

# Annual Review 2023-24



# 2023-2024 in numbers:

**80** volunteers

**2095** volunteer hours

**3,339** calls leading to 820  
internal referrals

**580** people supported at  
mental health support sessions

**101** support sessions delivered

**893** meals provided

**55** people supported  
through green social prescribing

**940** people accessed  
community training

**301** people accessed  
Mindfulness and Relaxation  
for Menopause courses

**268** peer group sessions

**70** people supported through  
peer support

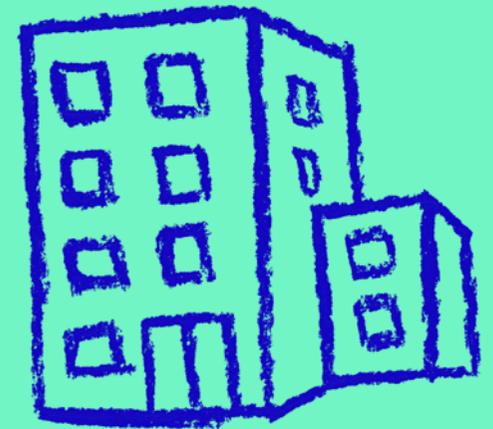
**1933** people accessed advice

**£1,685** million generated  
in additional income

**133** volunteers recruited across  
the Manchester Volunteer Advice  
Partnership (MVAP) project

**100%** MVAP volunteers  
reported increased level of skills due  
to training and volunteering

**3175** people contacted  
to access physical health checks



**71** people supported through discharge from Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)

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**1933** people reported improvements in relationships and engagement activities

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**380** young people supported in schools

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**106** young people received peer support

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**90** young people were supported as they were leaving care

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**566** young people accessed counselling

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**284** adults accessed counselling

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**37** people received support through our newly relaunched Listening Ear service

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**7,581** minutes of emotional support through Listening Ear

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**100%** of women completing the Mums Matter course reported improved wellbeing

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**95%** of peer support group members said they have increased their ability to manage their mental health through attending the groups

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# Welcome to our 2023/2024 Annual Review

This year represented the first full year of our new strategy – **Making it Easier to Ask for Help**. It sounds simple, but it is anything but. We continue to be in the middle of a well-reported mental health crisis where there are more people asking for and not getting the help they need. People told us that knowing where to go to get help was often overwhelming as their experience was being directed to one place then the next and very rarely a destination. When we spoke to staff and volunteers they said what they wanted to do was not more, although that would be nice, but based on existing resources, what they suggested was that we focus on doing things better, in order to make it easier for people to ask for help.

**This meant first and foremost valuing our staff and volunteers**, ensuring that we supported wellbeing at work and ensured that there was good access to training and supervision.

Secondly, we needed to **strengthen our whole person approach**, ensuring that our services and internal systems worked with people to get the right help and that everything was connected.



Thirdly, we need **to be influencers for better mental health services**, working locally or with partners and national Mind, as well as supporting and empowering people who use our services to influence as well, both within Manchester Mind, locally and nationally.

Finally, **we need to be sustainable**, this means money but it isn't all, it is about good governance and ensuring as a charity we are well run and comply with all our legal obligations. But then yes it also means money, so it includes our ability to fully fund our services, that we continue to fundraise to ensure we are able to deliver more and our employer training, which supports mental health in the work place but also aims to make a profit to support our local services.

**It also means we are able to demonstrate our impact for the 11,000 people who had contact with Manchester Mind in this year.**

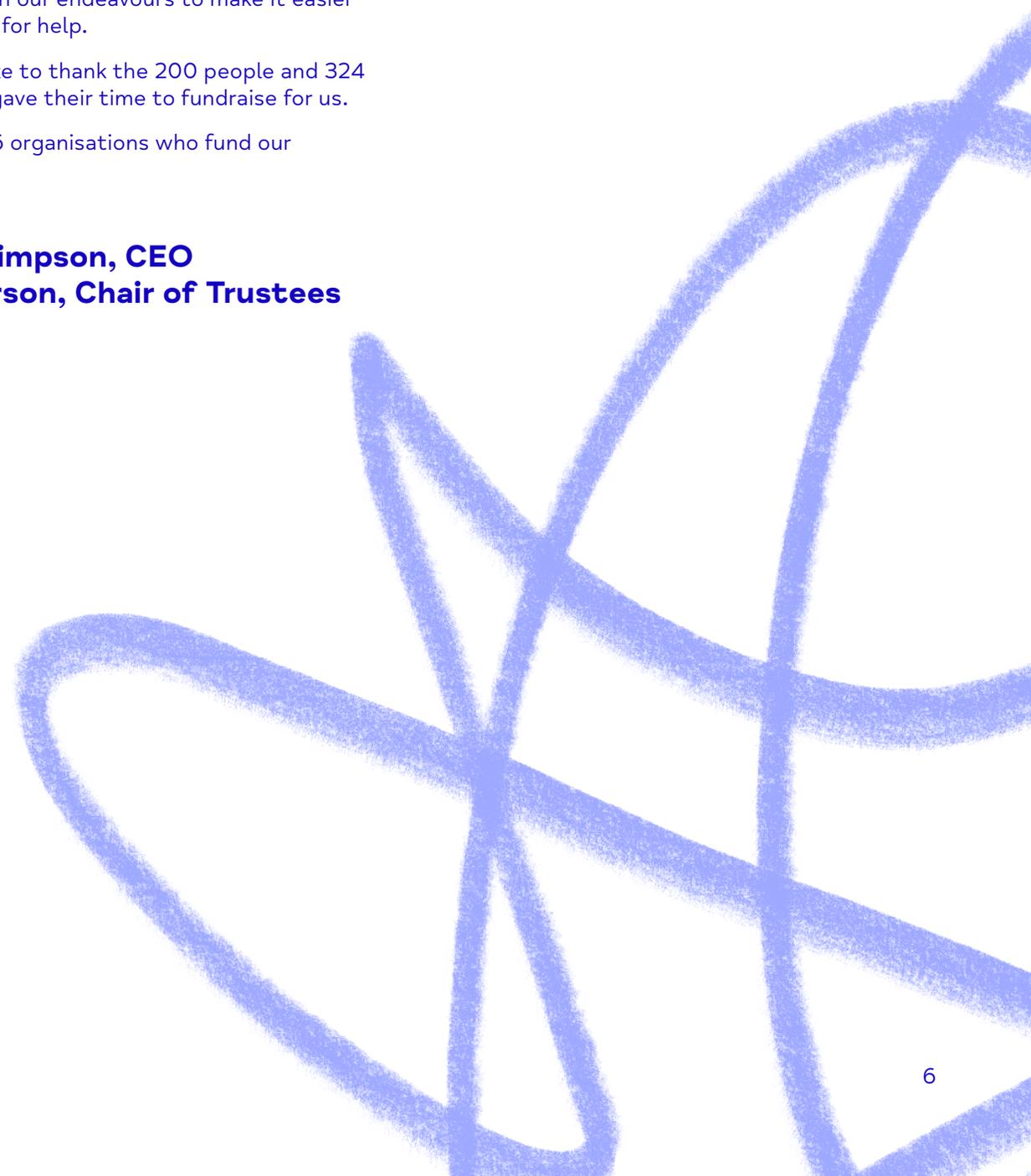
Demonstrating impact isn't always easy, we tell our story and the story of people who use our services and the staff who deliver them, but we also need data. This year has seen an improvement in our systems and therefore the quality of the data we can use to show impact. Therefore, **in this report you will see the numbers as part of the story.**

Before we move onto that, we would just, as always, want to thank our 82 staff and 80 volunteers who helped this year in our endeavours to make it easier for people to ask for help.

We would also like to thank the 200 people and 324 businesses who gave their time to fundraise for us.

And finally, the 16 organisations who fund our services.

**Elizabeth Simpson, CEO**  
**Rachel Pearson, Chair of Trustees**





# Welcome to the Welcome Team

In September 2022 we invested money fundraised the previous year to develop our Welcome Team – it is the first frontier in enabling people to find it easier to ask for help. Before the welcome team, getting through to us was not as good as it should have been and it was a priority for us to improve the start of the journey. By April 2023 our still relatively new Welcome Team had made a huge impact.

**“You took the time to gather a load of information and put it all in an email. You listened and heard me. I really appreciate it”**

**– caller to Welcome Team**

The Welcome Team took **3320 calls in 2023/4. 3320 individuals reached out for help by turning to and calling Manchester Mind**, for whatever reason, whether it was to speak to an advice worker, or whether they had never opened up about their mental health before and felt they needed to, whether they wanted to make a donation, find out about a job vacancy or whether they felt so vulnerable that they had nowhere else to turn – over 3000 calls were made to us, each of these calls are met with the same consistent and caring approach.

One person at the other end of one of those phone calls was Janiyah. Janiyah called in October, really distressed and low in energy and motivation, and with no one to

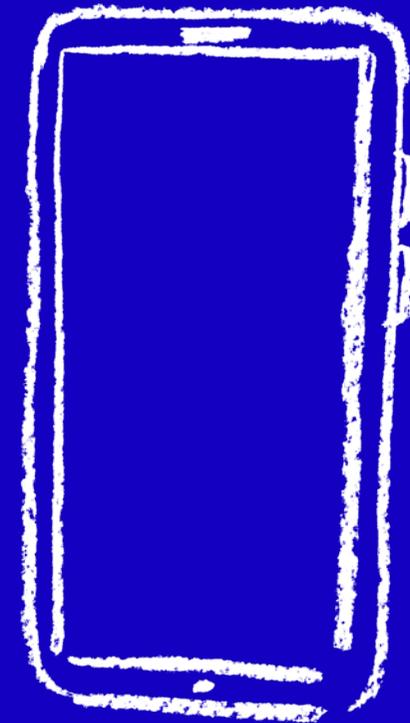
talk to. She had come to the UK in the previous year as a student, had little communication with her family and had struggled to make friends amidst her studying. She felt like she didn't know what to do next, and **so she called us**. We spoke at length, for about an hour, and were able to build a good rapport and by offering emotional support, active listening and kindness, by the end of the call we had completed a counselling and a listening ear referral, this way she would be supported by listening ear whilst waiting for counselling. During this time Janiyah was able to build her confidence up to eventually being able to join the peer support groups, which as a more permanent avenue of support, she still attends to this day. That is one call - three services.

Internal referrals play an extremely important role in the work the welcome team does – of the 3320 calls last year, 819 new referrals were made to our services -

**“Getting access to mental health [support] is very difficult and you guys made it easy”.**

That's 25% of people who called us were able to find at least one appropriate service within Manchester Mind that they felt would help them, which is what we want to do. Having an accessible and consistent phone service makes accessing the services a little bit easier.

**Sian Carroll,  
Welcome Team Officer**

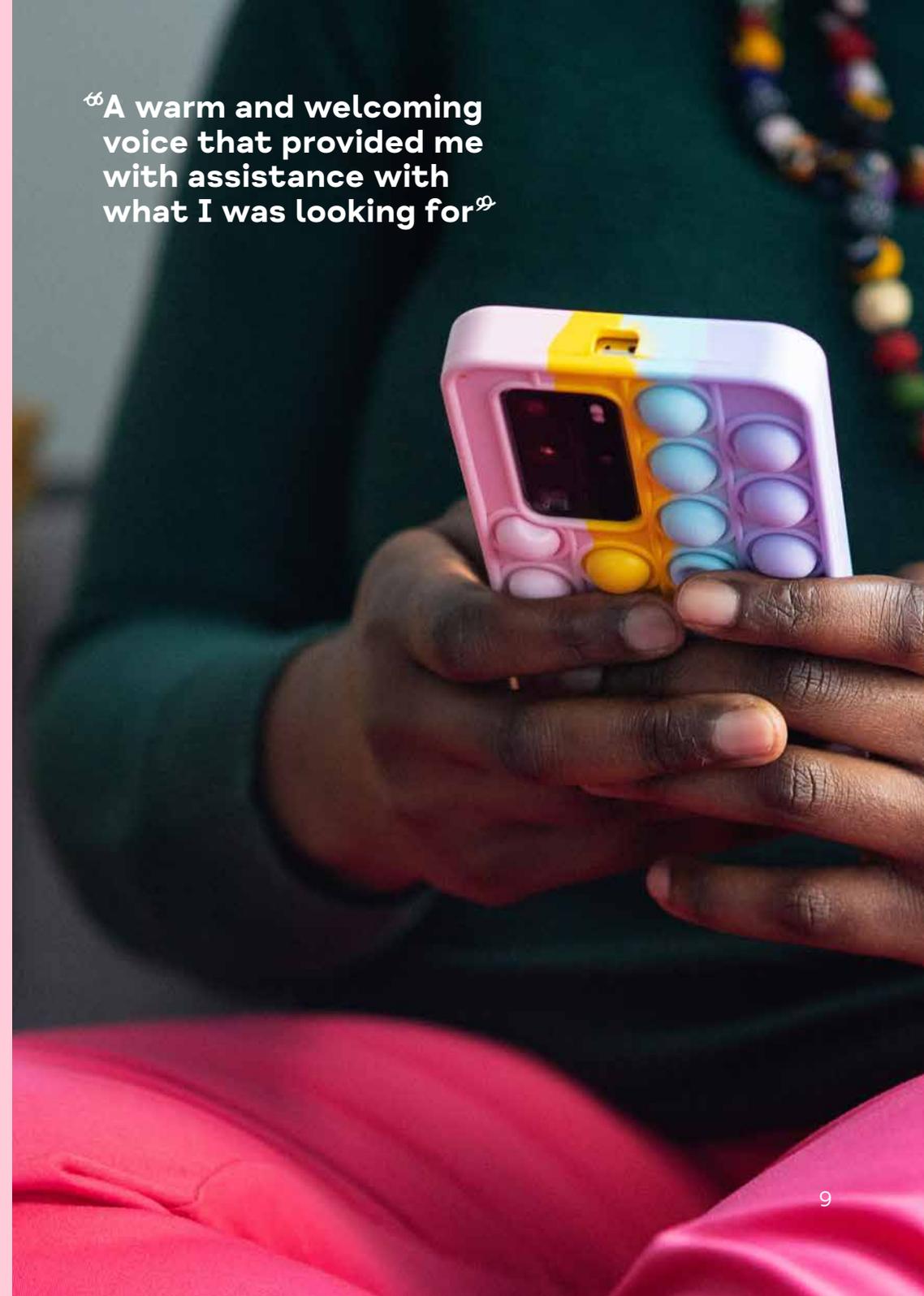


# The impact of a Listening Ear call

As part of the development of the Welcome Team there was a relaunch of our Listening Ear service. It had fallen into abeyance due to lack of capacity, but we still found that people were needing something, either because they were lonely and needed someone to talk to or it helped whilst people were waiting for counselling, or as the case study below shows after counselling had finished. 37 people received 7,500 minutes of emotional support.

**The Welcome Team were approached by the Counselling Team regarding a person that they were supporting. Gina's counselling was coming to an end and she asked if she could receive further emotional support. The Listening Ear Service was able to offer this and Gina was assigned a Listener who started supporting her the week after her counselling ended. Initially she said it was difficult to build rapport over the phone so the Listener offered a video call, which made all the difference.** Gina actually said that she found the sessions more helpful than counselling. Gina said during one of her calls that she was anxious about signing a new tenancy lease due to the duration and her not being sure if she wanted to remain in the house for a further 12 months. Her Listener offered to run this past one of our welfare advice triage workers to see if this was something they could advise on. Gina was appreciative of this and sent the contract to her listener. The Advice Worker then contacted Gina. Further along Gina also spoke about an inheritance she was due – again we could book her an advice appointment to relieve her anxiety. So, Listening Ear, offered the combination of emotional and practical support.

“A warm and welcoming voice that provided me with assistance with what I was looking for”





# Marketing by Numbers... In 3,2,1... If only it was that easy!

When I was asked to write something about how I use numbers in my role I thought “Oh well that is easy because I use numbers all the time”.

But then came the realisation that **what I actually have to do is use a lot of assumptions and conjecture because the numbers only tell half a story...** Frustrating? Yes... very. How can I use the numbers to show the very real, human impact that our communications have in supporting the people of Manchester with their mental health?

What I hope to do is multifaceted. But broadly speaking I want to raise awareness of Manchester Mind, so people in need can access support via our range of services and our self-care online hub, I want people to know about any volunteer or job vacancies, inform people about our workplace training, and encourage people to support our work through donations and fundraising. **Ultimately, I want to play a part in making it easier for people to get the help they need.** I hope that once people engage with us they will stay connected with us in some way, including joining our mailing list or following our social media channels. I hope that by evaluating the numbers I can see which communications are working best and then focus my attention on them to keep our messages targeted and relevant to the people we aim to reach. But often is it not easy to track these engagements, so we have to interrogate the data.

Here is a sample of some numbers from 2023/2024:

Online users up  
**150.5%**

New users up  
**147.8%**

Engagement time up  
**23.5%**

Social media followers  
across all channels:

**25,500**

Wellbeing checklist downloads

**464**

Google Grant AdWords –

**9.54k**  
Clicks to website

**114k**  
times adverts were shown  
on Google

**3.11k**  
conversions\* (action completed  
from an advert)

Engagement time up  
**23.5%**

\*Including 86 calls (other actions include newsletter sign ups, visiting our JustGiving page and making enquiries).

**So, what does this all mean?  
What we know:**

- We know that people use our website, then call us and access our services as is shown in our Peer Support story on page 14
- We know people visit our social media accounts or website and then decide to donate to Manchester Mind or raise money for us by undertaking a sponsored event
- Most people cite word of mouth as the way they heard about Manchester Mind, followed by our other services and online searches
- We know through our partnership working, people come to us as volunteers and then go onto paid roles in areas such as marketing and advice work
- We know people may hear about our community training courses through our various communications and then once on the course they may access other Manchester Mind services



**“I found my inner peace in the natural environment, observing plants, insects, or little animals and seeing the life cycle of nature going round and round alongside the four seasons. With this idea in mind, I searched online and found Manchester Mind providing gardening sessions to support those people at risk of mental health problems.”**

This story was recently shared by a new member of our team demonstrating what we also know... that people visit our website for support and become volunteers and can end up volunteering in many areas of Manchester Mind. In this instance during a year-long period this person accessed our gardening sessions, became a volunteer in two of our services and then joined our team.

**Communications shape and change lives!**

**Sam Harwood, Marketing and Communications Manager**

# Community Services count

**The Community Services Team reached 940 new people across 7 small projects delivered by 9 members of staff and 22 volunteers who gave 1,101 hours of their time.** Many of the volunteers had previously accessed courses or groups within the projects and wanted to give back as part of their own journey.

**559 people accessed 66 weekly courses and workshops around wellbeing, self-care, mindfulness and resilience.** Specifically, 256 women accessed Mindfulness and Relaxation for Menopause tasters and courses, with those who accessed the 8-week course reporting a 20% improvement in their ability and confidence in managing the impact of menopause. **Additionally, 33 mums, with a child under the age of 2, attended the 8-week Mums Matter course and overall reported a 17% improvement in their wellbeing.**

“I never realised how patient I am, that I’m actually a good mother” **Parent supported by Big Manchester**

“**Mums Matter has been a lifeline for me, sometimes literally, at a time when I have felt the saddest, loneliest and most vulnerable... It’s a safe space to meet other mums who may also be struggling and to bond with them**”

– Mums Matter course participant

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“**I have been calmer and less anxious - I feel I have gained insight into the reasons I react in the way I do to difficulties I encounter and am able to rationalise them much better - it’s been almost life changing for me to be able to cope**”

– Menopause course participant



**“Because of you I have hope  
that things can change”**

**“Manchester Mind have  
been the only ones who  
listened to me”**

**“I feel I benefitted more  
from three sessions of this  
course than I would in 55,000  
sessions of therapy”**

Bringing Minds Together course participant

**“Peer support for me is a lifeline... that I find invaluable...  
I wouldn't know what to do without the people involved”**

**Peer Support Group member**

**70 people accessed 268 peer support group sessions delivered online and in community venues and parks across the city.** 45% were new group members over the year and the remaining maintained their attendance to keep well. 61 additional phone check-ins took place and 11 referrals were made into other Manchester Mind services. As a result of attending over 90% of people said they had increased ability to manage their mental health, felt less isolated and had increased ability to cope with their day-to-day life.

**60 people were supported by the Mental Health Link Worker based in the Council's Adults Early Support Team with 22% being referred into Manchester Mind services for welfare advice, counselling and peer support.**

**“On the day we first spoke I was sleeping and couldn't move, but now my eyes are open and I'm taking action”  
Person in contact with the Mental Health Link Worker**

**Laura Edwards,  
Community Services Manager**

**“I will take away lots of the things I have learnt and be a calmer person for doing so. I will pass on that self-acceptance and kindness to those around me, too. The course will not only help me, but those I come into contact with”**

– Mindfulness for Stress course participant



## Peer Support Group: A personal story

“I have had different periods of my life where my mental health has been poor, and despite therapy and at times medication helping, in my 30s **I felt like I wanted to be able to talk openly about my mental health with other people.** Although I have friends and family I talk to, some things felt harder for them to understand from the things I have experienced. I had gone through a really stressful and distressing time at work and had taken a few months off sick, during that time I had counselling but it had also brought up things about my past and mental health. **I felt I wanted to talk about more and feel less alone. I did a search online for mental health support and found the peer support with Manchester Mind.** After chatting with Manchester Mind about it and seeing if it was the right thing for me, I joined a weekly group online.

When I first joined the group, I was feeling really fragile but also not sure what to expect. Thankfully everyone in the group has been incredibly welcoming and supportive. **Being able to share my thoughts and feelings with other people has given me a sense of belonging and acceptance, and has been very comforting to hear from other people about their experiences as we all check in and share how we are doing.** With this I have been learning a lot about myself because people are open and able to share their own experiences in a safe space. I’ve made the peer support group part of my own routine to help my mental health, and know especially if I’m not feeling great I always feel better after a session. Since joining the group I’m feeling a lot more settled in myself with the mutual support and connection I have.”

# 15,000 feet in the air! The day we did a skydive



Over the years many people have given up their time to fundraise for Manchester Mind, people who have been brave, kind and generous. **So early in 2023 we thought we should follow their example, get a team together and do what?**

On the 25 October 2023 **12 Manchester Mind staff members willingly jumped out of an aeroplane that was hovering at 15,000 feet in the air. Yeah... you might want to read that again!**

Back in June 2023 the suggestion of doing a group skydiving fundraiser was mentioned, and surprisingly it wasn't completely dismissed. A few people were, unexpectedly, on board with it. The suggestion was opened up to all staff, and we ended up with a strong team of 12 brave staff members. Elizabeth, Sharon, Joanna, Sian, Jing Yi, Finn, Hannah, Catarina, Fi, Marianne, Sam M and Sophia were confirmed. And so, the suggestion became ideas that were bounced to and from one another. Those ideas eventually became plans, the date was booked, taxis organised, schedules cleared and fundraising pages created. **On the 25 October, it was all of a sudden not just a plan. It was real. It was actually happening!**

We had all spent the last 2.5 months talking eagerly about it to each other, our families, our friends, our colleagues, and anyone else we could muster up some donations from. A mixture of excitement, nerves and adrenaline flowing through the conversations.

Finn had set us up with both individual and team Justgiving pages, where we could compare and keep track of how much money we were raising, not that it was a competition of course! **With a target of £200 each to raise, we went above and beyond –Joanna, Elizabeth and Marianne raising over £800 each. The target was smashed by a total of £3187 and everyone met their individual goal. Our final amount raised was an incredible £5,586.** We all knew how much of an impact this money would have on helping us to run our services at Manchester Mind, supporting 11,000 people each year.

**Our skydive challenge felt miniscule in comparison with those who struggle with their mental health every day.**

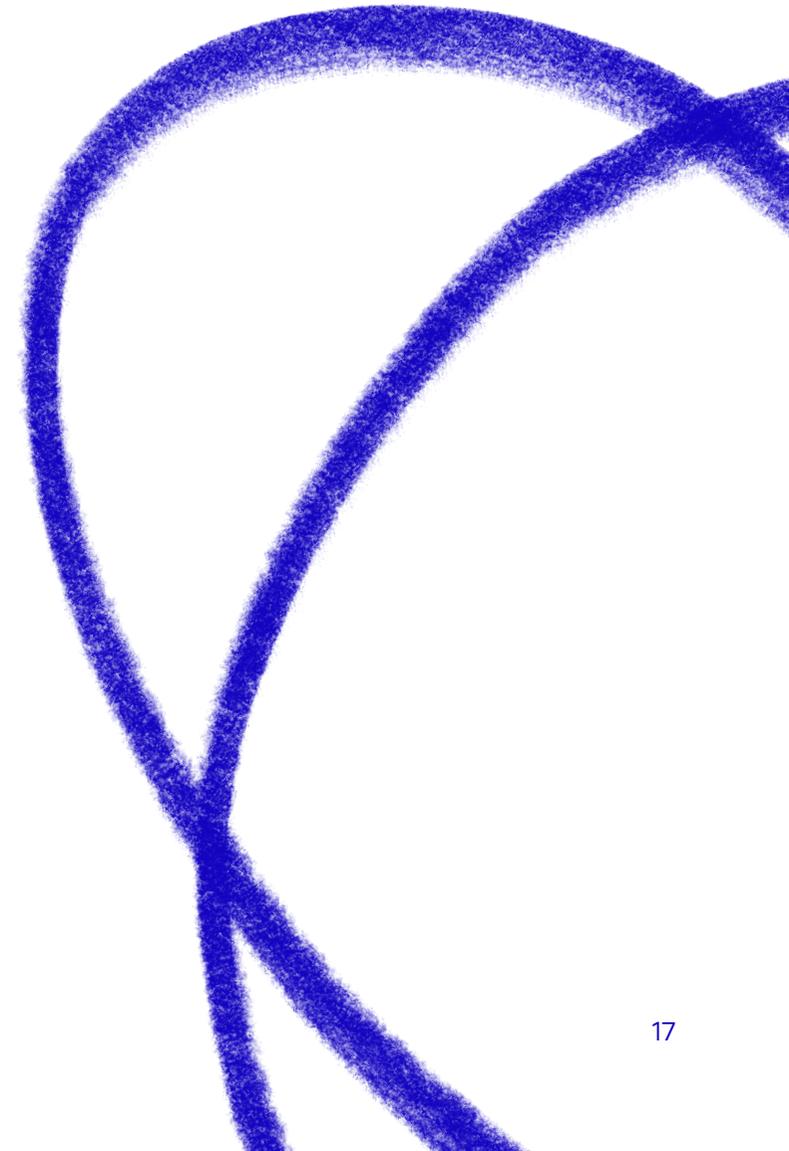
After a **5am** start and **55 miles** travelled, it was 8am and we were in Lancaster, about to do it. It had been a miserable week, with clouds and rain and low temperatures cursing the North West of England (naturally). But when we arrived it was to a beautiful sunrise indicating a bright, clear, sunny autumnal day with clear skies providing beautiful views for miles, even before we got up in the plane. From up high, you could even see as far as the coast. Things were falling into place, the nerves were settling (we won't speak for everyone on that actually), and the weather served as subtle confirmation that this was meant to happen, we were meant to be here. **The day ran as smoothly as hurtling towards the earth at 120 mph for 3 miles could. We went up in the tiny, and at times claustrophobic, aircraft in small groups – watching our peers disappear out the plane before us.** Friends and family and the other skydivers watched from the floor, looking out for the specific colours of our parachutes and shouting animatedly when someone was close enough to identify, cheering them on, despite it being impossible for them to hear us. It really felt like a day of togetherness, it's so much easier to face daunting challenges when you know you're being supported by your caring peers. **All together we covered 180,000 feet with over 100 minutes spent in the air between us, and not to forget a total of 2 bottles of prosecco drank to celebrate and round off a 10-hour day before heading home, still on a high. Though I'm not sure how we'll ever quite reach those highs of 15,000 feet again.**

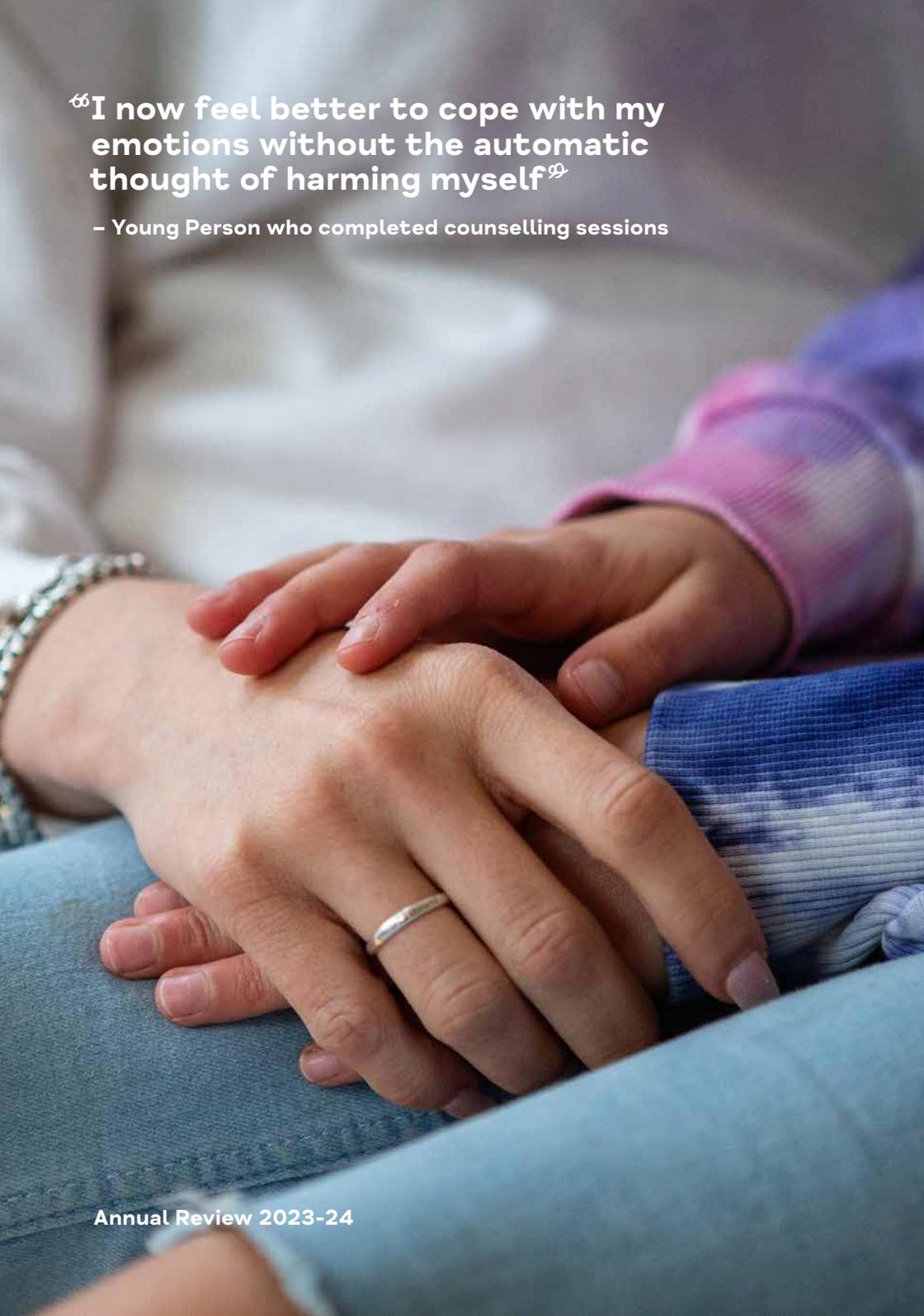
**A reflection from a reluctant skydiver.....**

“When I signed up for the skydive I didn't give that much thought (but then I don't about most things). On the run-up to the day, we got sent an email about what to expect and the realisation started to sink in.

On the day it was a very early start and then all of a sudden, I was up in the first plane... From then all it all happened so quickly but I remember it being the most terrifying, freeing and ecstatic experience I have had. Would I do it again? Most probably not but I loved every minute of it and I felt I was among friends”

**Finn Logue, Fundraising Officer  
and Sian Carroll, Welcome  
Team Officer**





“I now feel better to cope with my emotions without the automatic thought of harming myself”

– Young Person who completed counselling sessions

## Collating the impact of our Children and Young People (CYP) Services

We all know that there are huge increases in demand for mental health support for children and young people. **We saw an increase of 42% in referrals coming to us from May 2023 – April 2024.** We receive referrals from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), GPs, local organisations, universities, internally from other services in Manchester Mind and of course lots of self-referrals through advertising our services and word of mouth. Due to the demand we are trying to increase the services we offer to meet the needs of the young people.

**Our mental health practitioners work across 9 schools in Manchester and they have seen 380 young people who attended a huge 1996 sessions.**

This was the first proper full year of the Staying Close project supporting young people in the care system into independent living and working collaboratively with Manchester City Council, Wythenshawe Community Housing, One Manchester Housing, Northwards Housing along with residential care homes The Beehive and The Lodge.

**A 29.5% increase in CYP Counselling referrals (677 referrals made), compared to 466 in 2022-23 again demonstrates the significant growing demand for young people who are reaching out to us for mental health support.**

We were able to meet this growing need by revamping our counselling model through recruiting experienced qualified volunteer counsellors, and also providing placements for trainees, whilst still being able to oversee the service through our Team Leader and our employed counsellors.

**Our Young People's Peer Support Development Worker is the link between community and schools having raised awareness of mental health to 250 people in schools whilst also supporting 18-25-year olds in community peer support groups.**

The demand for young people to access mental health support is evident in these figures. This could be the impact of Covid-19 and the lockdowns including disruption to education, isolation, family life and social impacts. It may also be due to the impact of social media, societal pressures and the cost-of-living crisis. Regardless of the reasons, the demand for more mental health services is ever-increasing.

Our figures also support the data nationally that the increased demand for mental health provision for young people is significantly needed more than ever.

**Sharon Doyle, Service Manager:  
CYP and Counselling Services**

**42%**

increase in referrals made to CYP services compared to 2022-23



**29.5%**

increase in referrals made to CYP Counselling compared to 2022-23





# The work of a Mental Health Practitioner in schools

Aisha came to us for support through her school, she is a young person who has been through a lot and with the support from our Mental Health Practitioner you can see, how her feelings and thoughts towards herself and others have started to change.

Aisha was referred by the Year 11 Pastoral Manager because she was experiencing anxiety, flashbacks and nightmares due to traumatic past experiences. **She wanted support in adjusting to life in foster care and navigating her complicated feelings with family relationships.** Aisha comes from an abusive household and has a pending court case on sexual abuse by the hands of a family member.

During our first session where the assessment was completed, after getting an understanding of her background, I explained that the support provided will be catered to her needs and what she finds comfortable. I gave examples of the possible approaches including person-centred talk therapy, solution-focused work, mindfulness and I was happy to try different things out until she found a good fit. When I asked her what goal she might want to set, she said she was unsure and I said we could explore it with time.

When Aisha arrived in her second session, she launched into talking about what's on her mind without much prompting. Since then, **she comfortably utilised the space to participate in talk therapy. She would talk about her thoughts and feelings and sometimes ask questions and I would respond reflectively.**

Throughout our sessions, there was a strong focus on what's "right" and her guilt with the traumatic events she had experienced, her feelings at others' response to it as well as the responsibility she takes on in caring for her younger sibling. She also spoke at length about her dilemma to stay in foster care, to return home or to go into semi-independent living. I would challenge her by offering alternative perspectives that are more compassionate to herself. I would also validate her feelings and affirm her kindness and sense of justice as they were important values to her.

When we did a session review at session 4, she said she had found the outside perspectives helpful and that moving forward, she wanted to figure out what she wanted.

In our tenth session, **she brought up that she noticed a pattern where she breaks down after bottling up feelings, saying there are specific things she doesn't feel like she can talk about.** I suggested we draw a diagram for her to mark out what was safe and not safe to talk about with me, so that we were aware of and acknowledged the existence of those things and why we might not want to speak of it. She named "x" (the traumatic experience she was unsure how to refer to) and her nightmares. It helped us move on and focus on things she felt she was able to talk about.

In one session, I introduced the concept of the sphere of influence and explained it in context of her life, differentiating things she had direct control over and things she could influence. Aisha found this incredibly helpful and allowed her to find closure in many things including making up her mind on her next steps on her living situation based on what's best for her.

We completed a total of 15 sessions and her CORE score (used to measure psychological distress) decreased from 20 to 16. Her pre-score shows she had been experiencing moderate to severe distress whereas her post-score shows it had lowered to moderate distress. This indicates an improvement in her wellbeing.

When reflecting on her journey, Aisha said that she knew what she wanted now and expressed understanding of how things may change and a feeling of trust in herself despite this. **She shared that she has become more self-compassionate, noticing when she is about to be burned out and giving herself the break she needs.** She felt she was more capable of taking on agency, having now a mindset where she is "breaking the cycle of 'I'm a victim, I'm always going to be a victim'". She also said she has learned to allow herself her feelings and to separate others' judgment from her view of herself and to leave the guilt from that behind.

Finally, she said moving forward, she expects there will still be challenges with her family and she'll keep practising and being mindful about what she can control. **"They've done this, they've said this to me, but they don't define me. I am who defines myself."**

**“Before I used to do ‘bad things’ was never focused in class. I’ve reflected on myself and that’s helped me. I’m in a good place.**

**Before I wasn't in a good place. I want to continue like this until college. I am managing my anger through taking a mental step back in situations and taking deep breaths.**🙏

**– Year 11 Student, worked with Schools Mental Health Practitioner**

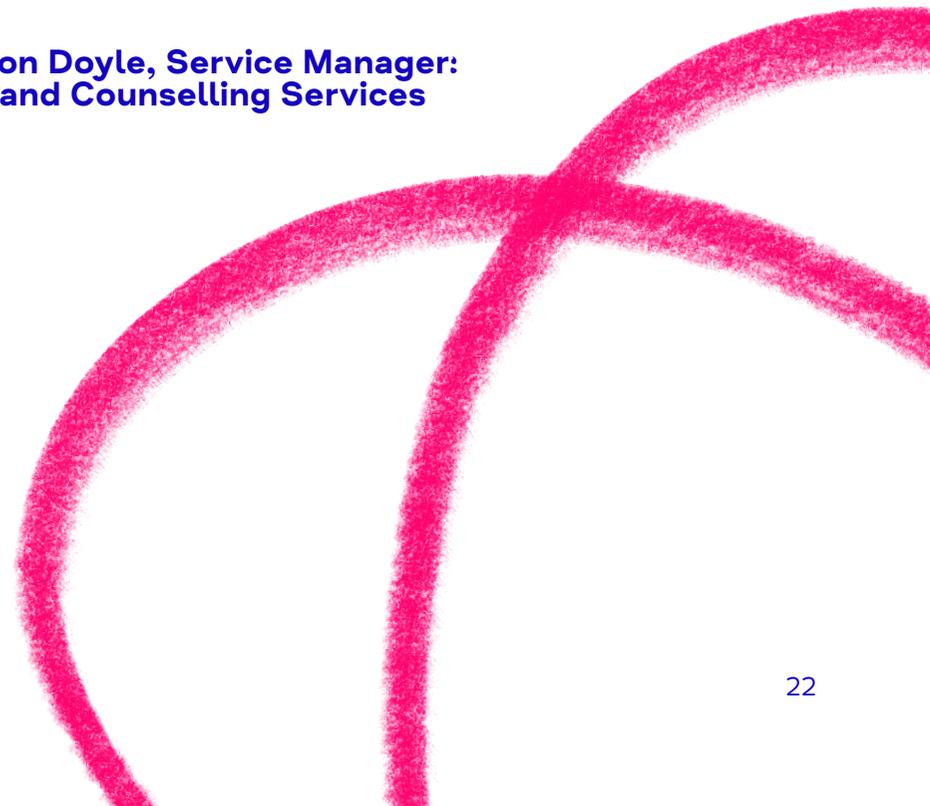


# Adult Counselling

Adult Counselling was our discreet pilot beginning in February 2023. **Between February and March 2023, we received 46 referrals and in 2023-2024 we received 300 and that was without publicising the service as we wanted to keep shorter waiting lists for as long as we could.**

Whilst this data and the stories behind the services illustrates the need for these vital services, they are not secure for us and next year will be a big year in raising the income, so that we can continue seeing people who need support from Manchester Mind.

**Sharon Doyle, Service Manager:  
CYP and Counselling Services**



# Measuring the value of our Workplace Training

Reflecting on the last annual year, it's incredible to see that **we reached 2019 people with our training and workshops**. I had to re-read the figure - no, it's not a year, that's the total number of attendees on training in 2023/24, all discussing mental health and wellbeing, and each individual will take something away with them at the end of our time together...

What will you take away with you? "That mental health is important to everyone and to talk about it more in conversations. To check in with others and leave time for myself to do things I enjoy even if it's for 30 minutes each day. Don't be so hard on myself." **Mental Health Taster participant**

**“As well as learning / refreshing on the training content, I felt the time allowed for discussion of our own experiences of mental health were invaluable and helped us to bond as a management team.”**

– **Manager's Training participant**

Each and every course or workshop we deliver shares the same message and tone, a better understanding of mental health and wellbeing, both personally and professionally, benefits everyone. Testimonials like that one, along with the 91% of participants who **rated the training overall as very good or excellent** shows just how powerful it can be when we prioritise mental health and wellbeing.

Having been on maternity leave for the majority of the annual year, I had the pleasure of seeing Manchester Mind from almost an outside view. In that window, **I saw the core values in play from all sides. I saw a brand-new team of two, supported by our 5 freelance trainers, navigating their way around systems and topics, but all creating a sense of belonging and building relationships to effectively continue our offer to the workplaces in Manchester.**

The numbers speak for themselves, **105 sessions delivered is an incredible achievement**, but I feel proud of the awareness it also raised for Manchester Mind and the services we provide and how these may be funded. Training is important for bringing revenue into the charity, not only in the obvious way – the training is paid for, but it puts us at the forefront of people's minds if they are wanting to fundraise for a local charity or donate. In turn, the income generated goes back into the charity to provide services. It's a really rewarding position to be in, and exciting to come back from maternity leave to continue sharing our message.

Feedback received from this all training was fantastic, **with 91% of participants rating it as very good or excellent**. None of this would have been possible without really connecting as a team and working with our trainers' strengths to find the best fit for our customers.

Whilst these numbers are measurable, what is less so is the knock-on effect our training has on the colleagues, family and friends of those attending. **Taking part in one of our courses not only illustrates how workplaces can have an impact on their employees' wellbeing, it also opens up the wider discussion around mental health, raising awareness and spreading Manchester Mind's message that everyone deserves to be supported in their mental health and that we are here for the people of Manchester.**

"I learnt a lot about mental illnesses that I previously didn't know such as schizophrenia. I began to understand how so many people struggle with anxiety (including me) and the importance of empathy and listening to someone, not trying to fix them. Also, the importance of developing a plan to try to deal with anxiety... Probably one of the best courses I have been on."  
**Mental Health First Aid participant**

**Danielle Partington,  
Training Manager**

# Fundraising: Whatever the number, they all matter

Last year, 324 organisations, 200 individuals and 125 volunteers helped raise funds for our local mental health services. It would be easy to see the grand total £366,481 as the overarching achievement, but that only tells half the story.

Whether a solo fundraiser completes a 10km run, a community group sells 68 cupcakes or a charity partner virtually travels 3 times around the world to hit their challenge target, supporters receive the same level of care, attention and gratitude on their fundraising journey. Each person has their own story to tell. We take time to learn about their motivations and reflect this in our approach, making sure they feel heard and valued every step of the way. Whether £50, £500 or £5,000 is raised, every contribution matters.

Our supporters often have incredibly personal reasons for fundraising. When Mark and Steve lost their best friend to suicide, they knew they had to do something in his memory for a mental health charity. In September 2023, the duo embarked on an epic cycle from Lands' End to John O Groats in aid of Manchester Mind. Traversing the entire length of the country, they cycled 1,000km in just 14 days, raising £10,035. We built a strong relationship with the couple and when the challenge was done, the sense of achievement was enormous and so heartfelt. Fundraising means more than the amount raised. It can be a way to heal, express oneself and give back to the community. It's as much about the journey as the end result.



Manchester Mind wants to make it easier for people to ask for help.

Our fundraisers and donors ensure we can do exactly that. The generosity of charity supporters humbles us, their collective action has a very real impact in keeping local services running and inspires others in new and creative ways.

**We're forever grateful for their commitment to improving mental health across our city. They even inspired us to jump out of a plane! THANK YOU.**

### **Finn Logue and Joanna Huddart, Fundraising Team**

**“I hope the funds raised help as many people as possible who suffer with their mental health and that no family have to endure the pain we have gone through. Thank you for your emails and kind words. I'll look forward to receiving the charity certificate and sharing it.”**

**– In Memory donor**





“We are overjoyed that our contribution will help various projects at Manchester Mind. The examples you gave demonstrate the beneficial impact our gift will have in the community. Thank you for your recognition and for allowing us to contribute to Manchester Mind’s essential work. We look forward to working together again in the future.”

– Student Fundraisers

“The climb was absolutely incredible, we reached the summit at 7am after an 80km hike. It was the perfect mental battle in which we raised funds for Manchester Mind. The donations really kept the team motivated the whole way, and I’m glad that we could reach the summit as a team.”

– Solo Challenge

“It has honestly been our pleasure to work with you and raise as much money as we can for such an important charity... being able to support those in our own city has been extra special... we hope the awareness raised for Manchester Mind will continue for many years to come.”

– Charity Partner

# It all adds up... Improving Physical Health Team

Improving the physical health of people with severe mental illness is a national NHS priority. **In Greater Manchester, there were over 20,000 people on GP Severe Mental Illness (SMI) registers.** In addition to the GP practice's standard communication approaches to try to invite this group to appointments, our Improving Physical Health Team successfully **arranged nearly 900 additional annual health checks for people who have often been left unsupported, or seen as hard to engage.** We have contributed to every Greater Manchester locality that we work in, to achieve the national target for the first time, of at least 60% people attending their health checks,

Reflecting on the first two years of the project, we have learnt that there is a lot of misunderstanding about the needs of the people on the GP SMI registers. Some people manage their health well and require minimal support to access their healthcare. But **a significant number of people live with more complex mental health needs, with physical health problems and social issues that are often not acknowledged as impacting on their mental health.** They are often isolated from their community and local services, and can be distrustful of health and social services due to previous experiences when seeking help.





We give people as much time as they need when we first reach out to them. We listen to their story and their needs. We try to understand what is important to them right now. Our whole-person approach ensures that we identify and support wider social issues that may be impacting on a person's mental and physical health.

Manchester Mind's approach to supporting people was recognised as an example of good practice by Equally Well UK (Reaching Out, Improving the Physical Health of People with Severe Mental Illness, January 2024). Working in partnership with each GP practice means that we can signpost to existing social prescribing services, or offer our Health Improvement model if local support is not available.

**900 more people accessing their annual health checks during 2023-24 means quicker interventions are offered for smoking, weight management, alcohol and drug use, and early identification of issues such as diabetes and heart disease.**

**Martin Gaved, Community Engagement Team Manager**

**“The service has been life-changing, without it I wouldn't have been able to do what I've done.”**

**Person supported to reduce their isolation by achieving the goal of leaving their house and travelling independently on public transport.**

# Thank you!

We are, as always, indebted to our amazing staff team and to our volunteers who give their time to support our services. They work hard and never give up. Thank you.

## **Our funders:**

Manchester City Council  
Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust  
The National Community Lottery  
National Mind  
Barnardo's  
The Access to Justice Foundation  
Manchester Care Commissioning Group  
Eric Wright Charitable Trust  
Jigsaw Foundation  
Beyondly  
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust  
The Big Life Group  
The Charity Service  
Gallagher Community Fund  
NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care  
The Houghton Dunn Charitable Trust

To all the people and businesses that support Manchester Mind – getting out to run in all weathers, hold events, bake cakes, hold raffles – we salute you all. Thank you.

Finally, a thank you to everyone who comes to Manchester Mind for help and support. It is really important to ask for help, but something that isn't always easy to do and we appreciate the fact that you do.