similar questionnaire, enabling us to compare the child's view of their progress against their parents. This helps us to measure outcomes more accurately.

Our monitoring system is designed using guidance from the National Child Bereavement Network. This enables us to analyse information and provide statistical evidence about the impact of our work.

Outcomes reported following support, the clients' perspective.

- 71% of children and young people reported that their emotional difficulties such as crying, feeling sad, anger, anxiety being withdrawn, feeling suicidal had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 69% reported that their physical difficulties such as eating, sleeping, nightmares, bed wetting, poor concentration had improved or were no longer a problem.
- 74% felt their behaviour such as bullying, arguments, fighting, self-harm etc had improved or was no longer a problem.
- 71% reported an improvement in their education and school attendance.
- 72% felt that their social life and mixing with friends had improved.
- 65% said their relationship with their parents and siblings had improved or was no longer a problem.

Outcomes reported following support, the parents' perspective.

- 73% reported an improvement in their child's emotional wellbeing.
- 61% reported an improvement in their child's physical wellbeing.
- 75% reported an improvement in their child's behaviour.
- 68% reported an improvement in their child's education.
- 81% felt that their child socialised with friends more.
- 71% felt that family relationships had improved.

Written Feedback Received from some Children We Supported

What Helped the most….

- Talking about what I've gone through and am currently going through. Helped me understand how I feel in times of reflection.
- Having someone new to talk to who doesn't have a history with me.
- More self-aware about my emotions/feelings and understand what happen and why I feel a certain way.
- Talking about the situations and hearing it from myself to get a better understanding on how I'm approaching things.
- Talking to my counsellor about what happened and her being supportive and listening to me.
- My anxiety was a struggle but the method of me thinking what's the worst that can happen has helped me so much more.
- It helped me understand that I don't need to be sad when I'm thinking about my nan because there are happy reasons to think about when talking about her.

Emotional Wellbeing Programme.

Our *Emotional Wellbeing Programme* consists of three two-hour sessions. Different emotions are discussed each session; worksheets enabled the student to explore how that specific emotion affects them and helps them to learn new ways of coping thus enabling them to support themselves to resolve difficulties they may be experiencing.

The programme encourages children and young people to share their feelings with their peers if they feel able to do so. In addition, it enables them to understand how their peers are feeling and provides them with skills to help support others.

Session one focuses on anxiety, session two anger and session three grief and loss. Each session follows the same format in helping the child/young person to understand what the emotion is, how it can affect the body and strategies to help them manage or overcome the emotion.

During the period April 2022 - March 2023, the programme was delivered in 11 schools to a total of 107 students and 22 staff members. The programme has been well received by the schools with them reporting that not only have the students who attended benefited from but also the staff who were present have gained a valuable insight into how different emotions affect their students.

Our Projects - GROUP SUPPORT

Although, all of our support groups are facilitated by WBSS staff, the meetings are user led with attendees free to share as much or little as they feel. The groups provide a sympathetic and nurturing environment in which attendees can feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of being judged.

HOPE – **H**elping **O**thers, through sharing **P**ersonal **E**xperience. Since early 2000, we have offered a monthly support group specifically for adults bereaved by suicide. Many group members have been part of the group for many years and continue to attend as they want to offer support and hope to others.

COMPLEX GRIEF – Established in 2021, and as a direct result of the COVID -19 pandemic, this monthly support group is specifically for adults who may be experiencing complex loss. Complex loss can occur when an individual experiences a loss in traumatic circumstances or have experienced several losses over a short period of time. It may occur if the individual has pre-existing mental health issues or addiction. Many people are experiencing complex grief as a result of them not being able to see or be with their loved ones when they died during the early part of the pandemic.

PARENTAL GRIEF – Established in 2021, and as a direct result of enquiries from service users, this monthly support group was set up to support adults bereaved of a child under the age of 35. This loss could be as a result of a long term, life limiting illness or tragic accident.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT – We recognise that many people may be unaware of our support or may not be able to access support for various reasons such as illness, disability, cultural difficulties etc. We plan to expand on the work already achieved by engaging with local organisations to provide group support with the community. We have attended a coffee morning held by Dean Harper Funeral Directors in Walsall where information and support was offered to people recently bereaved. In June 2023 we delivered an introductory support session at three separate residential care homes run by Walsall Housing Group. Residents at one of the homes found the support extremely beneficial and requested that the home provide monthly group sessions where residents can meet to discuss their feelings in a safe and confidential environment.

Spotlight on our Volunteers

Our volunteers are our most vital asset. During 2022 / 2023, they donated 874 hours of their time to support the bereaved.

Since WBSS started to provide placement opportunities it has trained 180 counsellors to help provide bereavement counselling.

Whenever possible, WBSS operates a rolling recruitment programme to attract volunteer counsellors to ensure that we have the staffing resources to provide a high skills base for us to draw from to support our clients. Over the years, we have developed a reputation for providing very good placements for those training to become counsellors and our volunteer mentoring is recognised as being excellent. This is evidenced in our retention rate of volunteers; we currently have 3 qualified counsellors who have been providing their services on a voluntary basis for between 10-15 years and 1 who has provided support for over 15 years.

WBSS volunteers, providing support to adults, are all either qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling or are on placement whilst training towards this qualification.

Prior to being able to provide support, all volunteers, regardless of qualification and/or experience, must complete our in-house 'Bereavement and Loss' 10-hour training programme. In addition, they must complete annual on-line safeguarding adults training.

Volunteers providing support to children and young people must have achieved at least 75 hours counselling support and in addition, must also complete THE SWING 'Supporting Children and Young People' 12-hour training programme.

We recognise the importance of continually refreshing and expanding volunteer knowledge and experience and aim to offer additional training whenever opportunities arise.

Words from one of our Volunteers

Just wanted to say a big thank you to Bev, Ian, Nikki and all the team at WBSS for giving me the opportunity to work as a trainee Counsellor at WBSS.

The training provided by WBSS was outstanding. It allowed me to understand that being human in a counselling session was mostly important, then being a counsellor second. It was ok to feel a client's pain, and to sit with their emotions and understand their feelings with them while still applying boundaries and protecting yourself. Learning self-care is just as important.

What I learnt from the training was more valuable than the theory I have learnt in 3 years of studying. My volunteering journey has been far more than amazing since I have started. I have evolved and grown as a person as well as a Physiotherapist, I have become more confident, and my self believe is stronger than ever.

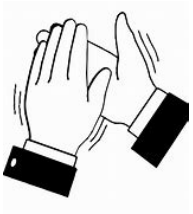
The experience I have gained is so much more than I anticipated, being a part of so many clients healing journeys has been an experience, an eye opener and so rewarding. Being part of a fantastic team has given me the belief to move forward with my independent counselling journey with great confidence.

Thank you WBSS for being part of my counselling journey and giving me the opportunity to increase my skills and experience. Something that will always remain with me wherever I shall go in the future.

Kind regards
Suki Dosanjh

Our Notable Achievements during 2022 - 23

Support we provided….



- Received 855 referrals requesting support.
- Supported 1,081 individuals.
- Delivered 2,614 hours of counselling support.
- Delivered 51 hours of group activities.
- Delivered 667 additional hours support.
- Conducted 256 initial mental health assessments.
- Delivered 102 hours of the Emotional Wellbeing programme in schools.
- Delivered the Emotional Wellbeing programme in 22 schools to 107 students and 22 staff.

In addition, we have also….

- Increased the number of outreach locations where support could be delivered to 8
- Continued to facilitate a monthly support group for parents bereaved of a child.
- Continued to facilitate a monthly support group for adults bereaved by suicide.
- Delivering internal safeguarding training to 53 volunteer and paid counsellors.
- Staff, trustees and volunteers completed 77 online safeguarding training sessions.
- Recruited 18 new volunteers, each received 12 hours of bereavement training.
- Assisted Walsall Rotary Club with their Santa Sleigh collection.
- Become an organisational member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy).

Our networking and partnership working….

- Continue to participate in several Walsall Multi-agency network meetings, including a Suicide Prevention Steering Group, Community Mental Health Partnership. and Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Children and Young People Strategy and Transformation Group.
- Continued with our partnership with key local charities and organisations namely Rethink, Walsall Black Sisters Collective and One Love Community CIC.
- Increased our partnership working within outreach locations throughout the borough.

Our proudest achievement….

- We were invited to be a guest speaker at The Henry Smith Charity Volunteer Conference held in Birmingham in April 2023. We are immensely proud of this and feel honoured to have been asked. Two staff delivered a short presentation about the work of *THE SWING* including some case studies of children supported. The audience of The Henry Smith Charity Trustees, staff and volunteer assessors were invited to ask questions about the service.

  Everyone found the experience extremely enlightening; *THE SWING* staff learned more about the process or assessment and by speaking about our charity's experience of a volunteer visit, both in person pre Covid and on-line during Covid, The Henry Smith Charity gained a valuable insight into their process from the point of view of the charity.

Our Plans and Goals Moving Forward

As 2022-23 was another extremely busy period providing supporting to individuals, not all of our plans for the year were achieved. Most of those goals have been carried forward to 2023-24.

- Secure funding to provide financial stability and enable us to recruit additional staff to help meet increased demand on our service.
- Increase the number of outreach locations in which support can be provided.
- Recruit additional volunteers, specifically ones who can provide support to children and young people.
- Write a fundraising strategy to help us achieve some of our goals.
- Set up a monthly support group for children and young people.
- Trial a drop-in facility for Children and young people.
- Set up drop-in support sessions for adults, particularly targeting hard to reach groups.
- Increase the number of schools where we deliver our Emotional Wellbeing Programme to.
- Develop a quarterly programme of Continual Professional Development training events for staff and volunteers.
- Increase the group support provided with the community.
- Deliver bereavement awareness webinars to local support groups and agencies.
- Explore the possibility of organising memorial services at local places of worship.
- Increase the profile of WBSS across the borough to ensure that the bereaved know where and how to contact us, should they need our support.
- Continue to network with key local groups and partnerships to seek opportunities for working together and improving support for the bereaved.

Financial Review

To ensure that we are accessible to all residents, we do not charge our clients for our services. However, we do encourage donations if clients feel they are able to support our charity. Grants from our service users, the general public and Charitable Trusts and Foundations are vital in helping us to provide our services.

Due to having surplus funds at the end of 2022, we decreased our fundraising efforts in order to concentrate on service delivery. As a result, our income decreased from £293,064 (2021/22) to £179,624 (2022/23). Our expenditure increased as a result of additional salaries and counselling costs such as room hire, supervision and materials. The total rose from £163,004 (2021/22) to £225,653 (2022/23). The end reserves balance decreased by £46,029 leaving a closing balance of £204,290.

Grants and donations from charitable giving organisations continue to be our primary source of income for THE SWING. In August 2022 we received a three-year grant from The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant. This grant enables us to fund the position of a counsellor. We are extremely grateful to The Henry Smith Charity for their continued support. BBC Children in Need continue to fund our Emotional Wellbeing programme in school. Other funding for THE SWING includes £10,000 from The Eveson Charitable Trust; £5,000 from Grantham Yorke Charitable Trust and The True Colours Trust; and £2,000 from Edward & Dorothy Cadbury Charitable Trust and The Roger & Douglas Turner Trust.

Funding from Walsall Council continued to fund cost associated with providing support to adults at community outreach locations. Whilst the Black Country Healthcare Trust helped to fund additional counselling sessions for both adults and children to help reduce waiting times.

Moving forward, we are aware that we need to apply for support from Grant making organisations as well as develop our income base, especially from community support and events. As a small charity, without a dedicated fundraiser, this does remain a challenge. However, we will continue to consider all options available to us in order to increase our income.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees continue to review the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risk to the organisation, that funding to run the organisation is not secure. The trustees have established a policy whereby the reserves in total that are not invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity, should be up to the equivalent of 9 months of the total anticipated expenditure of the charity.

This level of these reserves has been determined by the need to meet the working capital requirements of the charity. In addition, due to a massive increase in demand for our service over the past year, this period represents the necessary amount of time required to deliver counselling sessions to all the clients who are on our waiting list for support and for the charity to carry out all its legal obligations.

At the end of March 2023, the total of the charity's reserves stood at £204,290 of which £86,600 was general unrestricted funds, £75,000 were designated funds and £47,690 restricted. Expenditure during the year was £225,653, therefore, based on this level, the unrestricted free reserves represent roughly 34% of our estimated expenditure of £251,518 for 2023/24. This will therefore be equivalent to just over 4 months of the charity's running costs.

The financial strategy of WBSS continues to be that of building unrestricted free reserves to meet our 9-month target, through planned cost-effective operational procedures and further fundraising. The Trustees will continue to take all necessary actions regarding the prevailing economic climate. Where surplus funds are available, a percentage will be transferred to the designated fund which will help fund the purchase of premises for the charity.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees are very aware of the need to assess and minimise risks to the operation of the charity. As such, a comprehensive set of policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, and where necessary, updated to comply with changes in legislation and the requirements of funding bodies. Following the guidance of these policies covers the main risks to the operation of the charity.

The risk of being unable to adequately fund projects is our main concern. In order to minimise this risk, the trustees hope to diversify income streams. Expenditure is constantly reviewed in order to ensure that funds continue to be used effectively.

The risk of not supporting clients and volunteers professionally is managed by having a supervision programme in place in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) procedures. It is WBSS's policy that every new volunteer is supported by way of an obligatory training course followed by induction, prior to client contact time. Staff meetings, project meetings, and individual meetings are conducted monthly, and the board of trustees meet at least bi-monthly to review, amend and update working procedures and to eliminate risks. These meetings are held more frequently if required. Disclosure and Barring checks are made every three years for all members of staff and volunteer counsellors.

General Data Protection Regulation is adhered to as well as policies regarding Safeguarding Adults and Children. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with Health and Safety of all staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the centre. These ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. In addition, the regular meetings of the Trustees at the charity's premises facilitate the constant review of the environment in which the charity exists.

The charity continues to monitor government guidelines as regards COVID-19 to ensure all visitors to our centre are safe. PPE equipment, protective screens etc are available if required.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Walsall Bereavement Support Service is a registered charity that aims to meet some of the needs of bereaved people within the Walsall Borough. The charity, originally formed as an unincorporated charity in 1998, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4th July 2013 and is governed by a constitution approved by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

Appointment of Trustees, Induction, and Training

The focus of the charity is that of supporting bereaved adults, young people and children. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of these groups are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees the charity has sought to identify members of the community who are willing to use their own experiences to assist the organisation.

The Trustee Board is well represented by a wide range of individuals from various aspects of the community. Trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees to act jointly with them for all purposes. A trustee whose term of office has expired can be appointed for a further term of office.

Whilst there is no formal induction process in place, all new trustees are invited and encouraged to visit the offices of WBSS in order to familiarise themselves with the organisation and the context within which it operates. The Hed of Service will then discuss the following aspects of the organisation with the new trustee and answer any questions arising.

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity.
- The current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future and objectives of the organisation.

In addition, new trustees are given a copy of the latest Annual Report along with a trustee role description, a copy of the constitution, the Charity Commission's Trustee Handbook, the organisation's main policy documents and the latest financial statements.

Organisational Structure

WBSS has a Board of Trustees of at least 4 members who meet at least quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present there are 5 trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Head of Service is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the day-to-day operational management of the organisation in line with the constitution and quality procedures. They are required to attend trustees meeting but have no voting rights.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity's SORP:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf on 10th January 2024

By **Mr. J. Green (Chair)**

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number: 1152724

Registered Office: Office Suite 2
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DA

Telephone: 01922 724841 / 01922 645035

Website: www.wbss.org.uk

Trustees:

Chair:	James Green
Treasurer:	Neil Simpson (stepped down Dec 2023)
	Alyson Green (from Jan 2024)
Trustees:	Dr Robert Crundwell (stepped down Dec 2023)
	Bev Simpson Stepped down Dec 20023)
	Verity Baker (stepped down Aug 2023)
	Sandev Panaser (appointed Oct 2023)
	Akinola Meheux (appointed Dec 2023)

Employees:

Head of Service	Bev Richardson Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP, MAAT (until Jul 2023)
THE SWING Co-ordinator	Sally Robinson Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP (until Aug 22)
THE SWING Counsellors	Harvender Panaser Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
	Lauren Jones Registered Member BACP (from Aug 22 – Feb 2023)
	Scott Homer Registered Member BACP (from Aug 22 – Dec 2023)
'Let's Talk' Co-ordinator	Ian Davies Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
'Let's Talk' Counsellor	Davina Lytton Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
Charity Administrator	Nikki Preene

Independent Examiner:

Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited, 1 Saracen Close, Ettington.CV37 7SZ

Banks:

Barclays Bank: 1 Breadmarket Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire. WS13 6JY

Nationwide: 18 Bridge Street, Walsall, West Midlands. WS1 1DE

Acknowledgements

Walsall Bereavement Support Service would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following organisations and donors for their financial support during 2022 / 2023.

- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- Black Country Healthcare Trust
- North Smethwick Development Trust
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant
- BBC Children in Need
- The Eveson Charitable Trust
- The Eric W Vincent Trust
- The Owen Family Trust
- CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust
- The True Colours Trust
- Matthews Wrightson Charity Trust
- The Grantham Yorke Charitable Trust
- The W.E.D. Charitable Trust
- The William A Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Edward & Dorothy Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Tesco Community Grant

We would also like to thank the following organisations for fundraising on behalf of Walsall Bereavement Support Service during 2022 / 2023

- St Lawrence Church, Darlaston
- The Rotary Club, Walsall

And finally… many thanks go to all of the volunteers for the skills, commitment, and time that they have contributed throughout the year. Without their support we simply would not be able to provide this valuable service.

Independent Examiners Reported to the trustees of Walsall Support Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Walsall Bereavement Support Service ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 19 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

3) the accounts do 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.

Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales
Karen Hanlan, Independent Examiner Limited
1 Saracen Close, Ettington, CV37 7SZ

Date
10th January 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	Total funds 2022
Income from:					
		£	£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	6,242	59,518	**65,760**	**81,400**
Charitable activities	2	85,530	26,290	**111,820**	**208,973**
Trading activities	3	526	-	**526**	**2,399**
Investments – bank interest		1,518	-	**1,518**	**292**
Total income		**93,816**	**85,808**	**179,624**	**293,064**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		4,918	4,912	**9,830**	**17,289**
Charitable activities		122,677	93,146	**215,823**	**145,715**
Total expenditure	4	**127,595**	**98,058**	**225,653**	**163,004**
Net (expenditure)/income and net movement in funds for year		(33,779)	(12,250)	**(46,029)**	**130,060**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		190,379	59,940	**250,319**	**120,259**
Total funds carried forward		**156,600**	**47,690**	**204,290**	**250,319**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	7	2,023	3,289
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	7,657	1,986
Cash at Bank		232,668	251,459
		240,325	**253,445**
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(38,058)	(6,415)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		**202,267**	**247,030**
NET ASSETS		**204,290**	**250,319**
FUNDS	11		
Restricted Funds		47,690	59,940
Unrestricted Funds			
- General		81,600	115,379
- Designated		75,000	75,000
TOTAL FUNDS		**204,290**	**250,319**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Mr J Green, Chair of Trustees Date: 10th January 2024

Principle Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Walsall Bereavement Support Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

Going Concern statement

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the Charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations.

The Charity's business plan shows that the Charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the Trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds

General accumulated funds are unrestricted funds available for general purposes and include funds designated for a particular purpose; the use of such funds remains at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are funds subject to conditions imposed by the donor or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds are raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charity.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor-imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of fundraising activity and includes an allocation of staff costs relating to time spent on fundraising activity.

Expenditure on charitable expenditure includes the costs of project delivery to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support and governance costs.

Principle Accounting Policies (continued)

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Interest receivable

Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts received in the year.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight-line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets, which is estimated at 4 years.

Fixed assets are capitalised when their value exceeds £500.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short-term deposits repayable on or within a three-month notice period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to employee's individual personal pension plans. The employer contributions to the scheme in 2023 were £4,056 (2022 £3,281) and are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Taxation

As a registered Charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Donations & legacies

	2023 £	2022 £
Un-restricted:		
Donations	6,242	2,953
Grants	-	-
	6,242	2,953
Restricted:		
Donations	218	-
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	30,000	30,000
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing	29,300	48,447
Other Charitable Trusts (Hope Group)	-	-
	59,518	78,447
Total	**65,760**	**81,400**

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Un-restricted:		
Training & Support	2.405	3,310
Walsall Council	44,250	96,750
Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust	37,500	64,185
North Smethwick Development Trust	1,375	-
	85,530	164,245
Restricted:		
The National Lottery (Let's Talk)	-	41,017
Children in Need (Emotional Wellbeing Programme)	5,757	3,711
The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant	20,533	-
	26,290	44,728
Total	**111,820**	**208,973**

3. Trading activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Un-restricted:		
Fundraising events	275	1,006
Online Fundraising	251	1,393
Restricted:		
Fundraising Events	-	-
Total	**526**	**2,399**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

4. Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	101,986	79,896	181,882	119,163
Payroll Costs	229	229	458	-
Fundraising Costs	313	638	951	8,011
Centre Costs	5,580	5,580	11,160	10,027
Unit 3 Rent	3,000	-	3,000	3,100
Unit 3 Utilities	173	-	173	372
Room Hire	1,450	450	1,900	315
IT	1,013	902	1,918	2,416
Telephone	939	829	1,768	1,607
Stationery	148	152	300	406
Postage	11	-	11	138
Printing	670	586	1,256	826
Office Equipment	302	458	760	1,121
Refreshments	12	-	12	51
Materials	-	2,194	2,194	1,364
Resources	-	267	267	29
Travel / Parking	210	954	1,164	643
Training	1,331	200	1,531	1,225
Supervision	4,442	1,636	6,078	5,044
Assessment	-	-	-	-
Client Support	-	-	-	-
Volunteer Expenses	512	-	512	239
Publicity	526	100	626	855
Insurance	1,258	1,258	2,516	2,137
DBS Checks	959	55	1,014	474
Legal & professional Fees	1,120	513	1,633	1,483
Bank Charges	64	64	128	162
Cleaning & H&S Equipment	58	45	103	126
Sundries	352	301	653	90
Depreciation	934	751	1,685	1.580
	127,595	**98,058**	**225,653**	**163,004**

5. Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising Costs	4,918	4,912	**9,830**	**17,289**
Direct Costs	80,976	78,858	**159,834**	**98,321**
Support Costs	17,622	10,113	**27,735**	**42,792**
Governance	24,079	4,175	**28,254**	**4,602**
	127,595	**98,058**	**225,653**	**163,004**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

6. Net expenditure/income for year

Net income is stated after charging:	2023 £	2022 £
Independent Examiners fee	990	990
Depreciation	1,685	1,580
	2,675	**2,570**

Staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries	149,821	111,149
National Insurance	8,005	4,733
Pensions	4,056	3,281
Staff settlement payment	20,000	-
Total	**181,882**	**119,163**

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2022: nil).

The equivalent of 5 full-time members of staff were employed during the year (2022: 4.18)
Key management personnel comprise the Head of Service and the Finance Manager whose employee benefits total £41,266 (2022 £38,794)

An early termination settlement was agreed with a member of staff following the end of year and has been accrued for in these accounts as an adjusting post balance sheet event.

The charity does not operate its own pension scheme but contributes towards NEST Pension scheme for all employees.

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits in the year (2022: None). No trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year (2022: None).

There are no further related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	19,505	2,182	21,687
Additions	419	-	419
At end of year	**19,924**	**2,182**	**22,106**
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	16,216	2,182	18,398
Charge for the year	1,685	-	1,685
At end of year	**17,901**	**-**	**20,083**
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2022	3,289	-	3,289
At 31 March 2023	**2,023**	**-**	**2,023**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

8. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments	2,082	1,486
Accrued income	5,075	-
Rental Deposit	500	500
	7,657	**1,986**

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals	1,409	1,270
Deferred income	16,650	5,145
Staff settlement payment (see note 6)	20,000	-
	38,058	**6,415**

Movements in deferred income are as follows:

	£
At beginning of year	5,145
Released to income in year	(5,145)
Deferred in year	(16,650)
At end of year	**16,650**

Deferred income relates to funding received in advance of project activity.

10. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	2,023	2,023
Current assets	177,436	62,889	240,325
Current Liabilities	(20,836)	(17,222)	(38,058)
Total	**156,600**	**47,690**	**204,290**

Fund balances at 31 March 2022 were represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	3,289	3,289
Current assets	190,379	63,066	253,445
Current Liabilities	-	(6,415)	(6,415)
Total	**190,379**	**59,940**	**250,319**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

11. Movement in funds

	Balance at beginning of year	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance at end of year
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Restricted funds					
The Swing	52,956	28,483	(45,048)	-	**36,391**
The Henry Smith Charity	-	30,000	(30,000)	-	**-**
The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant	-	20,533	(13,998)		**6,535**
BBC Children in Need Wellbeing Program	468	5,757	(5,102)	-	**1,123**
Tesco Community Grant	-	1,000	(790)		**210**
Grantham Yorke	388	-	(388)	-	**-**
HOPE Group	2,481	35	(690)	-	**1,826**
The Toy Trust	1,185	0	(1,185)	-	**-**
Skipton Building Society	2,462	0	(857)	-	**1,605**
	59,940	85,808	(98,058)	-	**47,690**
Un-restricted funds					
General fund	115,379	93,816	(127,595)	-	**81,600**
Designated building fund	75,000	-	-	-	**75,000**
	190,379	93,816	(127,595)	-	**156,600**
Total funds	**250,319**	**179,624**	**(225,653)**	-	**204,290**

Transfers between funds relates to expenditure on capital items funded by a grant.

Let's Talk provides counselling support to adults.

The Swing provides counselling support to children, young people and families. Funding is provided by various charitable giving organisations and grant providers.

The Henry Smith Charity grant is year 3 of a three-year grant towards The Swing project costs.

The Henry Smith Charity Covid-19 Long-Term Support Grant is year 1 of a three-year grant for the costs of a counsellor with The Swing.

A three-year grant from BBC Children in Need has enabled us to pilot an Emotional Wellbeing programme to deliver to groups children at their school.

Tesco Community Grant supported the pilot Emotional Wellbeing programme.

Grantham Yorke provided funding for sessional workers to support bereaved children and young people as and when required.

HOPE Group (formally the Bereaved by Suicide Support Group) provides monthly support to the families who have lost loved ones as a result of suicide.

General funds consist of unrestricted reserves brought forward, general donations and fundraising; they may be used for any charitable purpose as deemed by the trustees.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been ringfenced towards the cost of purchasing premises from which the charity can operate and provide support.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

12. Controlling Interest

The Charity is controlled by the Trustees.

13. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022
Income from:				
		£	**£**	**£**
Donations & legacies	1	2,953	78,447	**81,400**
Charitable activities	2	164,245	44,728	**208,973**
Trading activities	3	2,399	-	**2,399**
Investments – bank interest		292	-	**292**
Total income		**169,889**	**123,175**	**293,064**
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		9	17,280	**17,289**
Charitable activities		28,514	117,201	**145,715**
Total expenditure	4	**28,523**	**124,481**	**163,004**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		141,366	(11,306)	**130,060**
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		49,013	71,246	**120,259**
Total funds carried forward		**190,379**	**59,940**	**250,319**

WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales - Charity number 1152724

Accounts

Walsall Bereavement Support Service
Reg. Charity No. 1152724

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Annual Report

2021-2022

Trustee's Annual Report And Financial Statements

1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service (WBSS) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2022.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act, the Charity's Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

Our Charitable Objectives

provide caring and sensitive support that is free, confidential, and open to all residents of Walsall, irrespective of their relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the time that has elapsed since the death.

reduce the potential negative long-term impact that bereavement can have on a person's physical/mental wellbeing, education or employment, by providing appropriate support to enable each person to cope with their loss and begin to rebuild their lives.

prevent the effects of bereavement from damaging family cohesion through developing understanding and improving communication within the family unit.

Our Strategic Aims

To establish WBSS as the local provider in the field of emotional bereavement support

To raise awareness about the impact of bereavement on a person's emotional and physical health and where and when to seek support and advice

To provide and promote high quality support services to the bereaved in the borough of Walsall

To raise awareness amongst the general public about 'Dying Matters' to help reduce the negative stigma that is attached to death and dying

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'. In the opinion of the trustees, the objectives of the charity as detailed on the previous page are for the public benefit.

The support offered by Walsall Bereavement Support Service is currently available free of charge to bereaved children, young people, and their families who live within the Walsall borough or those registered at a Walsall GP surgery or educated within a Walsall school. Support is offered irrespective of the relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the length of time that has elapsed since the death.

Chair's Report

Within my report last year I wrote, *"The impact of the pandemic on the bereaved, irrespective of how their loved one died, will become clear as we work through 2021"* and *"we anticipate that our referrals this coming year will increase rapidly".*

Never have a few sentences proved so true. The number of client referrals the charity received almost doubled this year when it increased from 332 to 644. The actual number supported was 856. This led to an increase in the number of support hours provided, which also almost doubled from 1,351 hours to 2,626.

On behalf of all the trustees, I would like to express my thanks to all the staff for the continued commitment and dedication they show to the people requesting support.

The vast majority of counselling support returned to face to face during this year. However, we will continue to offer telephone and on-line support to those who request it in order to cater for the needs of those unable or unwilling to travel.

When our three-year grant from The National Lottery ended in February 2021 alternative funding needed to be secured otherwise there was a real danger that the charity would have to close. The trustees are extremely grateful to Walsall Council and Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust who were both able to provide us with some short-term financial support. This not only ensured that the charity could continue but also helped it increase its capacity by employing two additional counsellors on fixed term contracts and recruiting and training 15 additional volunteer counsellors.

As we start 2022-23, we will be seeking to increase our income through a variety of channels as we seek to secure longer term funding for the charity as a whole.

Our new 5-year business plan started in April 2022, our plans are ambitious but with appropriate financial support they are achievable. The long-term goal of the charity is to purchase its own premises. With this in mind, the trustees have set up a designated fund into which an amount of unrestricted reserves can be transferred annually. Our fundraising strategy will hopefully help us to achieve this goal.

Jim Green

Our Service

During the year, WBSS supported 513 bereaved adults and 343 bereaved children, young people, and their families. In total, 2,626 hours of support was provided to the bereaved. This is more than two and a half times as many clients (332 in 2021) and almost twice as many support hours (1,351 in 2021) than the previous year.

Our support is provided through 3 projects:

'Let's Talk' Bereavement support for adults

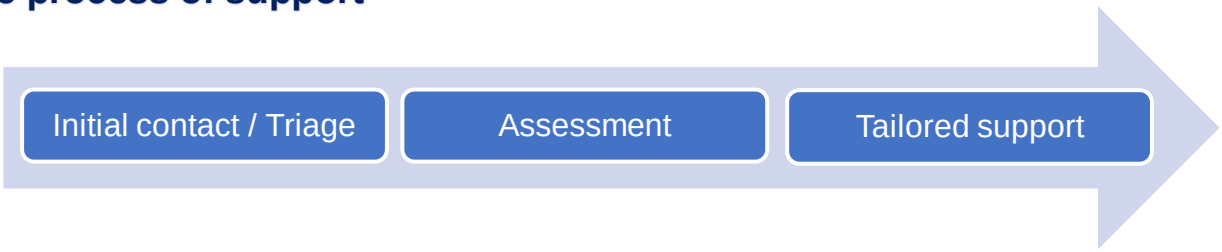
Group Support **HOPE** - Specialist support for adults bereaved by suicide
Complex Grief - Specialist support for adults experiencing complex grief
Parental Grief - Specialist support for parents bereaved of a child

THE SWING Bereavement support for children, young people, and families

Our support is tailored to the specific needs of our service users and includes:

- **One-to-one face to face, telephone and on-line counselling**
- **Sibling, Couple and Family counselling and support**
- **Group support**
- **Out of Hours service week-day evenings and Saturday mornings**
- **Special Support in schools**
- **Outreach work in the community**

The process of support



Our Services are Open to all People

WBSS wants its projects and services to be open to as wide a range of people as possible and as such, we do not discriminate against clients by age, race, gender, sexual orientation, relationship to the bereaved person, the time elapsed since the death, or cause of death.

We utilise the skills of staff and volunteer counsellors from different backgrounds and ethnicities, to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate support to each individual client. We work with schools across the borough, many of whom have high numbers of students who have additional support needs such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's syndrome etc. To help support these potentially with potentially challenging needs, counsellors have all undergone specific training relating to supporting this client group.

Our Projects

'Let's Talk'

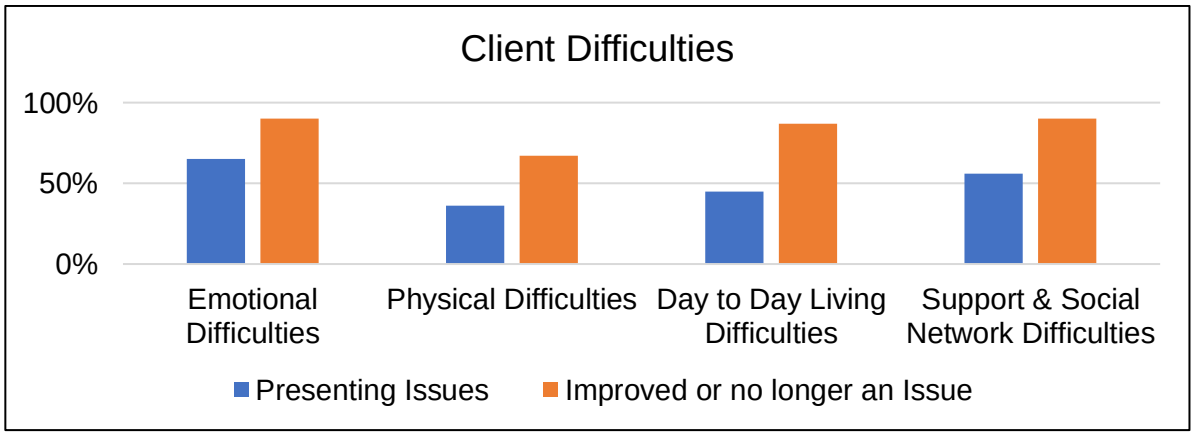
The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Many of our clients have anxiety, depression and more complex issues that have developed as a result of how they feel. For adults this can include dependency upon substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs or cigarettes.

Some are unable to work, have withdrawn from family and social life and are less able to take care of themselves.

Over the past 12 months 'Let's Talk' received 397 referrals (186 in 2021), supported a total of 513 clients and delivered 1,559 hours support (697 in 2021)

Difficulties experienced and outcome following support.



The adults we have supported

38% sought support within the first 6 months following their bereavement and **40%** between 6 - 24 months of bereavement; however, we support people whenever they need our help and during this period 8% of service users sought our help 5 years or more after their bereavement.

72% of adults supported were females, **28%** male.

Where client postal addresses were given, 346 (**70%**) lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 95 (**19%**) lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas.

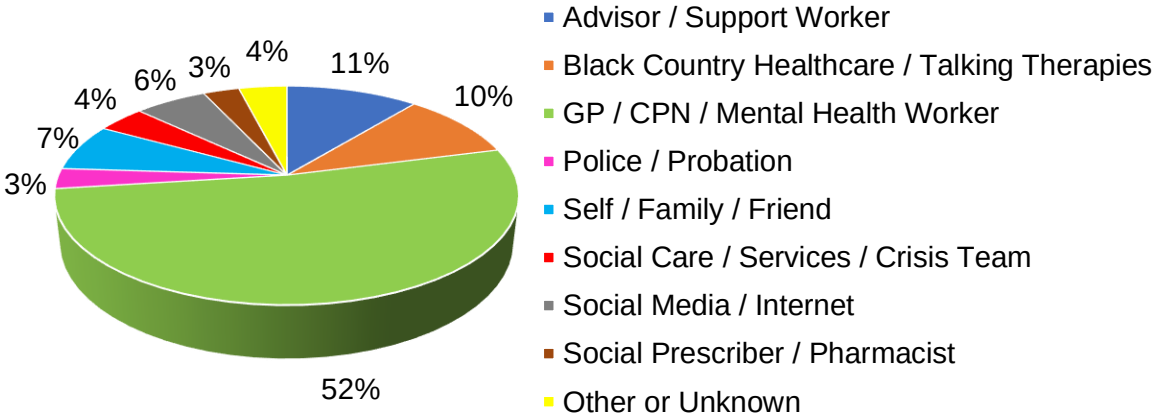
10% of adults supported felt suicidal at the point of referral.

31% of adults supported had complex grief needs.

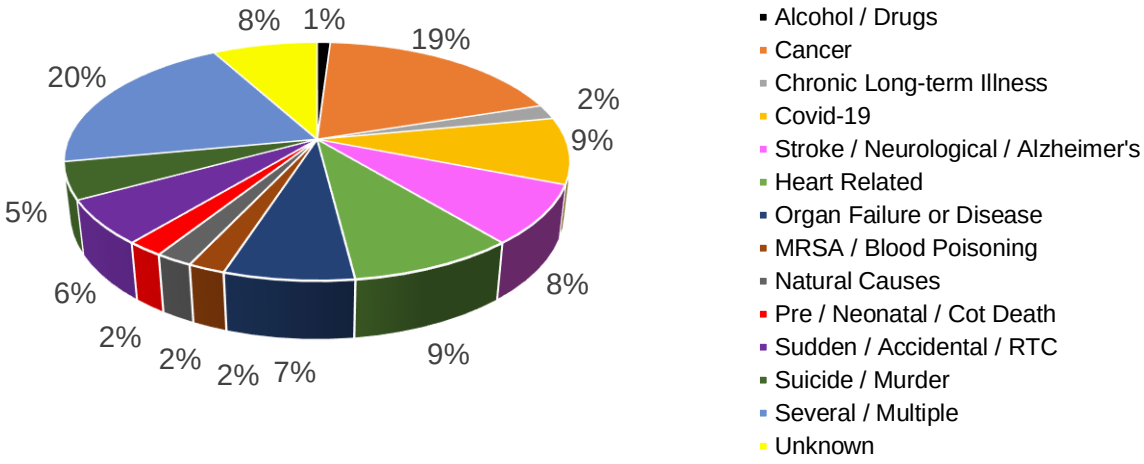
19% of adults supported had experienced several or multipule losses.

86% of adults seeking support had experienced the death of a significant family such as a parent, spouse, sibling, grandparent or child.

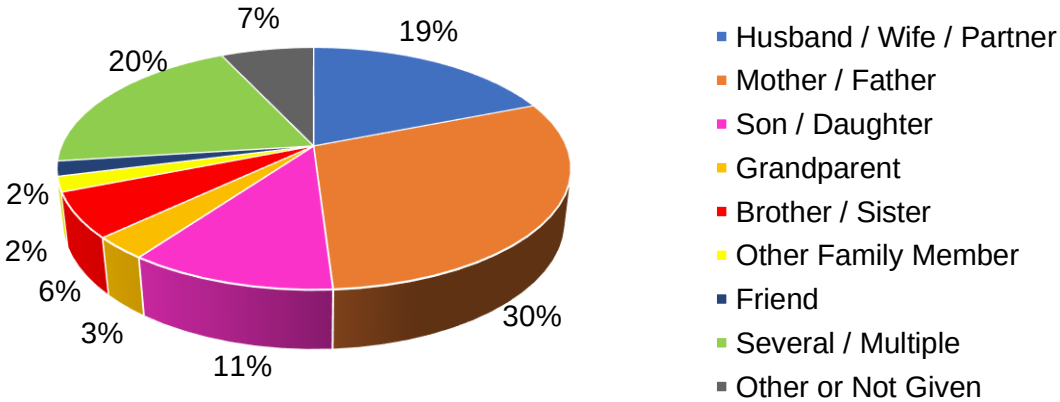
Referrals source



Cause of death



Relationship with the deceased



Outcomes from adult service users

- **96%** felt that their support had helped them.
- **76%** felt that there had been an improvement in their mental health.
- **58%** had noticed an improvement in their physical health.
- **48%** said that they felt more socially supported and less isolated.
- **96%** of adults said that the quality of our services was excellent or very good and all of these would recommend us to others who are bereaved.

Written feedback from some of the adults we supported

- I kept lots of things close to my chest, not even my family knew about them but talking to M, she just listened to me. I felt heard and like a great weight was lifted off my shoulders. I didn't feel judged or embarrassed. I am grateful
- My counsellor helped me to understand the process of bereavement and explained it. I thought I was going crazy but he explained the way that I felt was normal for people who are bereaved
- Before I was emotionally very anxious and tearful. The anxiety has now subsided to what I would consider to be a normal level
- I have suffered many years of multiple traumatic episodes in my life, my supporter was very understanding, and I was able to confidently talk about the tragedies to her
- C made me feel like what I was experiencing was normal when I thought that it wasn't, that made me feel relieved. I still have bad days and dark memories but I know eventually the good memories will come. I didn't like to keep upsetting my friends and family so it was good to speak to someone outside my family
- I have learnt to be less self-critical, open to acceptance that emotions are natural in all forms and that is OK
- I have never had anyone close to me die before when my mom died. J normalised how I was feeling and explained the process of grief and bereavement.
- My counselling was consistent in terms of the time and day, which I found helpful and enabled me to commit to attending the sessions. C helped me to talk through a very difficult part of my life and deal with issues that I would not otherwise be inclined to discuss with other family members. I found it easier to openly discuss difficult topics surrounding the passing of my father. I am grateful to C for her patience and understanding
- Knowing that there is someone there to listen to me and only a phone call away. Everyone there has been excellent and I can't fault anyone
- The counselling has changed my life! My counsellor was very approachable and friendly. I have felt so much better physically and mentally since receiving support and have even found a new job. I have recommended WBSS to a close friend who has just lost a loved one, I will 100% recommend the service
- Before the support started I wasn't keen on talking to anyone other than my family, I was offered support from Talking Therapies but always declined it. Now that I have had support from someone that is not my family I think I would do it. It really helped.
- Good member of staff who understood my other issues besides bereavement which builds up a much more cohesive working relationship, both over the telephone and the final session face-to-face at your office in Walsall, felt very at home and confident in both formats.
- The support I received from my counsellor was above and beyond the help I realised I needed. Not only has it helped mentally but in every aspect of my life, I am stronger. My relationships are stronger. My self-esteem and confidence is so much better. I've actually changed jobs from a job to an exciting career as a kindness champion/support worker. There is no way I could have or would have done this (believed in myself) to make such a massive positive change. Thank you, I'm proud of myself!
- I feel calmer and have some coping strategies and an idea of what further support I need.
- My counsellor was really good, she got me talking about things that I didn't even know were there. Her interpersonal skills are very good and also had the space and time to talk.

GROUP SUPPORT

Although, all of our support groups are facilitated by WBSS staff, the meetings are user led with attendees free to share as much or little as they feel. The groups provide a sympathetic and nurturing environment in which attendees can feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of being judged.

HOPE - **H**elping **O**thers, through sharing **P**ersonal **E**xperience. Since the early 2000's, we have provided a monthly support group for adults bereaved by suicide. Many group members have been attending for many years and continue to do so as they want to offer support to others.

COMPLEX GRIEF - Established in 2021, in response to the COVID -19 pandemic, we facilitate a monthly support group for adults experiencing complex grief. Complex grief can occur when an individual experiences a loss in traumatic circumstances or has experienced several losses over a short period of time. It may also occur if the individual has pre-existing mental health issues or addiction. In our experience many clients are experiencing complex grief as a result of them not being able to see or be with their loved ones when they died, especially if this was during the early part of the pandemic. Many people have suppressed their grief which has increased the complexities they are experiencing.

PARENTAL GRIEF - Established in 2021, as a direct result of enquiries from service users, we provide a monthly peer support group for adults bereaved of a child dying under the age of 35. Originally, the aim of the group was to provide support to parents whose child died as a result of a long-term life limiting illness; however, group support is now available to parents regards of the cause of death.

Carol's Story (current HOPE group member)

The best support is from each other, from people who understand what we have gone through and are still going through, because they are going through the same. New people come to the meeting every month and by being with us and talking with us, I hope they see that there is a future and that they will laugh again.

My husband Phil took his own life in September 2012. He had shown no signs of depression or that anything was wrong in what I thought was our wonderful perfect life. His loss was devastating… beyond any words. My GP gave me a list of support networks and I called Walsall Bereavement Support Service. I was soon told of their monthly support group for people bereaved by suicide and went to my first meeting. It was difficult, I didn't know what to expect. I was prepared to try anything to help me understand what had happened, to find a way to take away some of this pain.

At that first meeting I listened to people talk of their loved ones and how they had died. I didn't say much but I cried a lot. Everyone understood. The next month I went again and this time I listened to people in their different stages of grief. Someone had lost her partner just 6 months earlier and she was laughing ... how could that be? Others had cleared out clothes, moved to a new house, and had holidays. It gave me hope for my future. These were people going through what I was going through.

10 years later I am still going to the meetings, still getting support from the wonderful group members, who give me a hug when I need one and who listen every month with such compassion. I have met lovely people and made wonderful friends who have supported me and cried with me.

Thank you HOPE ... you were there when I needed you most and you still are.

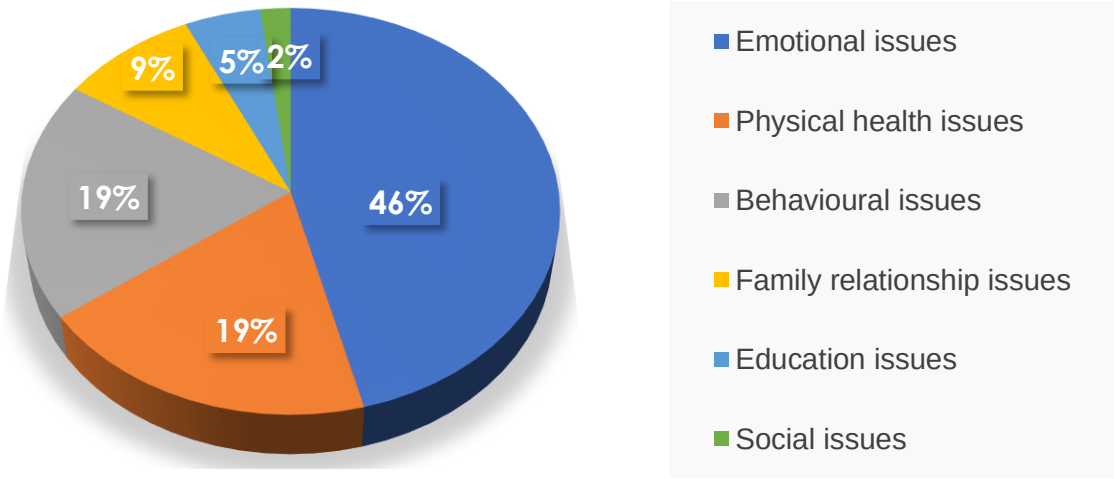
THE SWING

Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological/physiological difficulties.

Without appropriate support, these issues can spiral out of control and in the worst cases, we see service users excluded from school for behavioural issues and family breakdown due to misunderstood grief/poor communication.

Over the past 12 months THE SWING received 244 referrals (146 in 2021), supported a total of 343 clients and delivered 1,067 hours support (868 in 2021)

Difficulties experienced by children and young people



Swing Client Profile

- 50% were male 50% female
- 77% lived in areas falling within the most deprived places to live in the UK (50% within the 10% most deprived places to live)
- 27% had specific support needs (emotional, health, behavioural, learning or diagnosed conditions)
- 5% had allocated social workers and 8% had safeguarding needs
- 5% lived in one adult households, 5% were looked after children
- 47% were 11 years or under, 53% were 12 – 18 years of age
- 77% were White British, 23% were from BAME communities
- 66% were referred by education, 9% Local Authority, 6% NHS or CAMHS
- 13% were referred by a parent or other family member, 1% referred themselves

The significance of their bereavement

- 73% had experienced a significant family death such as a parent/carer, sibling, or grandparent
- 33% were bereaved of a parent
- 9% were bereaved of a sibling including half/step
- 31% were bereaved of a grandparent
- 8% were bereaved of another relative (Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, Niece/Nephew)
- 2% were bereaved of a partner or friend
- 16% were bereaved multiple times

Of the children and young people we supported…

58% felt that their social life issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

53% felt that their behavioural issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

78% felt that their emotional symptoms had improved/were no longer an issue for them

73% felt that their physical issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

82% felt that their family relationships had improved/were no longer a problem for them

70% felt that their education had improved/was no longer a problem for them

From the parents/carers perspective

78% parents felt that their child's issues with family life had improved or were no longer a problem

70% of parents felt their child's emotional issues had improved or were no longer a problem

73% of parents felt that their child's issues with education had improved

73% of parents thought that their child's physical health issues had improved or were no longer a problem

60% of parents felt that their child's behavioural issues had improved or were no longer a problem

60% of parents felt that their child's social life had improved or was no longer a problem

The impact of our counselling work

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluation because it enables us to hear and respond to the views and experiences of our beneficiaries. The learning that we gain from evaluating our work informs the development of any of our new work streams.

We measure success by evaluating improvements made by each client against the issues affecting them due to their bereavement. At the onset of support, we undertake an assessment and record the issues facing each person via a questionnaire. We then monitor change under four main categories: emotional, behaviour, physical, and social/educational. These are broken down further into specific issues that include anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance/alcohol misuse, mental/physical health, etc. In doing this, we are able to gain an overall picture of the difficulties each person is experiencing and create a support plan tailored to their specific needs.

We monitor the progress of clients throughout their support and adjust their support plan if necessary. Finally, we ask all clients to complete an end of support questionnaire to compare where they were at the start of their support to the end. This determines our outcomes. For children/young people we also ask parents to complete a similar questionnaire, enabling us to compare the child's view of their progress against their parents. This helps us to measure outcomes more accurately.

Our monitoring system is designed using guidance from the National Child Bereavement Network. This enables us to analyse information and provide statistical evidence about the impact of our work.

Schools Emotional Wellbeing Programme

In June 2021 we were awarded funds from BBC Children in Need which enabled us to develop an *Emotional Wellbeing Programme* which would be delivered within schools.

The programme we produced consists of three two-hour sessions. A different emotion is discussed each session; worksheets enabled the child or young person to explore how the specific emotion affects them and helps them to learn new ways of coping thus enabling them to support themselves and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing.

The programme also encourages children and young people to share their feelings with their peers if they feel able to do so. In addition, it enables children/young people to understand how their peers are feeling and provides them with skills to help support others.

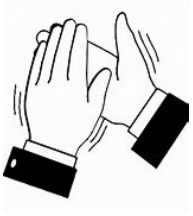
Session one focuses on anxiety, session two anger and session three grief and loss. Each session follows the same format in helping the child/young person to understand what the emotion is, how it can affect the body and strategies to help them manage or overcome the emotion.

This three-year programme will be delivered to 12 schools during each academic year. This will result in 24 primary schools, 3 Special Educational schools and 6 Secondary schools receiving this programme. Each school is asked to select a group of up to 12 students to undertake the programme; these students are normally of a similar age group. Over the course of the three years, potentially 432 students will have benefited from the programme.

As at the end of March 2022, the programme had been delivered in 6 schools to a total of 62 students. The programme has bene well received by the schools with some schools asking if we could deliver the programme again to another set of students

Our Notable Achievements during 2021 - 22

Support we provided….



- Received 641 referrals requesting support.
- Supported 856 individuals.
- Delivered 1,723 hours of counselling support.
- Delivered 61 hours of group activities.
- Delivered 663 additional hours support.
- Conducted 179 in-depth mental health assessments.
- Delivered a three-week Emotional Wellbeing programme in 6 schools to 62 students.

In addition, we have also….

- Employed 2 additional counsellors to support children, young people and adults.
- Increased the number of outreach locations where support could be delivered to 6.
- Established a monthly support group for parents bereaved of a child.
- Established a monthly support group for adults experiencing complex grief.
- Delivering internal safeguarding training to 31 volunteer and paid counsellors.
- Staff, trustees and volunteers completed 55 online safeguarding training sessions.
- Recruited 15 new volunteers, each received 12 hours of bereavement training.
- Delivered a presentation to students studying towards a child counselling MSc at Birmingham City University.
- Completed a 5-year business plan.
- Signed up as a key partner in Walsall No Wrong Door approach.
- Participated in The National Lottery #CommunitiesCan event.
- Established a fundraising sub-committee of ex-service users.
- Assisted Walsall Rotary Club with their Santa Sleigh collection.

Our networking and partnership working….

- Continue to participate in several Walsall Multi-agency network meetings, including a Suicide Prevention Steering Group, Community Mental Health Partnership and Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Children and Young People Strategy and Transformation Group.
- Formed new networking partnerships with key local charities and organisations namely Rethink, Walsall Black Sisters Collective and One Love Community CIC.
- Formed working partnerships with various outreach locations throughout the borough.
- Worked in collaboration with 5 local charities to offer a holistic support package to service users.

Our Future Plans for 2022 - 23

We were extremely busy during 2021-22 due to the enormous increase in the number of clients supported and the number of support hours delivered. As a result, not all of our plans for that year were achieved, however most of those goals have been carried forward to 2022-23.

We will seek to….

- Secure funding to recruit additional staff to help meet increased demand for our service.
- Increase the number of outreach locations in which support can be provided.
- Recruit additional volunteers, specifically ones to support for children and young people.
- Become an organisational member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) (achieved in June 2022).

Develop our Service….

- Write a fundraising strategy to help us achieve some of our goals.
- Set up a monthly support group for children and young people.
- Trial a drop-in facility for children and young people.
- Set up drop-in support sessions for adults, particularly targeting hard to reach groups
- Increase the number of schools where we deliver our Emotional Wellbeing Programme.
- Develop a quarterly programme of Continual Professional Development training events for staff and volunteers.

Our networking and partnership working….

- Deliver bereavement awareness webinars to local support groups and agencies.
- Consider the possibility of organising memorial services at local places of worship.
- Increase the profile of WBSS across the borough to ensure that the bereaved know where and how to contact us, should they need our support.
- Continue to network with key local groups and partnerships to seek opportunities to working together and improving support for the bereaved.
- Continue to promote the aims of the ‘Dying Matters’ coalition to encourage people to talk more openly about dying, death, and bereavement and to make plans for the end of life.
- Work with local funeral directors and bereavement staff at Walsall Hospital to build referral pathways for families and individuals in need of counselling support.

COVID-19

The charity continues to monitor government guidelines regards COVID-19 to ensure all visitors to our centre are safe. PPE equipment including an infrared thermometer, protective screens, hand sanitiser and fogger machines etc. are all in place if required. The charity continues to offer a blended approach to the support it provides; where appropriate, clients are offered face to face support or remote via telephone or zoom. This approach is vital as we want our services to be more accessible to those who cannot afford to travel into Walsall town centre or those who are fearful of travelling following the pandemic.

Spotlight on our Volunteers

**Our volunteers are our most vital asset.
In 2021 / 2022, they donated 864 hours of
their time to support the bereaved.**

Since WBSS started to provide placement opportunities it has trained 162 counsellors to help provide bereavement counselling. During this year 15 new volunteers were recruited and trained.

Whenever possible, WBSS operates a rolling recruitment programme to attract volunteer counsellors to ensure that we have the staffing resources to provide a high skills base for us to draw from to support our clients. Over the years, we have developed a reputation for providing very good placements for those training to become counsellors and our volunteer mentoring is recognised as being excellent. This is evidenced in our retention rate of volunteers; we currently have 5 qualified counsellors who have been providing their services on a voluntary basis for between 10-15 years.

WBSS volunteers, providing support to adults, are all either qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling or are training towards this qualification.

Prior to being able to provide support, all volunteers, regardless of qualification and/or experience, must complete our in-house 'Bereavement and Loss' 10-hour training programme. In addition, they must complete annual on-line safeguarding adults training.

Volunteers providing support to children and young people must be qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling and in addition, they must also complete *THE SWING* 'Supporting Children and Young People' 12-hour training programme.

We recognise the importance of continually refreshing and expanding volunteer knowledge and experience and aim to offer additional training whenever opportunities arise.

Financial Review

To ensure that we are accessible to all, we do not charge our clients for our services. However, we do encourage donations if clients feel they are able to support our charity. We fund all of our services through voluntary donations and grants.

Opening the year with reserves of £120,259, equivalent to approximately 7.5 months of the charity's running costs, the main focus of the charity was to secure funds to enable it to continue.

A change in our fundraising strategy was required which resulted in us directly approaching local authority organisations for financial support. The trustees are extremely grateful to both Walsall Council and Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust who were able to provide some financial support for the charity.

We were fortunate to secure £64,185 from the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This funding enabled the charity to increase the number of support hours it provided. In addition to this, Walsall Council provided WBSS with a one-off grant of £84,000. These funds enabled WBSS to employ additional staff which enables it to increase its capacity to meet the growing demand for support and also reduce waiting times. Grants and donations from charitable giving organisations continue to be our primary source of income for the *THE SWING*. Our main funder was The Henry Smith Charity, who continued to support the charity with £30,000. A full list of grant making organisations, charitable trusts and local organisations who have supported WBSS financially during this year is listed on our acknowledgement page.

With limited income secured beyond 2022-23, we are aware that we need to develop our income base further, especially from community support and events. As a small charity, without a dedicated fundraiser, this does remain a challenge, but consideration does need to be made as regards options to achieve this.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees continue to review the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risk to the organisation is the lack of secure funding. The trustees have established a policy whereby the reserves in total that are not invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity, should be up to the equivalent of 9 months of the total anticipated expenditure of the charity. This amount for 2022 – 23 would be £197,720.

This level of these reserves has been determined by the need to meet the working capital requirements of the charity. In addition, due to a massive increase in demand for our service over the past year, this period represents the necessary amount of time required to deliver counselling sessions to all the clients who are on our waiting list for support and for the charity to carry out all its legal obligations.

At the end of March 2022, the total of the charity's reserves stood at £250,319 of which £190,379 was unrestricted and £59,940 restricted.

Whilst this may seem a healthy level of reserves, the trustees are aware that expenditure during 2022-23 will increase by an anticipated 25% due to an increase in the number of staff and staff hours. With only 30% of these costs secured, the charity may need to rely upon its unrestricted reserves if alternative funds cannot be secured.

Looking towards the future, the trustees feel that a long-term goal of WBSS would be to purchase its own premises. This would provide a secure base on which the charity can grow and develop further.

With this in mind the trustees have designated £70,000 of unrestricted funds towards the cost of purchasing a building. To enable this amount to increase, 10% of unrestricted year-end reserves will be transferred to this designated fund annually.

The financial strategy of WBSS continues to be that of building and maintaining unrestricted reserves to meet our 9-month target, through planned cost-effective operational procedures and further fundraising. The Trustees will continue to take all necessary actions regarding the prevailing economic climate.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees are very aware of the need to assess and minimise risks to the operation of the charity. As such, a comprehensive set of policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, and where necessary, updated to comply with changes in legislation and the requirements of funding bodies. Following the guidance of these policies covers the main risks to the operation of the charity.

The risk of being unable to adequately fund projects is our main concern. In order to minimise this risk, the trustees hope to diversify income streams. Expenditure is constantly reviewed in order to ensure that funds continue to be used effectively

The risk of not supporting clients and volunteers professionally is managed by having a supervision programme in place in line with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) procedures. It is WBSS's policy that every new volunteer is supported by way of an obligatory training course followed by induction, prior to client contact time.

Staff meetings, project meetings, and individual meetings are conducted monthly and the board of trustees meet at least bi-monthly to review, amend and update working procedures and to eliminate risks. These meetings are held more frequently if required. Disclosure and Barring checks are made every three years for all members of staff, trustees, and potential new volunteers.

General Data Protection Regulation is adhered to as well as Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection policies regarding all work with children and families. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with Health and Safety of all staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the centre. These ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. In addition, the regular meetings of the Trustees at the charity's premises facilitate the constant review of the environment in which the charity exists.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Walsall Bereavement Support Service is a registered charity that aims to meet some of the needs of bereaved people within the Walsall Borough. The charity, originally formed as an unincorporated charity in 1998, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4th July 2013 and is governed by a constitution approved by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

Appointment of Trustees, Induction, and Training

The focus of the charity is that of supporting bereaved adults, young people and children. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of these groups are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees the charity has sought to identify members of the community who are willing to use their own experiences to assist the organisation.

The Board of Trustees is well represented by a wide range of individuals from various aspects of the community. Trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees to act jointly with them for all purposes. A trustee whose term of office has expired can be appointed for a further term of office.

Whilst there is no formal induction process in place, all new trustees are invited and encouraged to visit the offices of WBSS in order to familiarise themselves with the organisation and the context within which it operates. The Head of Service will then discuss the following aspects of the organisation with the new trustee and answer any questions arising.

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity.
- The current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future and objectives of the organisation.

In addition, new trustees are given a copy of the latest Annual Report along with a trustee role description, a copy of the constitution, the Charity Commission's Trustee Handbook, the organisation's main policy documents and the latest financial statements.

Organisational Structure

WBSS has a Board of Trustees of at least 5 members who meet bi-monthly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present there are 6 trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Head of Service is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the day-to-day operational management of the organisation in line with the constitution and quality procedures. The Head of Service is required to attend trustee meetings but has no voting rights.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity's SORP:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 12th January 2023

By **Jim Green (Chair)**

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number: 1152724

Registered Office: Office Suite 2
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DA

Telephone: 01922 724841 / 01922 645035

Website: www.wbss.org.uk

Trustees:

Chair:	James Green
Treasurer:	Neil Simpson
Trustees:	Dr Robert Crundwell
	Bev Simpson
	Alyson Green
	Verity Baker

Employees:

Head of Service	Bev Richardson Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP, MAAT
THE SWING Co-ordinator	Sally Robinson Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP (until Aug 22)
THE SWING Counsellors	Amanda Holtham Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP (until Nov 21) Harvender Panaser Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP (from Nov 21) Lauren Jones Registered Member BACP (from Aug 22) Scott Homer Registered Member BACP (from Aug 22)
'Let's Talk' Co-ordinator	Ian Davies Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
'Let's Talk' Counsellor	Davina Lytton Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP (from Dec 21)
Charity Administrator	Nikki Preene

Independent Examiner:

Karen Hanlan
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
CV37 7SZ

Banks:

Barclays Bank
1 Breadmarket Street
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 6JY

Nationwide
18 Bridge Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DE

Acknowledgements

Walsall Bereavement Support Service would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following organisations and donors for their financial support during 2021 / 2022.

- Alfred Haines Charitable Trust
- Arnold Clark Automobile Community Fund
- Baron Davenport's Charity
- BBC Children in Need
- Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust
- CB & HH Taylor 1984 Charitable Trust
- Cooper & Jordan's Endowed School Foundation, Aldridge
- Dumbreck Charitable Trust
- Eric W Vincent Barbara Ward Foundation
- George Henry Charitable Trust
- Marsh Charitable Trust
- Skipton Building Society
- Sir John Middlemore Charitable Trust
- The Albert Hunt Trust
- The Cole Charitable Trust
- The Eveson Charitable Trust
- The Harry Payne Fund
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Geoff Hill Charitable Trust
- The Lillie C Johnson Charitable Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Owen Family Trust
- The Roger & Douglas Charitable Trust
- The Saintbuy Trust
- The Souter Charitable Trust
- The Wilmcote Charitrust
- Walsall Council

We would also like to thank the following organisations for fundraising on behalf of Walsall Bereavement Support Service during 2021 / 2022

- Hydesville School, Walsall
- Shelfield Ladies Social Committee
- St Matthews Church, Walsall
- St Lawrence Church, Darlaston
- The Crossing at St Paul's, Walsall
- Walsall Rotary Club
- Walsall Quakers

And finally… many thanks go to all of the volunteers for the skills, commitment, and time that they have contributed throughout the year. Without their support we simply would not be able to provide this valuable service.

Independent Examiners Reported to the trustees of Walsall Support Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Walsall Bereavement Support Service ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which are set out on pages 21 to 30.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

3) the accounts do 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.

Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales
Karen Hanlan, Independent Examiner Limited
1 Saracen Close, Ettington, CV37 7SZ

Date
12th January 2023

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	Total funds 2021
Income from:					
		£	£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	2,953	78,447	**81,400**	**54,427**
Charitable activities	2	164,245	44,728	**208,973**	**111,007**
Trading activities	3	2,399	-	**2,399**	**2,275**
Investments – bank interest		292	-	**292**	**312**
Total income		**169,889**	**123,175**	**293,064**	**168,021**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		9	17,280	**17,289**	**12,822**
Charitable activities		28,514	117,201	**145,715**	**145,851**
Total expenditure	4	**28,523**	**134,481**	**163,004**	**158,673**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		141,366	(11,306)	**130,060**	**9,348**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		49,013	71,246	**120,259**	**110,911**
Transfers between funds					-
Total funds carried forward		**190,379**	**59,940**	**250,319**	**120,259**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	7	3,289	3,770
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	1,986	1,609
Cash at Bank		251,459	132,633
		253,445	134,242
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(6,415)	(17,753)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		247,030	116,489
NET ASSETS		250,319	120,259
FUNDS	11		
Restricted Funds		59,940	71,246
Unrestricted Funds			
- General		113,379	49,013
- Designated		75,000	-
TOTAL FUNDS		**250,319**	**120,259**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Mr J Green, Chair of Trustees Date: 12th January 2023

Principle Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Walsall Bereavement Support Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

Going Concern statement

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the Charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations.

The Charity's business plan shows that the Charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the Trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds

General accumulated funds are unrestricted funds available for general purposes and include funds designated for a particular purpose; the use of such funds remains at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are funds subject to conditions imposed by the donor or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds are raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charity.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor-imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of fundraising activity and includes an allocation of staff costs relating to time spent on fundraising activity.

Expenditure on charitable expenditure includes the costs of project delivery to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support and governance costs.

Principle Accounting Policies (continued)

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Interest receivable

Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts received in the year.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight-line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets, which is estimated at 4 years.

Fixed assets are capitalised when their value exceeds £500.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short-term deposits repayable on or within a three-month notice period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to employee's individual personal pension plans. The employer contributions to the scheme in 2022 were £3,281 (2021 £2,349) and are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Taxation

As a registered Charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Donations & legacies

	2022 £	2021 £
Un-restricted:		
Donations	2,953	730
Grants	-	450
	2,953	1,180
Restricted:		
Donations	-	-
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	30,000	20,000
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing	48,447	33,247
	38,447	53,427
Total	**81,400**	**54,427**

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Un-restricted:		
Training & Support	3,310	1,325
Walsall Council	96,750	-
Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust	64,185	-
	164,245	1,325
Restricted:		
The National Lottery (Let's Talk)	41,017	52,456
Children in Need small grant (The Swing)	-	4,047
Children in Need main grant (The Swing)	-	14,712
Children in Need (Emotional Wellbeing Programme)	3,711	-
CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund	-	2,273
HM Government & The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	-	36,194
	44,728	109,682
Total	**208,973**	**111,007**

3. Trading activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Un-restricted:		
Fundraising events	1,006	2,275
Online fundraising	1,393	-
Restricted:		
Fundraising Events	-	-
	-	-
Total	**2,399**	**2,275**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

4. Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	25,838	93,325	119,163	112,137
Fundraising Costs	9	8,002	8,011	11,105
Centre Costs	733	9,294	10,027	7,800
Unit 3 Rent	-	3,100	3,100	1,897
Unit 3 Utilities	16	356	372	774
Room Hire	-	315	315	45
IT	14	2,402	2,416	1,881
Telephone	122	1,485	1,607	975
Stationery	50	356	406	162
Postage	-	138	138	1,095
Printing	-	826	826	898
Office Equipment	444	677	1,121	1,878
Refreshments	-	51	51	3
Materials	-	1,364	1,364	637
Resources	-	29	29	251
Travel / Parking	-	643	643	142
Training	-	1,225	1,225	1,574
Supervision	429	4,615	5,044	4,913
Assessment	-	-	-	975
Client Support	-	-	-	120
Volunteers	178	61	239	-
Publicity	-	855	855	1,206
Insurance	515	1,622	2,137	2,010
DBS Checks	-	474	474	452
Annual Fees	84	1.399	1,483	1,508
Bank Charges	-	162	162	100
Covid-19 PPE	1	125	126	2,547
Sundries	90	-	90	283
Depreciation	-	1,580	1,580	1,305
	28,523	**134,481**	**163,004**	**158,673**

Resources Expanded

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising Costs	9	17,208	**17,289**	**12,822**
Direct Costs	26,418	71,903	**98,321**	**105,858**
Support Costs	2,096	40,696	**42,792**	**37,789**
Governance	-	4,602	**4,602**	**2,204**
	28,523	**134,481**	**163,004**	**158,673**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

5. Net expenditure/income for year

Net income is stated after charging:	2022 £	2021 £
Independent Examiners fee	990	890
Depreciation	1,580	1,305
	2,570	**2,195**

6. Staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries	111,149	105,435
National Insurance	4,733	4,353
Pensions	3,281	2,349
Total	**119,163**	**112,137**

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2021: nil).

The equivalent of 4.18 full-time members of staff were employed during the year (2021: 3.82)

Key management personnel comprise the Head of Service and the Finance Manager whose employee benefits total £38,794 (2020 £39,779).

The charity does not operate its own pension scheme but contributes towards NEST Pension scheme for all employees.

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits in the year (2021: None). No trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year (2021: None).

There are no further related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	18,406	2,182	20,588
Additions	1,099	-	1,099
At end of year	**19,505**	**2,182**	**21,687**
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	14,636	2,182	16,818
Charge for the year	1,580	-	1,3580
At end of year	**16,216**	**2,182**	**16,398**
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2021	3,770	-	3,770
At 31 March 2022	**3,289**	**-**	**3,289**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

8. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments	1,486	1,109
Rental Deposit	500	500
	1,986	**1,609**

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals	1,270	1,581
Deferred income	5,145	16,172
	6,415	**17,753**

Movements in deferred income are as follows:

	£
At beginning of year	16,172
Released to income in year	(16,172)
Deferred in year	(5,145)
At end of year	5,145

Deferred income relates to funding received in advance of project activity.

10. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	3,289	3,289
Current assets	109,379	63,066	253,445
Current Liabilities	-	(6,415)	(16,415)
Total	**190,379**	**59,940**	**250,319**

Fund balances at 31 March 2021 were represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	3,770	-	3,770
Current assets	45,243	88,999	134,242
Current Liabilities	-	(17,753)	(17,735)
Total	**49,013**	**71,246**	**120,259**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

11. Movement in funds

	Balance at beginning of year	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance at end of year
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Restricted funds					
The National Lottery	15,100	41,017	(56,117)	-	**-**
Let's Talk	250	-	(250)	-	**-**
The Swing	50,591	43,480	(41,115)	-	**52,956**
The Henry Smith Charity	-	30,000	(30,000)	-	**-**
BBC Children in Need – Wellbeing Program	-	3,711	(3,243)	-	**468**
Grantham Yorke	388	-	-	-	**388**
HOPE Group	3,197	-	(716)	-	**2,481**
The Toy Trust	1,720	-	(535)	-	**1,185**
Skipton Building Society	-	2,967	(505)	-	**2,462**
Weslyan	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	**-**
	71,246	123,175	(134,481)	-	**59,940**
Un-restricted funds					
General fund	49,013	169,889	(28,523)	(75,000)	**115,379**
Designated building fund	-	-	-	75,000	**75,000**
	49,013	169,889	(28,523)	-	**190,379**
Total funds	**120,259**	**293,064**	**(163,004)**	-	**250,319**

The National Lottery Community Fund ended in February 2022. This three-year grant enabled us to provide support to bereaved adults under the project name of Let's Talk.

The Swing provides counselling support to children, young people and families. Funding is provided by various charitable giving organisations and grant providers.

The Henry Smith Charity is year 2 of a three-year grant towards The Swing project costs.

A three-year grant from BBC Children In Need has enabled us to pilot an Emotional Wellbeing programme to deliver to groups of children at their school.

Grantham Yorke provided funding for sessional workers to support bereaved children and young people as and when required.

HOPE Group (formally the Bereaved by Suicide Support Group) provides monthly support to the families who have lost loved ones as a result of suicide.

General funds consist of unrestricted reserves brought forward, general donations and fundraising; they may be used for any charitable purpose as deemed by the trustees.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been ringfences towards the cost or purchasing premises from which the charity can operate and provide support.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

12. Controlling Interest

The Charity is controlled by the Trustees.

13. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total Funds 2020
Income from:		£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	1,180	53,247	**54,427**
Charitable activities	2	1,325	109,682	**111,007**
Trading activities	3	2,275	-	**2,275**
Investments – bank interest		312	-	**312**
Total income		**5,092**	**162,929**	**168,021**
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		-	12,822	**12,882**
Charitable activities		-	145,851	**145,851**
Total expenditure	4	**-**	**158,673**	**158,673**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		5,092	4,256	**9,348**
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		41,433	69,478	**110,911**
Transfer between funds		2,488	(2,488)	**-**
Total funds carried forward		**49,013**	**71,246**	**120,259**

WALSALL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

England & Wales - Charity number 1152724

Accounts

Walsall Bereavement Support Service
Reg. Charity No. 1152724

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Annual Report 2020-2021

Trustees' Annual Report

And Financial Statements

1st April 2020 - 31st March 2021

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Report of the Trustees

The Trustees of Walsall Bereavement Support Service (WBSS) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2021.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act, the Charity's Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

Chair's Report

Well, what a year we have all had!

Despite the upheaval of national restrictions resulting in our staff and volunteers having to work remotely from home, during this period we have continued to support 332 bereaved adults and children/young people who felt unable to cope with their grief and its impact on their lives. Referrals to both our adult and children/young people's support services did reduce because of school closures and businesses, medical, and community organisations reducing or closing their services. At the time of writing my report we are now well on our way to restrictions being lifted and as the country returns to new type of normality we anticipate that our referrals this coming year will increase rapidly. We know that people bereaved over the past year have had to endure the pain of being unable to be with their loved ones when they have died, find comfort from friends or families living in different households, or hold the funerals they would have chosen to have. Historically, we have found that most people who find it difficult to manage their grief seek support within the first 2 years following their bereavement. The impact of the pandemic on the bereaved, irrespective of how their loved one died, will become clear as we work through 2021.

When national restrictions came into place in March last year, the trustees decided that all staff and volunteers should work from home until it was safe to return to our counselling offices. A grant enabled us to update staff laptops and telephones to make this transition as smooth as possible and ensure continuity of support for our service users. We also introduced a new digital policy and staff were able to train to offer remote counselling via Zoom. Thankfully, by September 2020, we were able to reopen our offices in a phased return and we continue to ensure that all procedures are in place to protect everyone.

Over the past few years, we had been working towards developing our community fundraising income and had welcomed the support of local people raising money to help fund the delivery of our services. Unfortunately, national restrictions prevented any of our plans from going ahead and we have been more reliant on grants and donations from trusts and foundations this year. We are very grateful for the continued support of the National Lottery Community Fund who fund our adult service *'Let's Talk'* and for their additional support over the past year through their COVID-19 Emergency Fund. Their grant enabled us to purchase vital PPE to ensure that our offices were safe for staff, volunteers, and service users to return, helped with our running costs, and enabled us to launch our new outreach project to support local people affected by bereavement who were feeling isolated and in need of someone to talk to.

We are also very grateful to the Henry Smith Charity and Children in Need for their continued support for our children, young people, and family project *THE SWING*, and to the many other grant makers who have helped us.

Some of these funders have supported WBSS for many years including the Eveson Charitable Trust, the Grantham Yorke Trust, and the Turner Trust and we are extremely grateful for their commitment to our work. As a small local charity, every donation makes a huge difference to what we are able to deliver.

In our report last year, we were able to introduce our new Head of Service, Rhiannon Brown. Unfortunately, due to ill health, Rhiannon sadly had to resign later in the year. At this time the country was going into its second lockdown, so the trustees chose to put an interim structure in place to manage the charity. Bev Richardson, WBSS Finance Manager and children's counsellor, stepped up to take responsibility for running the charity. Bev had been working for WBSS for 15 years and had a firm understanding of the operational needs of the organisation and the support needs of its service users. This smooth transition ensured there was no disruption to any of the services that we provide. In March 2021, we advertised for a new Head of Service, and we were pleased that Bev decided to apply for this position and was successful in her application.

Finally, I would like to thank WBSS team of staff and volunteers for their dedication and hard work over the past 12 months. Our volunteers are integral to our service delivery, especially to our adult bereavement support service because they provide over 96% of the adult counselling support. The quality of this support is outstanding because our volunteers are already training to become qualified counsellors and in addition, they receive specialist bereavement training from WBSS. Many of our volunteers continue to provide support for many years, even after they are fully qualified.

I look forward to the year ahead and no doubt a few more challenges, but we are determined to ensure that everyone who needs our support will be cared for.

Jim Green

Charitable Objectives

provide caring and sensitive support that is free, confidential, and open to all residents of Walsall, irrespective of their relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the time that has elapsed since the death.

reduce the potential negative long-term impact that bereavement can have on a person's physical/mental wellbeing, education or employment, by providing appropriate support to enable each person to cope with their loss and begin to rebuild their lives.

prevent the effects of bereavement from damaging family cohesion through developing understanding and improving communication within the family unit.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Chapter 1 Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'. In the opinion of the trustees, the objectives of the charity as detailed on the previous page are for the public benefit.

The support offered by Walsall Bereavement Support Service is currently available free of charge to bereaved children, young people, and their families who live within the Walsall borough or those registered at a Walsall GP surgery or educated within a Walsall school. Support is offered irrespective of the relationship to the deceased, the cause of death, or the length of time that has elapsed since the death.

Our Strategic Aims

To establish WBSS as the main local provider in the field of emotional bereavement support

To raise awareness about the impact that bereavement has on a person's emotional and physical health and where and when to seek support and advice

To provide and promote high quality support services to the bereaved in the borough of Walsall

To raise awareness amongst the general public about 'Dying Matters' to help reduce the negative stigma that is attached to death and dying

WBSS is a volunteer led charity who offers its services free of charge to all Walsall Residents

Our Service

During the year, WBSS helped 186 bereaved adults and 146 bereaved children, young people, and their families. In total, 1,351 hours of support was provided to the bereaved.

Our support is provided through 3 projects:

'Let's Talk' Bereavement support for adults

HOPE GROUP Specialist support for adults bereaved by suicide

THE SWING Bereavement support for children, young people, and families

Our support is tailored to the specific needs of our service users and includes:

- **One-to-one face to face, telephone and on-line counselling**
- **Group Support**
- **Family and Sibling support**
- **Out of Hours service week-day evenings and Saturday mornings**
- **Special Support in schools**
- **Outreach work in the community**

The process of support

Our Services are Open to all people

WBSS wants its projects and services to be open to as wide a range of people as possible and as such, we do not discriminate clients by age, race, gender, sexual orientation, relationship to the bereaved person, the time elapsed since the death, or cause of death.

We utilise the skills of staff and volunteer counsellors from different backgrounds and ethnicities, to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate support to each individual client. We work with schools across the borough, many of whom have high levels of students who have additional support needs such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's syndrome etc. To help support these potentially challenging students, counsellors have all undergone specific training relating to supporting this client group.

Our Projects

'Let's Talk'

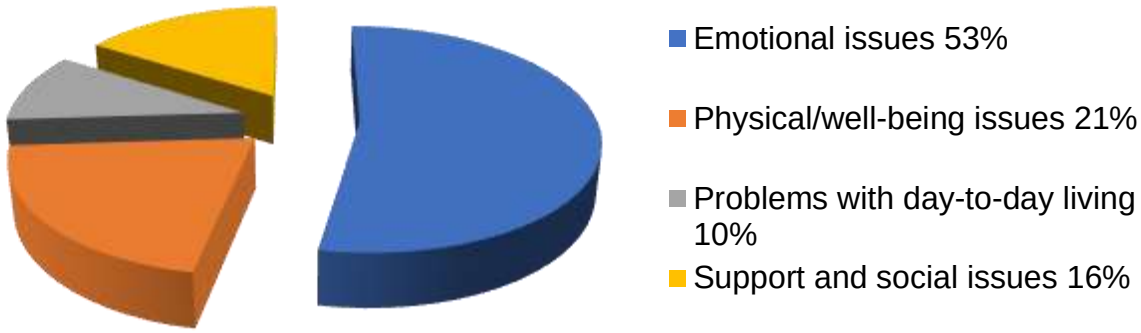
The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Many of our clients have anxiety, depression, and more complex issues that have developed as a result of how they feel. For adults this can include dependency upon substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, or cigarettes.

Some are unable to work, have withdrawn from family and social life, and are less able to take care of themselves.

Over the past 12 months 'Let's Talk' received 186 referrals and delivered 697 Hours of Support

Difficulties experienced by adults referred for support



75% of service users had been prescribed medication to help them with the effects of their bereavement

The adults that we helped

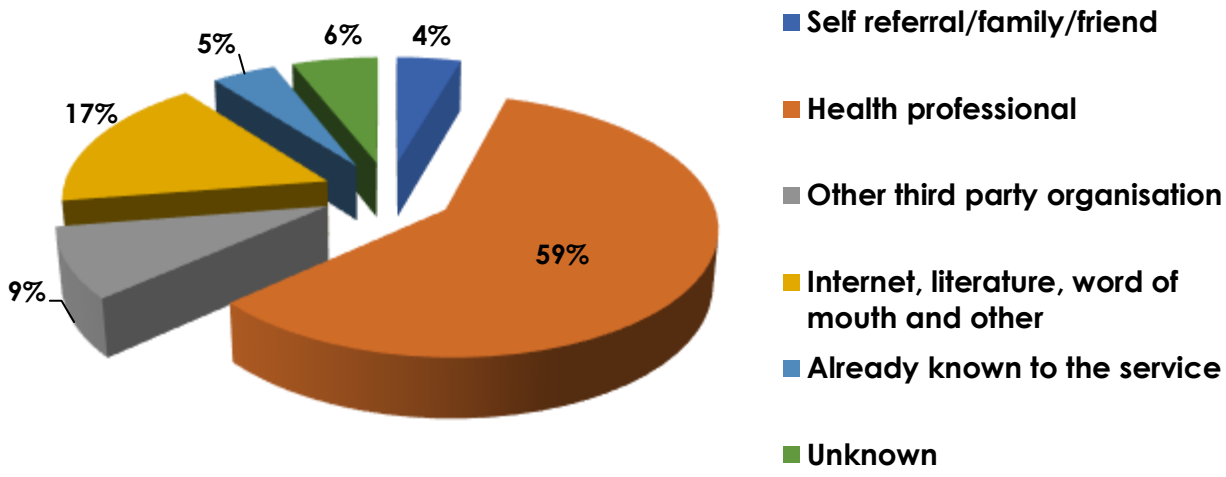
79% sought support within 2 years of bereavement; however, we support people whenever they need our help and during this period **6%** of service users sought our help 5 years or more after their bereavement

77% were of working age (between 20-69 years of age)

72% of referrals who gave their postal addresses lived in areas falling in the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. A further 16 (9%) lived in areas in the top 25% most deprived areas. In total, 146 (81%) of clients lived in the top 25% most deprived areas of the UK

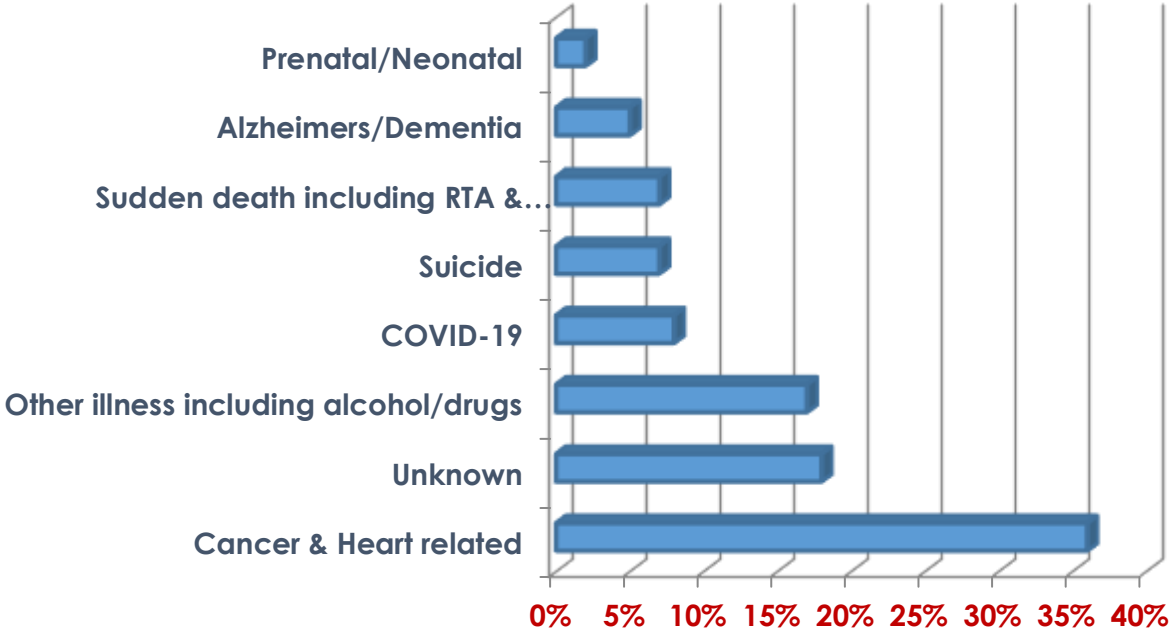
63% of referrals were female, **30%** male, and **7%** unknown

Referral sources



85% of adults seeking support had experienced a significant family death such as a parent, spouse, sibling, grandparent or child

Cause of death



HOPE GROUP

Since early 2000, we have offered a monthly support group specifically for adults bereaved by suicide. Although the group is facilitated by two people connected to WBSS, either volunteers, staff, or group members can lead the meeting. The HOPE Group provides a sympathetic and nurturing environment in which attendees can feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of being judged.

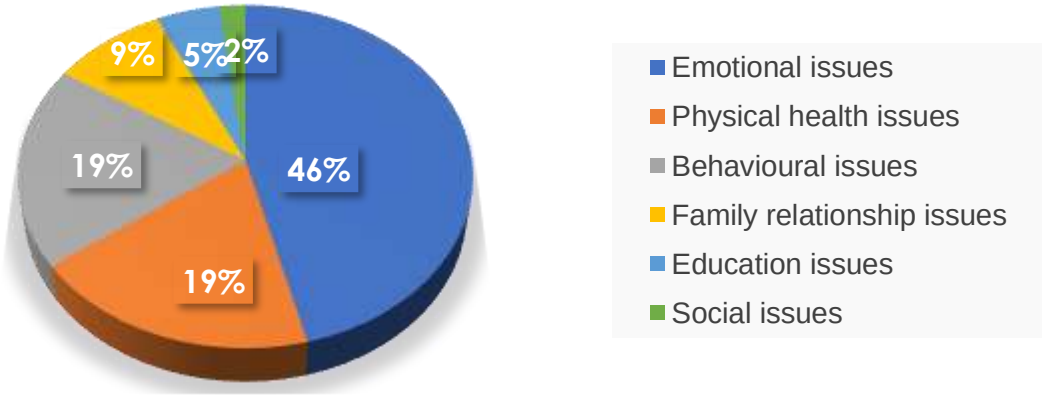
THE SWING

Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological / physiological difficulties.

Without appropriate support, these issues can spiral out of control and in the worst cases, we see service users excluded from school for behavioural issues and family breakdown due to misunderstood grief/poor communication.

Over the past 12 months of the 146 referrals to THE SWING and delivered 868 Hours of Support

Difficulties experienced by children and young people referred for support



- 73% had experienced a significant family death such as a parent/carer, sibling, or grandparent
- 70% lived in areas falling within the most deprived places to live in the UK (50% within the 10% most deprived places to live)
- 30% had specific support needs (emotional, health, behavioural, learning or diagnosed conditions)
- 18% were defined as having Safeguarding Needs
- 17% had experienced multiple bereavements
- 6% had allocated social workers and 18% had safeguarding needs
- 4% were living in one adult households and 7% in other care

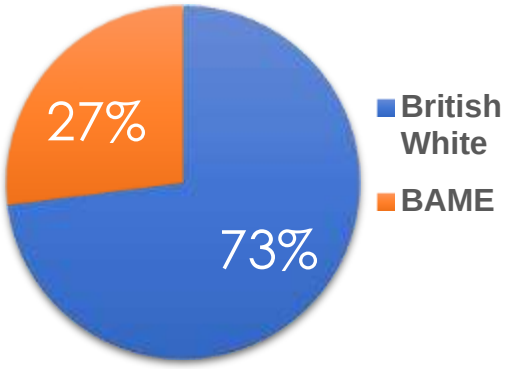
Age Breakdown

47% were 11 years and under
52% were 12-18 years of age
1% were over 18 years of age

Gender Breakdown

51% were male
49% were female

Ethnicity



Referral Sources

60% Education

14% Local Authority

9% NHS/CAMHS

17% Other

The significance of their bereavement

- 73% were bereaved of a significant immediate family member
- 28% were bereaved of a parent
- 9% were bereaved of a sibling including half/step
- 8% were bereaved of another relative (Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, Niece/Nephew)
- 2% were bereaved of a partner or friend
- 17% were bereaved multiple times

The impact of our work

We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluation because it enables us to hear and respond to the views and experiences of our beneficiaries. The learning that we gain from evaluating our work informs the development of any of our new work streams.

We measure success by evaluating improvements made by each client against the issues affecting them due to their bereavement. At the onset of support, we undertake an assessment and record the issues facing each person via a questionnaire. We then monitor change under four main categories: emotional, behaviour, physical, and social/educational. These are broken down further into specific issues that include anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance/alcohol misuse, mental/physical health, etc. In doing this, we are able to gain an overall picture of the difficulties each person is experiencing and create a support plan tailored to their specific needs.

We monitor the progress of clients throughout their support and adjust their support plan if necessary. Finally, we ask all clients to complete an end of support questionnaire to compare where they were at the start of their support to the end. This determines our outcomes. For children/young people we also ask parents to complete a similar questionnaire, enabling us to compare the child's view of their progress against their parents'. This helps us to measure outcomes more accurately.

Our monitoring system is designed using guidance from the National Child Bereavement Network. This enables us to analyse information and provide statistical evidence about the impact of our work.

Outcomes

For adult service users

- **83%** felt that their support had helped them
- **75%** felt that there had been an improvement in their mental health
- **67%** had noticed an improvement in their physical health
- **50%** of service users receiving professional medical support felt that following counselling they did not require this continued support
- **48%** said that they felt more socially supported and less isolated
- **92%** of adults said that they would recommend us to others who are bereaved
- **84%** of adults said that the quality of our services was excellent or very good

For children and young people

100% felt that their social life issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

92% felt that their behavioural issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

88% felt that their emotional symptoms had improved/were no longer an issue for them

84% felt that their physical issues had improved/were no longer a problem for them

82% felt that their family relationships had improved/were no longer a problem for them

70% felt that their education had improved/was no longer a problem for them

From the parents' / carers' perspective

92% parents felt that their child's issues with family life had improved or were no longer a problem

80% of parents felt their child's emotional issues had improved or were no longer a problem

73% of parents felt that their child's issues with education had improved

68% of parents thought that their child's physical health issues had improved or were no longer a problem

68% of parents felt that their child's behavioural issues had improved or were no longer a problem

60% of parents felt that their child's social life had improved or was no longer a problem

Spotlight on our Volunteers

Our volunteers are our most vital asset. In 2020/21, they donated over 400 hours of their time to support the bereaved

Since WBSS started to provide placement opportunities it has trained 147 counsellors to help provide bereavement counselling.

Whenever possible, WBSS operates a rolling recruitment programme to attract volunteer counsellors to ensure that we have the staffing resources to provide a high skills base for us to draw from to support our clients. Over the years, we have developed a reputation for providing very good placements for those training to become counsellors and our volunteer mentoring is recognised as being excellent. This is evidenced in our retention rate of volunteers; we currently have 5 qualified counsellors who have been providing their services on a voluntary basis for between 10-15 years and 1 who has been with us for 18 years.

WBSS volunteers, providing support to adults, are all either qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling or are training towards this qualification.

Prior to being able to provide support, all volunteers, regardless of qualification and/or experience, must complete our in-house 'Bereavement and Loss' 10-hour training programme. In addition, they must complete annual on-line safeguarding adults training.

Volunteers providing support to children and young people must be qualified to at least Diploma Level 4 in Counselling. In addition, they must also complete *THE SWING* 'Working with Children and Young People' 10-hour training programme as well as annual on-line safeguarding children training.

We recognise the importance of continually refreshing and expanding volunteer knowledge and experience and aim to offer additional training whenever opportunities arise.

Feedback from volunteers about how our training will help them with their future practice…

"It reassured my understanding of counselling skills. It's all in 'the context' it's about the client's needs. It encouraged me to celebrate with the clients their happy memories even though they are going through this difficult time in their life."

"Some very specific techniques for how to support people with their bereavement."

"Death changes everything. I realise I know more than I thought about bereavement. I realised that it isn't all sadness there will be lighter sides to working with the bereaved."

"Potential structure to sessions, how to work creatively with complex and complicated grief."

"I have learned something new from each session, there are so many different layers to grief that I hadn't previous knowledge of."

"I loved the fact that working with the bereaved can have a lot of positives that I didn't know about previously. I'm glad that we learned about the six ways of helping and we didn't focus on theories and models of bereavement because I can learn and research that outside of this course."

"The simple fact that everything changes after death and grief can manifest in so many different ways."

Notable Achievements during 2020-21

In addition to all the counselling support we have delivered we have also….

- Continued to provide support to children, young people and adults throughout the whole of the year despite COVID-19 lockdowns and local constraints.
- Received a total of 332 referrals requesting support.
- Purchased equipment to ensure that our centre was as safe as possible for staff, volunteers, and service users to return during COVID-19.
- Implemented a new staffing structure enabling us to provide additional support to service users and volunteers.
- Reviewed administrative and monitoring procedures and introduced new ways of working to improve efficiency.
- Overhauled and updated our website.
- Produced a leaflet and distributed it to 58 residential / care homes throughout the borough to offer support for staff affected by their work during the pandemic.
- Recruited and trained 14 new volunteers (to the date of this report) and provided them with 30 hours of bereavement training.
- Provided specific training to 5 volunteers to help them support children and young people
- Staff, trustees, and volunteers collectively completed 53 online safeguarding training sessions.
- Delivered internal webinars to 11 volunteers who requested training to assist them with providing counselling support by telephone.
- Delivered 3 'Supporting the bereaved' webinars which included 14 'Places of Welcome' coordinators who facilitate monthly groups at various Walsall locations.
- Delivered bereavement awareness training to staff at 2 local secondary schools to help them to recognise the signs of grieving and gain an awareness of when professional support should be sought.
- Continued to support the Dying Matters awareness campaign.
- Participated in The National Lottery #CommunitiesCan event.
- Completed One Walsall Development Tool which enabled us to internally assess how the charity is performing in 8 areas of development.
- Increased networking with local strategic groups. This included being part of the Walsall Multi-agency Suicide Prevention Strategy Group, Walsall Community Mental Health Partnership, Walsall Children and Young People Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy/Transformation group, and Walsall Mental Health Focus Group.
- Contributed to three workshops helping to develop a CCG Walsall Model of Participation and Engagement which will help shape services provide by Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Our Future Plans for 2021-22

During the next year, we will be writing a new 5-year business plan and fundraising strategy. These documents will present an overview of the activities and services of WBSS and explain how we plan to develop and fund our services over the coming years. The ongoing impact of COVID-19 will be taken into account within our plans.

- Recruit additional volunteers and train them to work with both adults and children.
- Recruit additional staff to help meet increased demand on our service.
- Develop a quarterly programme of Continual Professional Development training events for staff and volunteers.
- Deliver child bereavement training to our volunteers to enable them to support clients across the whole of the charity.
- Deliver bereavement awareness webinars to local support groups and agencies.
- Facilitate a programme of three weekly sessions to groups of students within school to help them to manage their emotions.
- Set up a befriending service for the elderly who are experiencing loneliness and isolation.
- Develop outreach support to vulnerable people including key workers in deprived communities to help them to cope with bereavement.
- Continue to deliver our bereaved by suicide support group and explore opportunities for setting up further groups for those dealing with other types of traumatic bereavement.
- Set up two drop-in support sessions, particularly targeting hard to reach groups.
- Consider the possibility of organising memorial services at local places of worship.
- Increase the profile of WBSS across the borough to ensure that the bereaved know where and how to contact us, should they need our support.
- Continue to network with key local groups and partnerships to seek opportunities of working together and improving support for the bereaved.
- Distribute our `Reaching Communities' leaflet to GP surgeries and funeral directors to increase awareness about our services.
- Continue to promote the aims of the 'Dying Matters' coalition to encourage people to talk more openly about dying, death, and bereavement and to make plans for the end of life.
- Work with local funeral directors and bereavement staff at Walsall Hospital to build referral pathways for families and individuals in need of counselling support.
- Secure funding to continue to deliver all of our current charitable activities.
- Set up a fundraising committee of volunteers to help us to develop our fundraising income by building upon community support and goodwill and increasing our income generation from fundraising events and individual giving. We will also continue to seek support from charitable trusts and foundations and other potential sources of income including contractual work.

Financial Review

We do not charge our clients for our services to ensure that we are accessible to all. However, we do encourage donations if clients feel they are able to support our charity. We fund all of our services through voluntary donations and grants.

Despite being unable to progress with our community fundraising, our overall income has remained fairly consistent with the previous year, decreasing slightly from £169,996 (2019/20) to £168,021 (2020/21). Our expenditure has increased slightly rising from £157,927 (2019/20) to £158,673 (2020/21). This was mainly due to additional staff costs being incurred. The end reserves balance increased by £9,348 as a result of deferred income being released into the accounts.

Grants and donations from charitable giving organisations continue to be our primary source of income. In June 2020, our three-year grant from The Henry Smith Charity towards the costs of running *THE SWING* came to an end. Fortunately, we were able to reapply for continuation funding and were awarded a further three-year grant of £30,000 per year for the period 1st November 2020 to 31st October 2023. We are extremely grateful to The Henry Smith Charity for their continued support and to Children in Need, whose main grant also ended this year. However, we were awarded a small three-year grant of approximately £6,500 per year from Children in Need, to deliver a series of workshops to groups of students at various schools.

Our National Lottery Community Fund which supports the running of our adult bereavement support service *'Let's Talk'*, is due to end in January 2022. We will shortly be preparing an initial proposal to The National Lottery to hopefully secure continuation funding for a further 3 years, which will include extending our support services further into communities across Walsall.

During this period, we secured £2,273 from the CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund to purchase mobile telephones for staff to enable them to continue to support clients remotely. Additionally, we secured a grant for £36,194 from HM government and The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Fund, which enabled us to purchase safety equipment to make our centre COVID-19 secure and reopen for face-to-face support much more quicker.

At the time of writing this report, we have been fortunate to secure £27,500 (April 21) and a further £36,685 (July 21) from the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This funding is for the charity as a whole to increase the number of support hours we provide. In addition to this, Walsall Council has committed to provide WBSS with a one-off grant of £60,000. The trustees feel that given the current waiting times, these two donations would be best used to employ additional staff on a temporary fixed term contract initially.

Moving forward, we are aware that we need to develop our income base, especially from community support and events. As a small charity, without a dedicated fundraiser, this does remain a challenge. However, we are considering options such as developing chargeable Continual Professional Development packages that can be delivered to other organisations to increase our income.

We are also aiming to set up a fundraising group, hopefully consisting of some past clients to organise fundraising events with some input and guidance from WBSS. Due to the continuing uncertainties around COVID-19, it is not possible to predict to what extent we will be able to develop this aspect of our income at this time.

Principal Funding Sources

The National Lottery Community Fund
This has been the charity's largest funder during 2020/21, with income totalling £52,456 to fund the adult bereavement support service *'Let's Talk'*.

The Henry Smith Charity
During this financial year, we entered our final year of a three-year grant from the Henry Smith Charity for £30,000 per annum. This grant was for *THE SWING*. We reapplied for a further three-year funding for this project in February 2020 and were informed in August 2020 that our application had been successful. We were awarded a further grant of £90,000 to be spread over the next 3 years.

BBC Children in Need
We received £14,712 for *THE SWING* from our three-year BBC Children in Need Main Grant and £4,047 from its Small Grants Programme. We reapplied to their Small Grants programme and were awarded £19,490 over three-years, to deliver a structured three-week therapeutic support programme within schools. We have also reapplied to Children in Need Main Grant programme for three-year funding for salary and associated costs of *THE SWING* Coordinator. A decision on the outcome of our application is expected towards the end of 2021.

Other notable grants
We are grateful for the continued support for *THE SWING* from repeat funders that include The Eveson Trust and The Grantham Yorke Trust, who both donated £5,000. We also received donations of £2,000 from The Souter Charitable Trust, Albert Hunt Foundation, The Saintbury Trust, William Cadbury, and The Roger and Douglas Turner Trust.

The Heart of England Community Foundation Coronavirus Resilience Fund donated £6,000 and The Toy Trust donated £2,597. Both of these grants were awarded for the purchase of resources and materials to support bereaved children and young people.

Community Fundraising and gifts in kind
As a result of the pandemic, community fundraising was drastically reduced this year. However, we are extremely grateful to the people of Walsall who helped us to raise £2,275. We received £432 in donations from clients, £300 from our local Asda, and £150 from St Lawrence church. A further £735 was raised from TSB Walsall and £776 through various fundraising activities by The Crossing at St Paul's. We would like to thank everyone who donated either their time or money to help support us. In addition, £764 was donated through JustGiving and PayPal.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees continue to review the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risk to the organisation, that funding to run the organisation is not secure. The trustees have established a policy whereby the reserves in total that are not invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity, should be up to the equivalent of 6 months of the total anticipated expenditure of the charity.

The level of these reserves has been determined by the need to meet the working capital requirements of the charity. This period represents the necessary amount of time required to deliver counselling sessions to all the clients who are on our waiting list for support and for the charity to carry out all its legal obligations.

At the end of March 2021, the total of the charity's reserves stood at £120,259 of which £49,013 was unrestricted and £71,246 restricted. Expenditure last year was £158,673, however this will increase during the next financial period due to increasing the number of staff. Therefore, the unrestricted free reserves represent 25.3% of our estimated expenditure of £193,764 for 2021/22. This will therefore be equivalent to approximately 3.04 months of the charity's running costs.

The financial strategy of WBSS continues to be that of building unrestricted reserves to meet our 6-month target, through planned cost-effective operational procedures and further fundraising. The Trustees will continue to take all necessary actions regarding the prevailing economic climate.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees are very aware of the need to assess and minimise risks to the operation of the charity. As such, a comprehensive set of policies and procedures are maintained, reviewed, and where necessary, updated to comply with changes in legislation and the requirements of funding bodies. Following the guidance of these policies covers the main risks to the operation of the charity.

The risk of being unable to adequately fund projects is our main concern. In order to minimise this risk, the trustees hope to diversify income streams. Expenditure is constantly reviewed in order to ensure that funds continue to be used effectively

The risk of not supporting clients and volunteers professionally is managed by having a supervision programme in place in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) procedures. It is WBSS's policy that every new volunteer is supported by way of an obligatory training course followed by induction, prior to client contact time. Staff meetings, project meetings, and individual meetings are conducted monthly, and the board of trustees meet at least bi-monthly to review, amend and update working procedures and to eliminate risks. These meetings are held more frequently if required. Disclosure and Barring checks are made every three years for all members of staff, trustees, and potential new volunteers.

General Data Protection Regulation is adhered to as well as Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection policies regarding all work with children and families. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with Health and Safety of all staff, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the centre. These ensure a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. In addition, the regular meetings of the Trustees at the charity's premises facilitate the constant review of the environment in which the charity exists.

COVID-19

As a result of a national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the charity closed its offices on Monday 23rd March 2020 and the Trustees implemented a work from home policy for staff and volunteers. The charity did not furlough any staff to ensure that bereaved clients could continue to be offered support. Trustees conducted monthly meetings via Zoom and regular meetings were held by the staff, also via Zoom, to offer guidance and support to each other.

All face-to-face counselling sessions were suspended and replaced with telephone support. Staff returned to working in the office on a rota basis from August 2020 and our centre re-opened for face-to-face support from September 2020.

The grant of £2,428 received from The CAF COVID Fund allowed us to purchase a laptop and printer to enable the Head of Service to work from home. In addition, we were also able to purchase mobile telephones for all staff to ensure support of clients could continue as cost effectively as possible. Previously, mobile phones were pay as you go.

In August 2020, WBSS also had confirmation that the charity would receive £36,194 from The National Lottery COVID Response Fund, to set up our Community Response Project. This project was to enable the charity to deliver outreach counselling support across Walsall in targeted communities. Unfortunately, due to continuing lockdown restrictions and venues being unable to hire rooms, we were unable to reach out into the community in the way that we had planned. However, this is still a project we plan to deliver because we want our services to be more accessible to those who cannot afford to travel into Walsall town centre or those who are fearful of travelling due to the pandemic. This grant also enabled us to purchase PPE equipment including an infrared thermometer, protective screens, hand sanitiser machines etc. and facilitated the safe reopening of our centre and the safe recommencement of face-to-face counselling support.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Walsall Bereavement Support Service is a registered charity that aims to meet some of the needs of bereaved people within the Walsall Borough. The charity, originally formed as an unincorporated charity in 1998, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4th July 2013 and is governed by a constitution approved by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

Appointment of Trustees, Induction, and Training

The focus of the charity is that of supporting bereaved adults, young people and children. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of these groups are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees the charity has sought to identify members of the community who are willing to use their own experiences to assist the organisation.

The Board of Trustees is well represented by a wide range of individuals from various aspects of the community. Trustees have the power to appoint additional trustees to act jointly with them for all purposes. A trustee whose term of office has expired can be appointed for a further term of office.

Whilst there is no formal induction process in place, all new trustees are invited and encouraged to visit the offices of WBSS in order to familiarise themselves with the organisation and the context within which it operates. The Head of Service will then discuss the following aspects of the organisation with the new trustee and answer any questions arising.

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees members.
- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity.
- The current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.
- Future and objectives of the organisation.

In addition to the above, a copy of the latest Annual Report is given to all new trustees along with a trustee role description, a copy of the constitution, the Charity Commission's Trustee Handbook, the organisation's main policy documents and the latest financial statements.

Organisational Structure

WBSS has a Board of Trustees of at least 5 members who meet at least quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present there are 6 trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Head of Service is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the day-to-day operational management of the organisation in line with the constitution and quality procedures. They are required to attend trustees meeting but has no voting rights.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity's SORP:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity (Accounts Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf on 19th October 2021
by **Jim Green (Chair)**

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Number: 1152724

Registered Office: Office Suite 2
The Crossing at St Paul's
Darwall Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DA

Telephone: 01922 724841 / 01922 645035

Website: www.wbss.org.uk

Trustees:

Chair:	James Green
Treasurer:	Neil Simpson
Trustees:	Dr Robert Crundwell
	Bev Simpson
	Alyson Green
	Elaine Bullen (stepped down 13 May 2021)
	Verity Baker (appointed 11 March 2021)

Employees:

Head of Service	Rhiannon Brown (until Nov 2020) Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
	Bev Richardson (from Nov 2020) Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
Finance Manager	Bev Richardson MAAT
THE SWING Co-ordinator	Sally Robinson Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
THE SWING Counsellors	Amanda Holtham Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP
	Bev Richardson (until Jan 2021) Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP

'Let's Talk' Co-ordinator Ian Davies (from Oct 2020) Dip.Couns. Registered Member BACP

'Let's Talk' Administrator - Claire Hastings (until Apr 2021)
Nikki Preene (from Apr 2021)

Independent Examiner:

Karen Hanlan
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited
12 Waterloo Close
Wellesbourne
Warwickshire
CV35 9JG

Banks:

Barclays Bank
1 Breadmarket Street
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 6JY

Nationwide
18 Bridge Street
Walsall
West Midlands
WS1 1DE

Acknowledgements

Walsall Bereavement Support Service would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following organisations and donors for their financial support during 2020/2021.

- Baron Davenport's Charity
- BBC Children in Need
- CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust
- Charities Aid Foundation Coronavirus
- Edward & Dorothy Cadbury Trust
- Heart of England Community Foundation Coronavirus Resilience Fund
- HM Government & The National Lottery Community Fund Coronavirus
- Matthews Wrightson Charity Trust
- National Education Union (Walsall)
- The Albert Hunt Trust
- The Cole Charitable Trust
- The Eveson Charitable Trust
- The Geoff Hill Charitable Trust
- The Grantham Yorke Trust
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust
- The Saintbury Trust
- The Souter Charitable Trust
- The Toy Trust
- The WED Charitable Trust
- The William A Cadbury Charitable Trust

We would also like to thank the following organisations for fundraising on behalf of Walsall Bereavement Support Service during 2020/2021

- Asda Walsall
- St Lawrence Church
- St Mark's Parish Church
- The Crossing at St Paul's
- TSB Walsall

And finally… many thanks go to all of the volunteers for the skills, commitment, and time that they have contributed throughout the year. Without their support we simply would not be able to provide this valuable service.

Independent Examiners Reported to the trustees of Walsall Support Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Walsall Bereavement Support Service ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on pages 23 to 33.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

3) the accounts do 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.

Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales

Karen Hanlan, Independent Examiner Limited

12 Waterloo Close, Wellesbourne CV35 9JG

Date

19th October 2021

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	Total funds 2020
Income from:		£	£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	1,180	53,247	**54,427**	**77,911**
Charitable activities	2	1,325	109,682	**111,007**	**88,291**
Trading activities	3	2,275	-	**2,275**	**3,212**
Investments – bank interest		312	-	**312**	**582**
Total income		**5,092**	**162,929**	**168,021**	**169,996**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	12,822	**12,822**	**13,007**
Charitable activities		-	145,851	**145,851**	**144,920**
Total expenditure	4	**-**	**158,673**	**158,673**	**157,927**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		5,092	4,256	**9,348**	**12,069**
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		41,433	69,478	**110,911**	**98,842**
Transfers between funds		2,488	-2,488	-	-
Total funds carried forward		**49,013**	**71,246**	**120,259**	**110,911**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	7	3,770	2,718
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	1,609	1,549
Cash at Bank		132,633	131,683
		134,242	133,232
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(17,753)	(25,039)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		116,489	108,193
NET ASSETS		120,259	110,911
FUNDS	11		
Restricted Funds		71,246	69,478
Unrestricted Funds		49,013	41,433
TOTAL FUNDS		**120,259**	**110,911**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Mr J Green, Chair of Trustees Date: 19th October 2021

Principle Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Walsall Bereavement Support Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

Going Concern statement

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the Charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations.

The Charity's business plan shows that the Charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the Trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds

General accumulated funds are unrestricted funds available for general purposes and include funds designated for a particular purpose; the use of such funds remains at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are funds subject to conditions imposed by the donor or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds are raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charity.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor-imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of fundraising activity and includes an allocation of staff costs relating to time spent on fundraising activity.

Expenditure on charitable expenditure includes the costs of project delivery to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support and governance costs.

Principle Accounting Policies (continued)

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Interest receivable

Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts received in the year.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight-line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets, which is estimated at 4 years.

Fixed assets are capitalised when their value exceeds £500.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short-term deposits repayable on or within a three-month notice period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to employee's individual personal pension plans. The employer contributions to the scheme in 2021 were £2,349 (2020 £2,469) and are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Taxation

As a registered Charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Donations & legacies

	2021 £	2020 £
Un-restricted:		
Donations	730	4,111
Grants	450	1,500
	1,180	5,611
Restricted:		
Donations	-	250
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	20,000	30,000
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing	33,247	42,050
Other Charitable Trusts (Hope Group)	-	-
	53,247	72,300
Total	**54,427**	**77,911**

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Un-restricted:		
Training & Support	1,325	1,125
	1,325	1,125
Restricted:		
The National Lottery (Let's Talk)	52,456	52,436
Children in Need small grant (The Swing)	4,047	9,665
Children in Need main grant (The Swing)	14,712	25,065
CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund	2,273	-
HM Government & The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	36,194	-
	109,682	87,166
Total	**111,007**	**88,291**

3. Trading activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Un-restricted:		
Fundraising events	2,275	2,294
Restricted:		
Fundraising (The Swing)	-	78
Fundraising (HOPE Group)	-	840
	-	**918**
Total	**2,275**	**3,212**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

4. Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	-	112,137	112,137	112,528
Fundraising Costs	-	11,105	11,105	8,876
Centre Rent	-	7,800	7,800	11,650
Unit 3 Rent	-	1,897	1,897	-
Room Hire	-	45	45	705
Utilities	-	774	774	-
IT	-	1,881	1,881	1,175
Telephone	-	975	975	494
Stationery	-	162	162	134
Postage	-	1,095	1,095	1,017
Printing	-	898	898	753
Office Equipment	-	1,878	1,878	413
Refreshments	-	3	3	100
Materials	-	637	637	145
Resources	-	251	251	297
Travel / Parking	-	142	142	1,143
Training	-	1,574	1,574	2,369
Supervision	-	4,913	4,913	4,600
Assessment	-	975	975	1,440
Client Support	-	120	120	75
Volunteers	-	-	-	-
Publicity	-	1,206	1,206	852
Insurance	-	2,010	2,010	1,941
DBS Checks	-	452	452	366
Legal & professional Fees	-	1,508	1,508	1,276
Bank Charges	-	100	100	190
Covid-19 PPE	-	2,547	2,547	-
Sundries	-	283	283	4,672
Depreciation	-	1,305	1,305	716
	-	**158,673**	**158,673**	**157,927**

Resources Expanded

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising Costs	-	12,822	**12,822**	**13,007**
Direct Costs	-	105,858	**105,858**	**99,455**
Support Costs	-	37,789	**37,789**	**41,122**
Governance	-	2,204	**2,204**	**4,343**
	-	**158,673**	**158,673**	**157,927**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

5. Net expenditure/income for year

Net income is stated after charging:	2021 £	2020 £
Independent Examiners fee	890	890
Depreciation	1,305	716
	2,195	**1,606**

6. Staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries	105,435	103,604
National Insurance	4,353	5,494
Pensions	2,349	2,469
Total	**112,137**	**111,567**

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2020: nil).

The equivalent of 3.82 full-time members of staff were employed during the year (2020: 3.93)

Key management personnel comprise the Head of Service and the Finance Manager whose employee benefits total £39,779 (2020 £46,468).

The charity does not operate its own pension scheme but contributes towards NEST Pension scheme for all employees.

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits in the year (2020: None). No trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year (2020: None).

There are no further related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	16,049	2,182	18,231
Additions	2,357	-	2,357
At end of year	**18,406**	**2,182**	**20,588**
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	13,331	2,182	15,513
Charge for the year	1,305	-	1,305
At end of year	**14,636**	**2,182**	**16,818**
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2020	2,718	-	2718
At 31 March 2021	**3,770**	**-**	**3,770**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

8. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	1,109	1,049
Rental Deposit	500	500
	1,609	**1,549**

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	1,581	890
Deferred income	16,172	24,149
	17,753	**25,039**

Movements in deferred income are as follows:

	£
At beginning of year	24,149
Released to income in year	(24,149)
Deferred in year	(16,172)
At end of year	16,172

Deferred income relates to funding received in advance of project activity.

10. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	3,770	-	3,770
Current assets	45,243	88,999	134,242
Current Liabilities	-	(17,753)	(17,753)
Total	**49,013**	**71,246**	**120,259**

Fund balances at 31 March 2020 were represented by:

	Un-restricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	-	2,718	2,718
Current assets	41,433	91,799	133,232
Current Liabilities	-	(25,039)	(25,039)
Total	**41,433**	**69,478**	**110,911**

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

11. Movement in funds

	Balance at beginning of year	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance at end of year
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Restricted funds					
The National Lottery	7,443	52,456	(44,799)	-	**15,100**
Let's Talk	250	-	-	-	**250**
The Swing	49, 324	30,650	(29,383)	-	**50,591**
The Henry Smith Charity	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	**-**
BBC Children in Need – small grant	746	4,047	(4,793)	-	**-**
BBC Children in Need – main grant	769	14,712	(15,481)	-	**-**
Grantham Yorke	388	-	-	-	**388**
St James's Place	7,316	-	(7,316)	-	**-**
HOPE Group	3,242	-	(45)	-	**3,197**
The Toy Trust	-	2,597	(877)	-	**1,720**
CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund	-	2,273	(1,801)	(472)	**-**
HR Government & The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Fund	-	36,194	(34,178)	(2,016)	**-**
	69,478	162,929	(158,673)	(2,488)	**71,246**
Un-restricted funds					
General fund	41,433	5,092	-	**2,488**	**49,013**
Total funds	**110,911**	**168,021**	**(158,673)**	**-**	**120,259**

Transfers between funds relates to expenditure on capital items funded by a grant.

The National Lottery Community Fund is the final year 3 of a three-year grant. This enabled us to provide support to bereaved adults under the project name of Let's Talk.

The Swing provides counselling support to children, young people and families. Funding is provided by various charitable giving organisations and grant providers.

The Henry Smith Charity is year 1 of a new three-year grant towards The Swing project.

Both BBC Children In Need grants ended during this year, they were part of a three- year grants towards salary costs associated with The Swing.

St James's Place provides funding for a third counsellor working with The Swing.

Grantham Yorke provided funding for sessional workers to support bereaved children and young people as and when required.

HOPE Group (formally the Bereaved by Suicide Support Group) provides monthly support to the families who have lost loved ones as a result of suicide.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

The CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund enabled to charity to purchase electrical equipment to enable staff to work from home more efficiently.

The Coronavirus Community Support fund, funded by HM Government &The National Lottery Community Fund partnership enabled the charity to buy PPE and equipment to ensure the centre was covid secure as well as pay towards costs in increase the charity capacity and assist with core costs.

General funds consist of unrestricted reserves brought forward, general donations and fundraising; they may be used for any charitable purpose as deemed by the trustees.

2020 funds	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds				
The National Lottery	5,084	52,436	(50,077)	**7,443**
Let's Talk	-	250	-	**250**
The Swing	48,001	32,128	(30,805)	**49,324**
The Henry Smith Charity	-	30,000	(30,000)	**-**
BBC Children in Need – small grant	653	9,665	(9,572)	**746**
BBC Children in Need – main grant	645	25,065	(24,941)	**769**
The Wesleyan Foundation	7,288	-	(7,288)	**-**
Grantham Yorke	463	-	(75)	**388**
St James's Place	-	10,000	(2,684)	**7,316**
Hope Group	2,600	840	(198)	**3,242**
	64,734	160,384	(155,640)	**69,478**
Un-restricted funds				
General fund	34,108	9,612	(2,287)	**41,433**
Total funds	**98,842**	**169,996**	**(157,927)**	**110,911**

12. Controlling Interest

The Charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

13. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total funds 2020
Income from:				
		£	£	£
Donations & legacies	1	5,611	72,300	**77,911**
Charitable activities	2	1,125	87,166	**88,291**
Trading activities	3	2,294	918	**3,212**
Investments – bank interest		582	-	**582**
Total income		**9,612**	**160,384**	**169,996**
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		-	13,007	**13,007**
Charitable activities		2,287	142,633	**144,920**
Total expenditure	4	**2,287**	**155,640**	**157,927**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		7,325	4,744	**12,069**
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward		34,108	64,734	**98,842**
Total funds carried forward		**41,433**	**69,478**	**110,911**