



**Walsall Bereavement
Support Service**

Reg. Charity No. 1152724

Walsall Bereavement Support Service

Annual Report 2021-2022



**Helping local people to cope with
the impact of bereavement and loss**

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

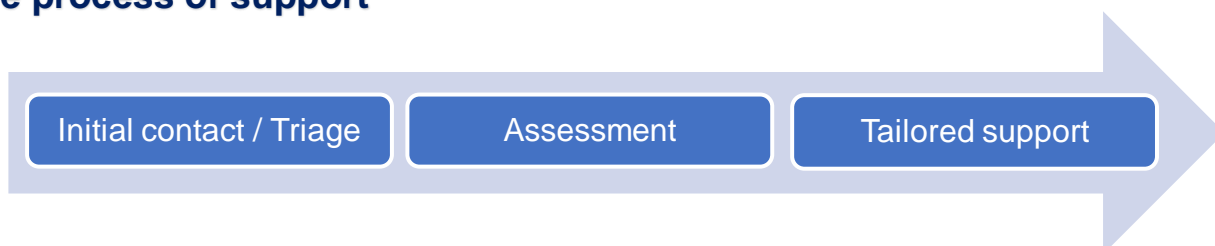
Group Support **HOPE** - Specialist support for adults bereaved by suicide
Complex Grief - Specialist support for adults experiencing complex grief
Parental Grief - Specialist support for parents bereaved of a child

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'

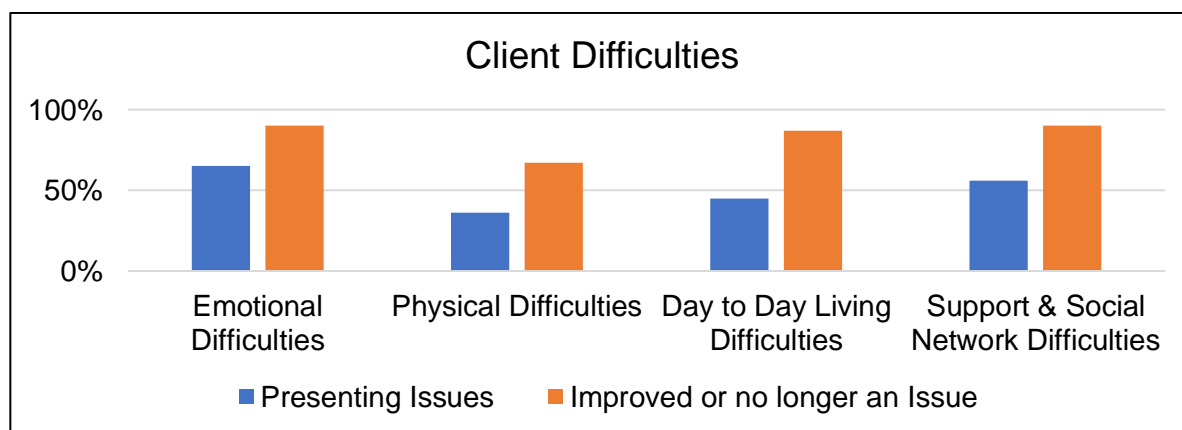
The people who turn to WBSS for support are unable to cope with the overwhelming feelings of grief that they are experiencing and the impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

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.

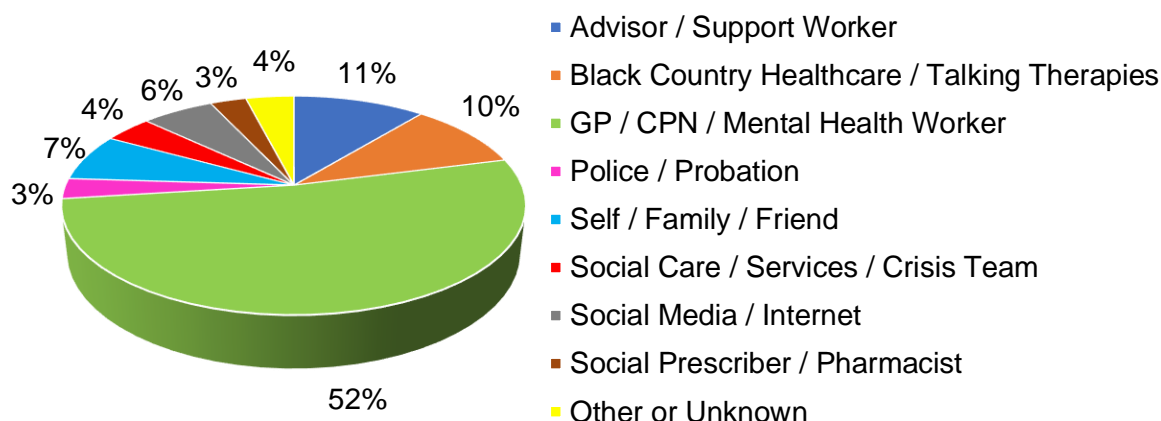
10% of adults supported felt suicidal at the point of referral.

31% of adults supported had complex grief needs.

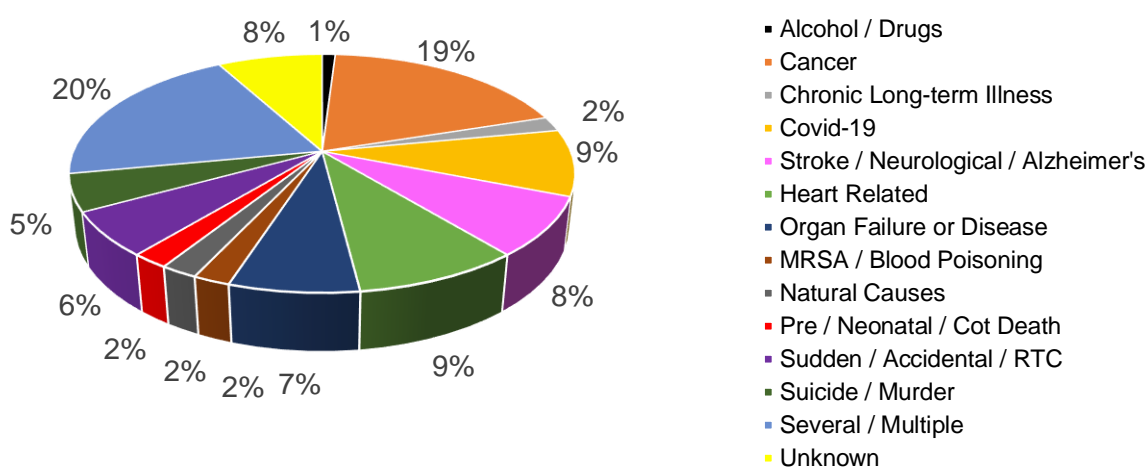
19% of adults supported had experienced several or multiple losses.

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

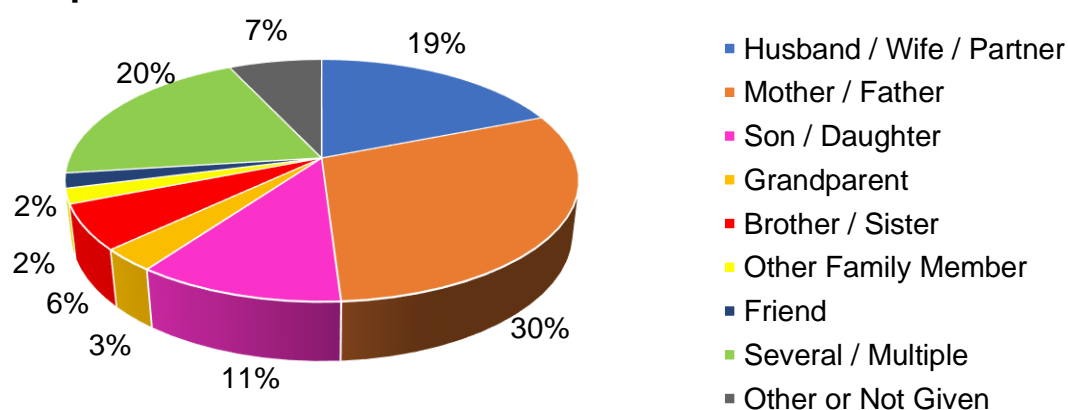
Referrals source



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 - Helping Others, through sharing Personal Experience. 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

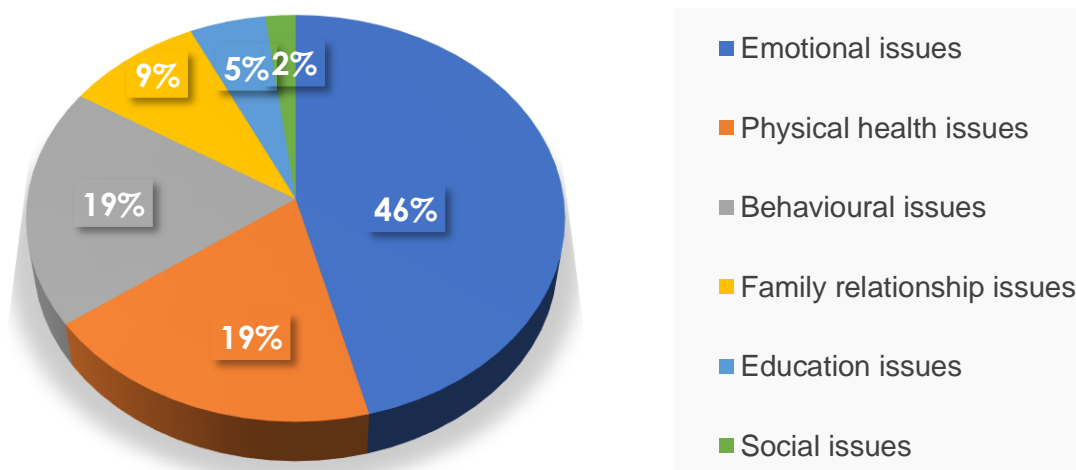
Children/young people referred to our service are struggling to understand or manage their reactions to grief, which can lead to psychological/physiological difficulties.

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

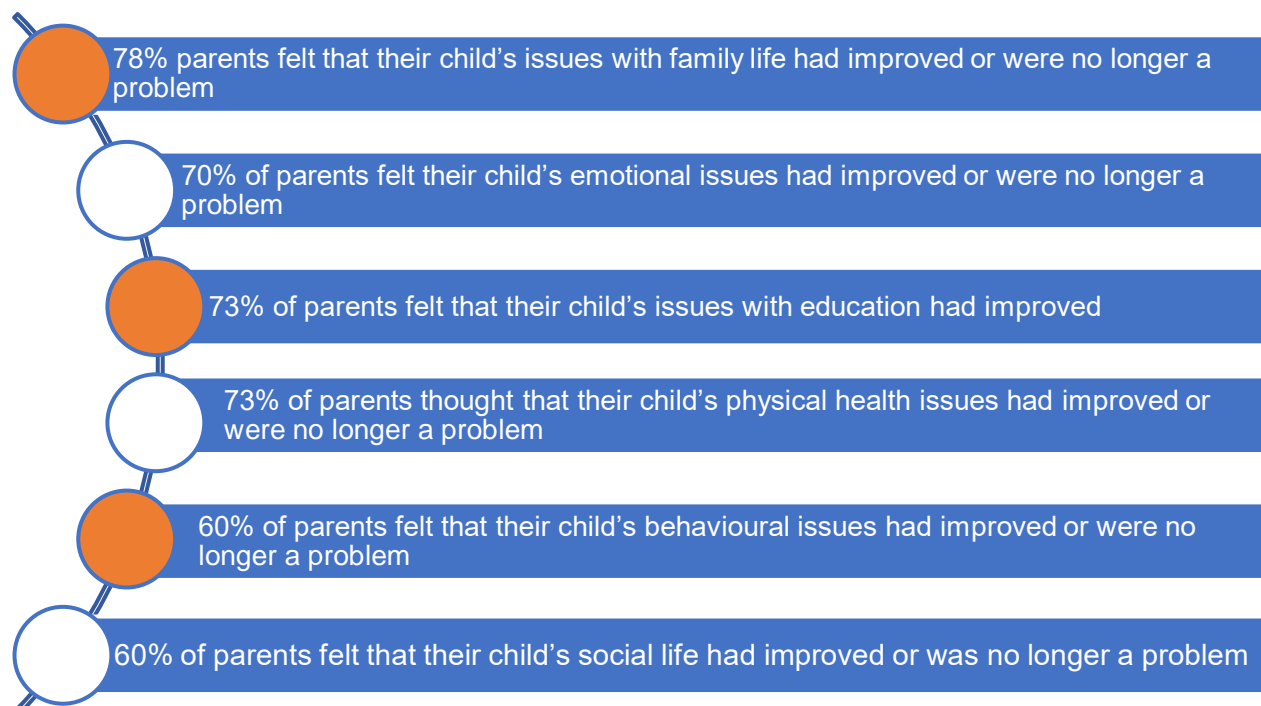
78% felt that their emotional symptoms had improved/were no longer an issue for them

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



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 been 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	Nationwide
1 Breadmarket Street	18 Bridge Street
Lichfield	Walsall
Staffordshire	West Midlands
WS13 6JY	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 Charitruist
- 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

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

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
	<u>2,953</u>	<u>1,180</u>
Restricted:		
Donations	-	-
Grants		
The Henry Smith Charity (The Swing)	30,000	20,000
Other Charitable Trusts (The Swing)	48,447	33,247
	<u>38,447</u>	<u>53,427</u>
Total	<u>81,400</u>	<u>54,427</u>

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	-
	<u>164,245</u>	<u>1,325</u>
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
	<u>44,728</u>	<u>109,682</u>
Total	<u>208,973</u>	<u>111,007</u>

3. Trading activities

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

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 ringfenced 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

		Un-restricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total Funds 2020
	Note	£	£	£
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