



## TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT

**01/04/2025 - 31/3/2026**

### ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

#### Trustees

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Sue Morgan       | Chair of Trustees |
| Steven Walder    | Treasurer         |
| David Shaw       | Secretary         |
| Theresa McCaskie | Safeguarding team |
| Brenda Soar      | Safeguarding team |

### REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER

1192034

### REGISTERED ADDRESS

Mind Over Cancer  
PO Box 290  
ROYSTON  
SG8 1FP

### ACCOUNTANT

The Union Building  
51-59 Rose Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 1BY

01603616300

### BANKERS

CAF BANK  
25 Kings Hill Avenue  
Kings Hill  
West Malling  
Kent  
ME19 4JQ

### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGAMENT

Mind Over Cancer is a Charitable Incorporated organisation where the only voting members are its charity trustees. It is governed by a foundation model constitution.

## A Message from our Chair of Trustees

This year we celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> year and as we head towards our 6<sup>th</sup> year we know that we cannot stand still and be happy with the status quo. The charity needs to grow in order to reach more young people and their support system who have been affected by cancer. We have shown that we can make a huge difference, we have positive results from the sessions that we provide. We know that the system that we have set up is robust, safe, and provided by professionals who are expert in this field. Everything is in place to grow and reach a wider audience.

This past year has seen us reach the magic (for us) £100,000 funds raised and money in the bank. This makes the running of the charity easier with less concern about the funds available to us. Grant applications have continued apace, and some are successful, but the process is getting harder and more competitive, making it more difficult to get money.

This coming year, alongside the day-to-day work, is dedicated to reaching other charities who also work with young people with cancer but do not provide this specific psychological support. We know that other charities provide other aspects of care and support, and we are uniquely placed to dovetail into their services. We have shown this with our unique partnership with Ellen Macarthur Cancer Trust, where we support young people who have been on sailing trips with them. Support has been offered away from EMCT, in a safe and confidential space, and we are about to enter our 4<sup>th</sup> year with them, helping many young people. We have positive results and commentary from young people. We know this works.

This charity is run by our indomitable Founder and Head of Services Susie Shaw. Her energy and enthusiasm and hard work keep this charity alive and running and is our only employee. There is some invaluable support from Lesley, who works on applying for grants for us, over five years she has managed to be successful to the tune of £100,000. We thank them both for their hard work and dedication. None of this would happen without them. But we realise that we cannot continue to work with such a small workforce, and our next strategy would be to get money to employ a fundraiser.

As ever we are indebted to the work and support from our Board of Trustees, who are totally committed to ensuring that this charity succeeds and to supporting Susie.



Sue Morgan MBE MA RGN RSCN

## Our Impact in 2024–2025

During 2024–2025, Mind Over Cancer continued to provide specialist psychological support for young people living with cancer, those rebuilding their lives after treatment, and the families who support them. Our services are available to anyone diagnosed between the ages of 0 and 29, whenever they are needed, recognising that the emotional impact of cancer rarely ends when treatment does.

Where possible, we capture the impact of our 1-2-1 counselling using two recognised mental health assessment tools, the GAD-7 and PHQ-9, completed at the beginning and end of the counselling course. The results we have been able to capture continue to demonstrate positive improvements in people's mental health and wellbeing, providing valuable evidence of the difference our support can make.

### Specialist Support Delivered

Over the year, we delivered 473 hours of specialist one-to-one online counselling, offering up to 11 sessions for each individual experiencing significant emotional or psychological distress. Alongside this, 15 drop-in support sessions provided flexible, timely support for young people who needed advice, reassurance, or a safe space to talk without committing to longer-term counselling.

### Peer Support and Partnership Working

In partnership with the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust (EMCT), our eight-month online support programme brought together 21 young people from across the UK. Each participant received approximately 48 hours of facilitated peer support through monthly sessions focused on the emotional realities of life after cancer, practical coping strategies, and the reassurance of knowing they were not alone.

Beyond our regular services, we engaged with 40 young people at events hosted by charity and NHS partners. These opportunities helped raise awareness of the ongoing psychological impact of cancer recovery and introduced young people to the support available through Mind Over Cancer.

We also supported 14 individuals who did not require our services directly by listening to their needs and signposting them to more appropriate specialist organisations. This ensured they could access the right support at the right time.

### Who We Supported

While the majority of referrals continue to be young people who have completed cancer treatment, our work demonstrates that cancer affects entire families.

During the year we supported:

- 29 young people through one-to-one counselling, ranging from those currently receiving treatment to survivors more than five years post-treatment.
- 10 parents (five mothers during treatment and five mothers after treatment), alongside two fathers.
- Two siblings, one during treatment and one after treatment.
- One grandparent and one partner, recognising the wider emotional impact of a cancer diagnosis on loved ones.

Our support groups welcomed 21 young people aged 14 to 24+, creating safe spaces where teenagers and young adults at different stages of recovery could learn from one another's experiences.

**\*\*Significantly, for the fourth consecutive year, the largest group accessing our one-to-one counselling service were young people who were more than four years beyond the end of their cancer treatment. The second largest group were those in their first year after treatment had finished.**

This consistent pattern continues to reinforce one of the key principles on which Mind Over Cancer was founded: the need for lifelong access to psychological support. Recovery from cancer is not linear, and emotional wellbeing does not follow the same timeline as physical treatment.

As young people move through adulthood, they often encounter new life stages - returning to education, starting careers, building relationships or thinking about having children. These milestones can trigger new questions and emotions linked to their cancer experience. Many are also living with complex late effects of treatment, navigating ongoing health concerns, uncertainty and changes to their identity.

Importantly, we recognise that many mental health difficulties, including trauma-related symptoms, may not fully emerge until months or even years after treatment has ended. As young people's brains continue to develop into early adulthood, they are often only later able to process the life-changing experiences they have endured. Our data continues to demonstrate that support must be available whenever individuals are ready to access it, rather than being limited to the period immediately following treatment.

## **What Young People Tell Us**

Although every person's journey is unique, common themes have emerged throughout the year.

Young people currently receiving treatment described the overwhelming emotional impact of diagnosis, the challenge of managing treatment alongside everyday life, and the uncertainty of what lay ahead.

For those who had completed treatment, support focused on life beyond cancer. Many experienced ongoing health anxiety, low mood and difficulties processing everything they had been through. Others struggled with questions of identity and purpose, asking, *"Who am I now?"* and *"What does my new normal look like?"*

Many also spoke about the hidden impact of cancer, including managing late effects, returning to education or employment, rebuilding friendships, navigating NHS follow-up care and feeling misunderstood by those around them who expected life to return to normal.

Parents and family members frequently needed space to process the trauma they had experienced themselves. Feelings of anxiety, sadness, overwhelm and uncertainty were common, reinforcing that cancer affects the whole family, not only the individual diagnosed.

## Looking Ahead

The experiences of those we supported this year continue to reinforce why lifelong psychological support is essential. Whilst medical treatment may come to an end, the emotional impact of cancer often continues for many years.

Mind Over Cancer remains committed to ensuring that no young person - or the people who love and support them - has to face those challenges alone.

## Life After Cancer: Creating a Space Where Young People Feel Understood – our partnership with Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust

Thanks to the generous support of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust, Mind Over Cancer continues to be their charity partner and this year has delivered their 3<sup>rd</sup> eight-month psychological support programme for young people living with the long-term impact of cancer. Over the course of the programme, 21 young people accessed regular online group support, alongside three participants receiving one-to-one counselling and three accessing additional drop-in support sessions.

While cancer treatment may come to an end, the emotional impact often continues for months or years afterwards. This programme provided something many participants told us they had never experienced before: a safe, understanding community where they could speak openly with others who truly "got it".

Throughout the eight months, one message was clear – young people continue to face significant psychological challenges long after treatment finishes. Feelings of survivor guilt, anxiety, low mood, uncertainty about identity, the impact of late effects, frustrations with healthcare systems, and the pressure to return to "normal" were common experiences. Participants also spoke about navigating education, employment, relationships and the hidden realities of living with chronic fatigue and other invisible effects of cancer.

Rather than trying to "fix" these experiences, the programme created a compassionate space where young people could share honestly, normalise their feelings and learn practical strategies to support their wellbeing. Together they explored coping techniques, developed personalised wellbeing plans and identified trusted people they could turn to when life became difficult.

Alongside acknowledging loss and uncertainty, the programme also celebrated the strengths that many young people had developed through adversity. Participants recognised increased resilience, empathy, confidence, communication skills and a renewed appreciation for life – qualities they often described as their own "superhero powers".

### The Power of Being Understood

One of the greatest impacts of the programme was reducing isolation. Many participants had never previously spoken to another young person who had experienced cancer.

As one participant shared:

*"There's a huge amount of guilt that melts away when you realise, 'Oh, that's not just me that finds that difficult, that's normal.' This is such a unique benefit of this programme that I've never experienced elsewhere." – Frances, 27*

Another reflected on the lasting emotional impact of the support:

*"Mind Over Cancer helps you overcome these demons in a safe, no judgement environment. It has taken a hidden weight off my shoulders." – Morgan, 19*

Participants consistently described feeling less alone, more hopeful and better equipped to manage the ongoing realities of life after cancer.

### **Support That Doesn't End When Treatment Ends**

Recognising that recovery is not a fixed journey, every participant was encouraged to continue accessing support beyond the programme. Each received a personalised wellbeing package, practical resources and information about future support, reinforcing that they could return whenever they needed to. Importantly, young people from previous programmes continue to access Mind Over Cancer's drop-in sessions, demonstrating the lasting relationships built through our services and the importance of flexible, lifelong psychological support.

We are grateful to the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust for making this partnership possible. Together, we are ensuring that young people don't simply survive cancer - they have access to the understanding, confidence and emotional support they need to move forward with their lives.

## **Working groups**

We continue to members of the CYPC (Children's & Young People's Cancer Coalition) and Cancer52.

## **Financial Review**

**Grants** – This year we were successful in receiving grants from several organisations, including the Postcode Lottery, National Lottery, The Albert Hunt Trust and Alan Boswell to name a few. We are forever grateful for the continued support from these organisations as well as others.

**Community** – Although this remains as a small part of our income, we hope to see this grow as the charity does.

**Supporters** - We continue to grow our community and looking for opportunities to engage with more people.

## **Patrons**

Our three Patrons, Remi Rough, Anna and Richard Park, continue to play an invaluable role in supporting Mind Over Cancer. Through their ongoing commitment, they help us raise much-needed awareness of our work and generate vital funds to enable us to continue providing support to young people and their families affected by cancer.

## **GIFTS IN KIND RECEIVED**

We continue to have our website hosted by Flock design/Angel Fernandez with no charge to the charity.

## **RISKS IDENTIFIED**

All risks are documented in the risk register and reviewed bi-monthly during Trustees Meetings under the Risk Agenda item. Major risks, as listed below, are currently mitigated to a safe, manageable level.

Inability to generate sufficient income to deliver services – reviewed on a quarterly basis via Trustee meetings.

Operational Risks (Staffing) – Reviewed bi-monthly via Trustee meetings.

Compliance with GDPR – GDPR policy in place to manage this – reviewed annually.

Compliance with Safeguarding – Safeguarding policy in place – reviewed annually, and Trustee Safeguarding Lead identified – standing item on bi-monthly Board agenda.

## **POLICIES**

Equality and Diversity and inclusion

Safeguarding

GDPR

Management of risks – reviewed bi-monthly at trustee meeting.

Conflict of interest – reviewed bi-monthly at trustee meeting.

Complaints

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** (staff/volunteers)

We continue to have one full time employed member of staff who oversees the running of the charity and leads on service delivery, and one part-time/self-employed fundraiser. We are looking to work with a fundraiser soon.

Our counsellors are all self-employed who we access via a third party. We have recently changed our third-party counselling partnership.

**DECLARATION** – chair and one other trustee

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

**SIGNATURE 1**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Morgan'.

**NAME – S. Morgan      DATE – 01/09/2026**

**SIGNATURE 2**

*S. Walder*

**NAME – S. Walder      DATE – 01/09/2026**