



Impact Report

2022



HOPE



in a changing landscape

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**Trustees:** Simon Clarke, James Culling, Hannah Parrish, Sara Jenkins, Helen Donovan, Alex De Araujo, Drew Gibson, Lesley Broughton





# Welcome

## Message from our Chief Executive and Chair

This year provided a chance to start moving on from the challenges from the pandemic that the previous two years brought, with lockdowns that had such an effect on the ways we worked and tested the emotional resilience of our communities.

There were glimmers of hope as people started to re-connect and were able to regain the factors and relationships that support their mental health and wellbeing.

In addition, we saw considerable growth and development in the organisation which allowed Mind BLMK to provide a wider range of options to support our communities, but also opportunities to work and volunteer for us.



BEING BETTER  
TOGETHER

Due to the growth, we have had to transform systems and processes to support a larger organisation, providing a wider range of services, including investing in new roles to increase skills and capacity in the workforce necessary to provide our services.

We have also developed new partnerships and continue to benefit from our relationship with NHS providers, local authorities and fellow community and voluntary sector providers as well as those businesses and individuals who chose to support us, including our dedicated workforce and Trustees.

Looking forward, we are excited about launching our new organisational strategy in the first quarter of 2023, which will guide us through the next 3 years and ensure we continue to meet the needs of our communities through providing effective services and recruiting, retaining and developing the highly skilled and experienced workforce on whom we rely.

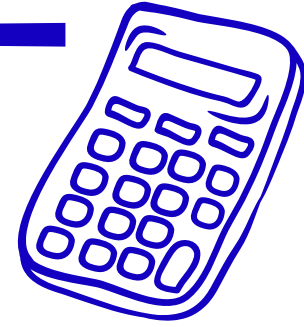
We believe in “Being Better Together” and would like to thank those who use our services for helping guide us and shape our services and strategy this year.

Chair





# A year in numbers



## 1:1 Support

**6,590**  
welfare calls, mentoring & counselling sessions were delivered

## Group Sessions

**1339**  
groups delivered in the Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes area

## Training

**2,674**  
people received mental health & wellbeing training



**22,970**  
hours of support delivered

## HQ Support

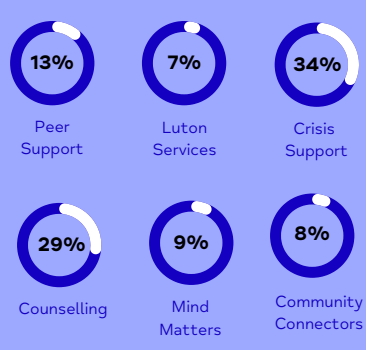
**4,278**  
calls were answered by our HQ team which equals over 6 days of support

## IN 2022

We supported

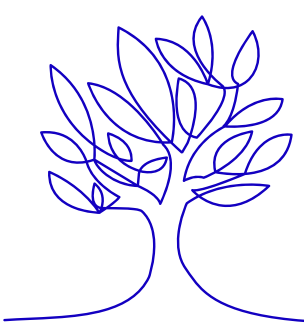
**6,193** individuals

How have we supported them?



**1,500**  
Referrals were received

We've had a busy year as we navigate our way through face-to-face and virtual support. Our Crisis Cafe are seeing significant numbers through the doors, and we now look to our transformation program for the roadmap ahead.





66

If it was not for the service that Mind offers at Florence Ball House, I believe that I would not be here today. While this statement sounds dramatic it is the hard truth and for this, I am extremely grateful. 99





# Our Services

Our local services relate to individual and corporate mental wellbeing across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.

We provide a range of support for individuals including Crisis Support, Peer Support Groups and Mentoring, as well as specialist groups such as supporting people who are graduates of the Dialectical Behavioural Therapy.

## Mentoring

Our mentoring services provide one-to-one support, helping people to achieve their goals.

## Peer Support

Our Peer support service brings people with a similar lived experience together to provide emotional, social or practical help to each other.

## Mind Matters

These discussion groups cover topics relating to mental health, including depression, anxiety, self-esteem, self-confidence and goal setting. The groups provide support in a safe, confidential and non-judgemental environment within which participants can discuss their well-being.

## Luton Wellbeing Centre

A drop-in daytime centre offering a range of services aimed at promoting mental health recovery, wellbeing and independence. This includes one-to-one support and groups.

## DBT Graduate Peer Support Groups

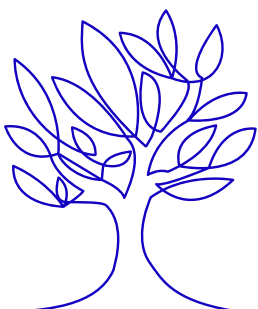
These groups are specifically for those who have completed DBT skills training or who are about to graduate from the DBT skills course.

## Hoarding Support

Hoarding support offers help to those who struggle with hoarding. It aims to improve their safety, quality of life and emotional wellbeing. The programme is delivered through weekly CBT based peer support groups, followed by six weeks of further one-to-one support with a trained volunteer.

## Training

We offer a unique range of business training programmes focused on mental health and wellbeing, with everything from recognised qualifications such as Mental Health First Aid, right through to bespoke sessions tailored to business needs.





## Crisis Support

Open 365 days of the year, this evening drop-in service is for anyone (18 years old or above) who feels they're in crisis or are experiencing mental distress. We also have our Crisis Recovery Service, which aims to provide not only immediate support, but also in managing individuals' wellbeing in the long term.

## Suicide Prevention Pathway Service

A single point of contact, connecting those with suicide ideation and mental health and wellbeing needs to specialist support from voluntary and community sector organisations and other services.

A service for individuals not at immediate risk of suicide but may require support to improve their mental health/wellbeing.



**Our door**

**Is always open!**



## Community Connectors

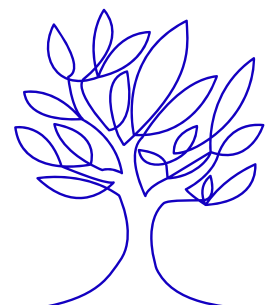
Community Connectors work with people to understand what could improve their mental health by supporting them and connecting them with their local communities. Turn to page 10 to read more.

## Counselling

Counselling for individuals who are struggling. Our counsellors are fully trained, have regular ongoing professional development opportunities and are fully supervised and supported.

## Milton Keynes Bereavement by Suicide Support Service

Mind BLMK understands that there are many practical issues that need to be carried out after a passing. These may seem confusing and be a cause of anxiety. Mind BLMK can offer support and information to help with this.







**Mind BLMK helped me get  
my life back together**





# Donna's Story

**In March 2020 my mum passed away. I had lived my whole life at home with my mum & had cared for her the last 3 years as she had dementia, and I was totally devastated.**

COVID had just begun, it was terrible. There was no funeral and my mum's ashes were delivered to me on my doorstep. From there onwards my mental health spiralled out of control. I'd had anorexia many years before, but it had returned to the point of being life threatening. Luckily for me I had great support from my dad & brother.

My brother has his own mental health issues and was attending a Mind group. He kept telling me to join and 6 months later I did. I couldn't believe the difference it made to my life. The staff are not only professional, but they are also genuinely so caring and knowledgeable due to their own lived experience.



**It has completely changed my life. It gave me hope listening to all the other stories from the other service users.**



**TOGETHER WE CAN  
CHANGE THE FUTURE**



## NEW ADVENTURES

Finally, I realised I wasn't alone, I wasn't completely mad, and I really connected with both staff & service users. It's what keeps me going and I honestly believe I wouldn't be here without them.

When I was at my lowest and feeling suicidal, Mind BLMK came to my rescue once again and referred me to the 'Suicide Prevention Pathway Service.' They literally saved my life, and I cannot praise and thank the 'Mind' group enough.

I have written a letter to Caroline Lewis explaining my gratitude & praise for the entire Mind group who has passed it on to the staff.

I'm still recovering thanks to Mind and attend a group twice a week, but wish they ran more sessions in my area as they keep me going.





# Community Connectors

**Life as we know it can sometimes be very challenging and knowing how and where to access support can make a huge difference.**

As part of the local offer to transform mental health services it was assessed that there was a need for non-clinical roles working alongside the NHS workforce. These Community Connectors work with people to understand what could improve their mental health by supporting them and connecting them with their local communities.

We chat to both Joshua Russell and Luke Newman who work within the blended NHS community mental health team in Biggleswade. They support people who need community group assistance in their mental health illness recovery. This could be from an initial GP assessment or near the end of their more complex support, where community groups will help them moving forward.

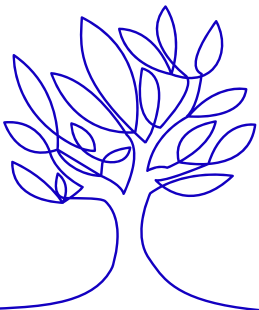
• **So, what does a normal day look like for a Community Connector?**  
• Every morning, Joshua and Luke join a triage meeting with Psychiatrists, Primary Care Practitioners, Pharmacists, Occupational Therapists, Social Prescribers and more. They discuss referrals from General Practitioners, Police, and other professional services to look at the care that people require. This could be from an initial assessment for more professional support, a medication review, signposting to community groups, or even a combination of all of them.

• When assigned, the Community Connectors will then contact the person to carry out a risk assessment to learn about their life and their previous and ongoing struggles. But they will also ask about their hobbies and interests. What do they like doing? For instance, it could be sports, television, reading or art.



**JOSHUA RUSSELL**

**Support Sessions**  
**486**  
1:1 support sessions were provided by our community connectors







### How does a Community Connector determine the right course of action for a service user?

The Connectors will conduct a DIALOG + questionnaire. This is a scale of 11 questions, where the individual will rate their satisfaction, from low to high, with eight life domains and three treatment aspects on a 7-point scale.

From the risk assessment and DIALOG + questionnaire, Joshua and Luke can then determine the best and suitable community groups accessible to the individual. This could be a peer support group, controlling anxiety workshop, a mother/baby group or one of many others.

### What happens next?

Over the following weeks, the Connectors will support the individual by contacting them weekly as to how the community groups are benefiting their mental health. They may even attend some of the groups with them to support them further.

When their mental health is at the stage to continue without Community Connector support, Joshua and Luke will reconduct the DIALOG + questionnaire to determine the improvement made by the individual since the initial assessment. The individual is then discharged, safe in the knowledge that there are groups in the community that can keep supporting them.

Support

81

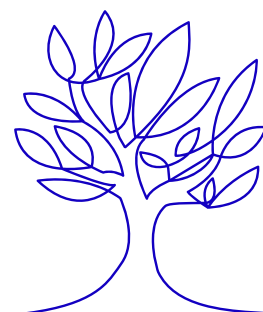
individuals were supported over the last two quarters of our financial year

Thank you

To the Mental Health Transformation Programme who have supported this service over the last 12 months



**“It has completely changed my life. It gave me hope listening to all the other stories from the other service users.”**





## **Donations, Legacies & Fundraising**

Thank you to everyone who has supported us and continues to do so. We couldn't operate without the generosity of our fundraisers, corporates and community. If you want to find out more about fundraising, please contact our Fundraising & Engagement Officer at: [fundraising@mind-blmk.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@mind-blmk.org.uk)



# Donations

Supporting Mind BLMK has never been so easy. The introduction of QR codes and business size cards to take out to events has meant we are able to unlock new revenue potential.



In 2022 our fundraising, corporate and legacy giving total was:

**£192K**



Changing Lives

## Why we need your support

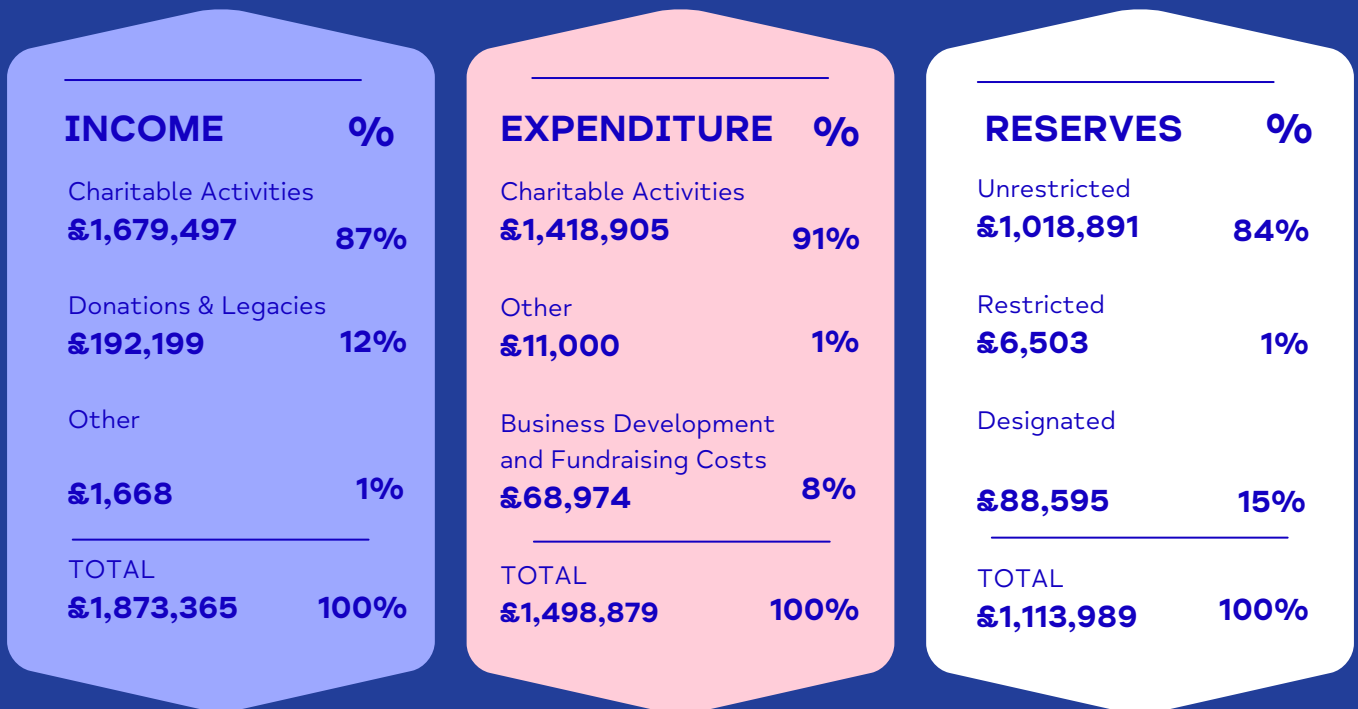
- To enable us to continue running our services
- To encourage more funding towards new projects and services
- To enable growth within our local communities
- To raise awareness within our local area
- To ensure that we are supporting those who need us most across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes

**THANK YOU!**



# How we spend our money

Mind BLMK Figures 2021/2022



## Overview:

The charity made a surplus of £374,486 during the year ending 31st March 2022. The surplus for the year reflects staff recruitment difficulties, some changes to delivery of the Crisis Cafes contracts owing to the Covid19 restrictions for part of the year, the continuing strong performance of the fundraising activities and action taken to curtail expenditure as appropriate to the changing circumstances.

Part of the review of the charity's strategy on funding streams and the need for community plans to tackle mental health will be to identify how a proportion of the surplus can be re-invested back into service.

**Bankers:** Barclays Bank PLC, 111 High Street, Beds MK40 1NJ



## Auditors:

Myers Clark - Chartered Accountants  
Statutory Auditor  
Egale 1  
80 St Alban Road  
Watford  
WD17 1DL





I have always been treated in a dignified way, which is rare these days, had my problems halved, and wasn't made to feel that they were insignificant or irrelevant



Absolute massive thank you for all the help to find a way forward. I no longer feel overwhelmed and like I want to end my life



I have been astounded by the support I have received and the helpfulness, reliability, promptness, dedication of all at Mind



**What people say about us**

# Robert's Story

**I was introduced to Mind BLMK in Luton in 2019. At the time I didn't know what this organisation had to offer me, because at that moment in time, I had nothing to offer them!**

I thought to myself, 'Why would they want to help someone with such a past troubled life; an alcoholic for 41 years, personality disorder, depression, anxiety and horrifyingly had just been released from a 10-year prison sentence.'

Well, nearly 4 years on, Mind BLMK have been my lifeline. Without the support I have received, I would not be where I am today.

In 2022, I have been using my troubled past experience with alcoholism to go around Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire and talk about my issues. I even went to a psychiatric unit to share my knowledge about substance misuse, which is now an ongoing project.



**I would never have had the confidence to do anything like this without the support of this wonderful organisation and its dedicated staff members.**

Mind BLMK of Luton have not only been supportive of this new adventure, but also without them by my side, I don't know how I would have integrated back into society.

They helped me to assess my weaknesses and strengths and to get myself back into adult education.



**MY EXPERIENCE  
STRENGTH & HOPE**

They explained how I could develop new relationships and how better I could serve the local community.

During the 4 years I have attended the Luton Wellbeing Centre, the staff have always been so kind and friendly to all service users. Nothing is ever too much trouble and the projects on offer are second to none.

One of the most important things to me was when we first went into a covid lockdown. Mind immediately set up group zoom meetings that were so important for someone like me living by myself.

I truly don't know where my life would have gone without the help of Mind BLMK. This organisation is so very important for the residents in Luton, even more so with the current climate. Lastly a massive thank you to all Luton Mind BLMK staff.

The name has been changed  
for client anonymity







# Your feedback is important

Feedback from our service users, their friends and family is always appreciated, both positive and negative. It's how we measure our effectiveness or identify areas within our provision for improvement.

## Complaints & Comments

Making a complaint won't reduce or take away your right to use our services and anything you tell us will be treated in confidence.

### We make sure:

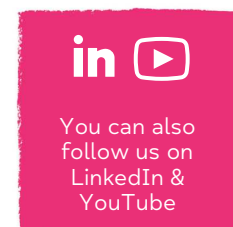
- All parties feel their views have been heard and respected.
- A mutually acceptable solution has been reached.
- Any necessary adjustments have been made to our way of working.



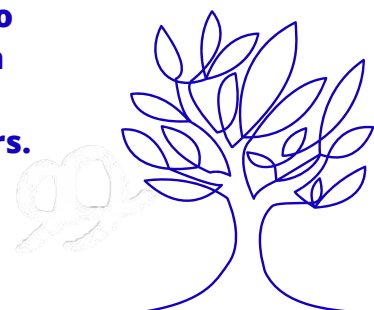
## Social Media

We've listened to what you want, and our social engagement continues to grow across all platforms, as we keep you updated you with news of our support work, our amazing fundraisers' stories and plans for the future.

### Click the icons to follow us:



**Tell us what we do well, what we can improve upon. Your voice matters.**



# Tribute to Steve Horner



IN LOVING MEMORY

**Steve Horner has been a hugely valued volunteer Trustee for Mind BLMK since 2014.**

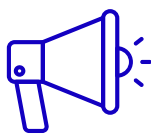
Sadly, Steve recently passed away and his expertise, support and sense of humour will be greatly missed. Mind BLMK benefitted for all these years from Steve's experience as an accountant who, having worked for the NHS, understood the challenges of funding and contracting.

Steve had spent many years supporting multiple charities, and we are so pleased he chose Mind BLMK as one of these. These years of experience meant that we were in safe hands, with someone who could work through complex situations and come up with helpful, practical and sensible solutions.

This was particularly helpful during the rapid growth of the last 2 years. Even as Steve's health declined, he was fully committed to supporting us and still attended meetings; challenging our thoughts to make sure the best outcome for Mind BLMK was achieved.



**Thank you, Steve, it has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside you.**




## Community News

We were delighted this year to receive a visit at our Luton Wellbeing Centre from the Parliamentary Shadow Secretary - Rachel Hopkins for Luton South. She said:



I was really pleased to visit Mind BLMK's drop-in at their Luton Wellbeing Centre today. It was great to meet Aaron and the team and talk to some of the people who use their services.

I enjoyed learning more about the range of services Mind BLMK provide, whether it is providing essential crisis support or just a safe place to pop in for a chat. 

**73%** of those who accessed Luton services felt less isolated





There is an inner calm that's  
bought through words



## POETRY

### Healing through words

Eamon, a Mind BLMK service user, found just how powerful words can be when he attended a poetry workshop way back in 2017.

Since then, Eamon has written around 90 poems and says:



**Poetry has helped me deal with my mental health challenges. Somehow writing distracts me and helps lift my mood. If one person somehow finds a connection with what I've written that helps and encourages them that would be great!**

### Potential

by Eamon Kugenieks

Even in your most desperate, deepest moments of despair, when all seems lost, and life feels so unfair

There is always a way to find a chance to cope...there is scope... even from the tiniest glimmer of hope..

Just as your mind has found its darkest, depths of doubt and it is so much easier to wonder...what is this life all about?

But maybe just maybe you can find a way to lift your bowed head... just high enough to see the slightest possibility of what may lay ahead?

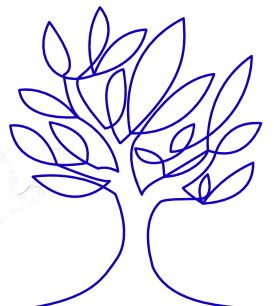
Yet at that moment the darker it gets, it reminds me of the saying:

"The darkest hour is just before dawn" and gives me hope, for that darkest hour...to become a new day, ready to shine to its glorious full potential



In the words of Madonna


**Express yourself!**



# Supporting mental health and wellbeing across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes

## Mind BLMK

The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick MK45 1AH

 [www.mind-blmk.org.uk](http://www.mind-blmk.org.uk)

 [hq@mind-blmk.org.uk](mailto:hq@mind-blmk.org.uk)



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Registered charity number: 1068724 Registered company number: 3511342