



Impact Report 2020/21

 mind Hertfordshire Network

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Our year...

We were able to adapt quickly and effectively to the national lockdown imposed in March 2020, ensuring that our clients and carers continued to receive vital support during the most challenging of times.

We held proactive, constructive conversations with funders and commissioners, to ensure we adapted our service provision effectively and safely to the unprecedented challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic presented. We also worked hard to ensure that we found creative ways to stay in touch with people who were isolated during the pandemic.

This ensured that we remained open and responsive to local need in a planned way, and limited financial risks in relation to our funded services. We repurposed existing funds to scale up our online activities with agreement from funders, ensuring that clients had access to support when they needed it. Our teams quickly engaged with new ways of working and this enabled us to move our support to telephone and online platforms, ensuring continuity of our core support services.

Our staff teams largely worked remotely from home, providing one-to-one and group support through phone, Skype, Zoom and Demio to help clients feel connected to us and each other.

We also met clients in gardens, driveways and outdoor public spaces to ensure that we continued to see them where possible.

We set up:

- An extended Crisis Helpline, to be there for Hertfordshire residents 24 hours a day, every day of the week.
- A new Young People's Helpline to ensure that we provide tailored interventions to support their mental wellbeing.
- Online Meeting Places.
- Online Yoga Groups and Music Groups.
- Children & Young People's (CYP) Online Hangout.
- CYP Care Leavers' Meeting Place.
- Online Carers Group.
- Adult Learning Through Wellbeing Courses (webinars).
- Counselling (using Skype, Zoom or phone).
- Local support for people who are self-isolating.

In a time of great uncertainty for so many people, we remained a constant source of support.

**We supported
5,383 people!**

**2,957 adults and 2,426
children and young
people.**



Message from our Chair...

It is with both pride and sadness that I write to you as our members, partners and colleagues for our 2021 Annual General Meeting.

It is my first AGM as Chair and we have said good bye to our beloved Fran Deschampsneufs, who has taken the difficult decision to step down after 25 years at the helm. Frankly, to follow in Fran's wake is a bit daunting and I hope I can do her legacy proud.

On behalf of the board of trustees and the charity as a whole, I want to say a heartfelt thank you to Fran for all that she has done to make this organisation what it is today.

And as if losing one of the charity's stalwarts is not enough, we also must say goodbye with equal sadness to our Chief Executive Julie Nicholson, a leader who wore her heart on her sleeve and if cut in half, would have Herts Mind Network written through her like a stick of rock.

Words are not enough to express our gratitude to Fran and Julie, although as they would say the organisation must go on, and with that I am delighted to be able to introduce Jo Marovitch as our new Chief Executive. I am certain she will lead the charity into its next chapter, and ensure we go from strength to strength.

This year has seen our charity achieve so much, responding to the pandemic and continuing to support so many people in so many innovative ways.

We know that support provided face-to-face is highly valued and I am delighted to see so many sessions returning to this way of working.

However, we also know that for many, the virtual world has made access so much easier and support much more accessible. As we reflect on what COVID has taught us, we will be careful to keep listening to you and learning what works.

Yet again, we are not able to safely meet in person in such a large group. I sincerely hope that next year we will be able to celebrate our AGM with a gathering that brings us all together again and celebrates all our individual and collective achievements.

I am so incredibly proud of all my colleagues and the service users who make Herts Mind Network what it is. Your commitment to peer support and coproduction really sets us apart and demonstrates the impact and importance of lived experience, hope and recovery.

“ This is an inspirational organisation full of inspirational people, and for that, I say to you all, thank you and stay safe. ”



Jess Lievesley
Chair



Jo Marovitch
CEO

Who we are...

We deliver essential mental health support in Hertfordshire, providing a diverse range of services from our seven Wellbeing Centres and other venues across all ten districts of the county.

Funded locally, our services are available to all residents in Hertfordshire over the age of 18 and we offer dedicated services for 11-18 year olds.

We create opportunities for individuals experiencing mental ill health to make choices, find their solutions, build resilience and manage their whole life and wellbeing.

Our services are based on the principle of self-help with a strong emphasis on prevention, personal development, self-management and improving health and wellbeing.

We provide opportunities for individuals to access support to enable them to recover from, or live with, mental ill health.

Our services are grouped in the following areas:

- Health and wellbeing
- Complex needs and crisis intervention
- Employment support and training
- Social enterprise
- Peer support
- Children and young people

Our mission

“To create opportunities for individuals experiencing mental ill health to make choices, find their own solutions, build resilience and manage their whole life and wellbeing”

Our vision

“We won’t give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets both support and respect”

Our values

- ✓ Hope
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Excellence



What people think about us...

“ I have really enjoyed getting support from you. You have been really lovely and I am so grateful that you came at the right time, because I may no longer have been here if you hadn't. You have been better and less judgemental than any other person that I have worked with.”

(Client, Community Support Service)

“ Accessing the BBO project has quite simply changed my life; changed the way I live my life. Both personally and professionally, I have become much more aware of myself and how I can manage, even transcend negative thinking, anxiety, depression and the effects of difficult situations.”

(Client, Building Better Opportunities)

“ I don't know what I would have done if Nightlight weren't here. Thank you for letting me stay the night, I feel less alone.”

(Client, Nightlight)

“ I felt that out of all the things I'd done in my life, this (volunteering with HMN) was one of the most important.”

(Light-Touch Volunteer)

“ After we speak I feel energised to improve things in my life.”

(Client, Peer Support Service)

“ I don't know what I would do if I couldn't get the food parcels. I am very grateful that you are around to help.”

(Client, Community Support Service)

“ I'm so thankful people like you exist at Nightlight. Thank you so much. Just to be heard and valued and believed has helped so much. I didn't know how I was going to get through the next two minutes before I called, but now I don't feel so lost this evening.”

(Client, Nightlight)

“ I have a better understanding, and feel I have been supported through all of it. I don't know where I would be without the support. I can now see the abuse for what it is – I was blind to it before – I now have ways I can deal with it.”

(Client, Domestic Abuse Service)

“ I found the training very informative, engaging and relevant, and now feel more confident in working with young people experiencing suicidal thoughts as well as intentions to end their life.”

(CYP Spot the Signs delegate)

“ The trainer was enthusiastic and engaged the children. Activities and questioning kept them engaged throughout e.g. videos, getting up and active.”

(5 Ways to Wellbeing delegate, teacher)

“ I have found all the courses I have taken with Herts Mind Network invaluable and enjoyable too. The course content and teaching are excellent.”

(HAFLS delegate)

Our services....

Health & Wellbeing

A major part of our service provision focuses on prevention, access to early help and improving health and wellbeing - both physically and emotionally.

Throughout the last year we have provided a range of one-to-one and group provision, including opportunities to complete learning sets covering a range of wellbeing topics. These services were invaluable during the pandemic, providing an easily accessible source of support for people within our local community.

The team worked hard to respond to all new client referrals, ensuring that individuals had access to the services and support that would be right for them.

Where needed, we were able to purchase tablets, mobile phones and data packages to help people remain connected and access services that were being provided online or by phone. The team also supported clients who needed additional help to use online platforms, as many people were not familiar with using services in this way.

1,367
assessments took
place during the year.

Our Meeting Places continued to provide a safe and welcoming social drop-in where people could feel supported.

During the pandemic we provided our Meeting Places remotely via Zoom, ensuring that people still had access to the support that they needed.

Attendees shared their experiences, built social networks and met people in a safe and non-judgemental setting.

This was of particular importance to people living on their own and those who needed to self-isolate during lockdown. The online provision also enabled people who did not have easy access to our Wellbeing Centres to be part of a group activity.

2,383
attendances at our
Meeting Places.

These groups have been a vital part of many people's support network over this period. Clients have also expressed that they would like these online Meeting Places to continue in the future, so they will become part of our ongoing service provision.



Our services....

Complex Needs and Crisis

We are experienced providers of complex needs and crisis services within the county. We aim to offer people in any form of crisis, access to the right support for them to prevent further deterioration, self-harm or suicide.

NightLight is our countywide out of hours mental health crisis service. The service is provided from Crisis Centres around the county, which are open every day of the year including bank holidays. The centres provide a safe and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed and experiencing a crisis.

Our Hemel Hempstead centre has four bed spaces, which can be used by any Hertfordshire residents if an overnight stay would help to resolve the crisis.

For those who prefer not to come into the centres, but would like someone to talk to, a telephone helpline service is available every day between 7pm and 1am to offer people sensitive and non-judgmental support. During the pandemic, the helpline operated extended hours to ensure that we were here for local people who needed us.

10,129
Nightlight Crisis
Helpline calls.

Our Community Support Services provide advice, information, onward referral and holistic support to people who are experiencing mental ill-health, or need help with their mental wellbeing. These teams provide one-to-one outreach support in a variety of areas such as; emotional and practical support; housing need; benefits; access to services; signposting; help to reduce episodes of crisis and building life skills.

During the pandemic we worked in partnership with local organisations to deliver much needed food parcels.

962
Community
Support sessions.

In Three Rivers, we also provide intensive support for people experiencing domestic abuse. Our Domestic Abuse Caseworker offers an easy-to-access, high quality service, providing a range of support, based on individual needs and wishes.

The service provides emotional and practical support; advice and information; safety planning; support and information about the Criminal Justice System; support to attend meetings; support with children's wellbeing and safety and signposting to other support agencies.

During lockdown we introduced wellbeing walks that proved very popular and enabled us to see people face-to-face.

604
support sessions in
the Domestic Abuse
Service.



Our services....

Employment & Training

We are proud to be involved in the BBO STRIVE in Hertfordshire project. This project is provided in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council.

STRIVE stands for Support and Transition Routes Into Volunteering and Employment.

The project assists people in need of extra support into sustained work and education through mentoring, work and volunteering experience, vocational advice and peer support.

Our project has demonstrated outstanding outcomes in supporting people into paid employment, and in job retention for those already in work and experiencing mental ill health.

Our Learning Mentors provide support focused on long-term guidance to build skills, confidence, resilience and independence, facilitating a positive journey towards employment.

Our HAFLS Wellbeing through Learning courses offer a range of wellbeing focused self-development courses for people aged 19+ designed to improve wellbeing, build confidence and gain new skills.

Topics include:

- Building Resilience
- Building Self-esteem
- Introduction to Wellbeing
- Mindfulness and Relaxation
- Understanding Anger and Other Emotions
- Overcoming Anxiety and Fear

These courses were provided through the Demio platform during the pandemic, ensuring that people continued to have access to engaging learning, and connections with others.

Five new courses were written co-productively with past learners in response to the emerging needs created by the pandemic. These included:

- Coronavirus and your Wellbeing
- Learning to Accept Change and Uncertainty
- Understanding Anger (for Carers)

101
clients were provided with
2,880
hours of support.

255
HAFLS
Learners.



Our services....

Social enterprise (Counselling and Training)

Our countywide Counselling Service is run as a social enterprise, with volunteers in the final year of training, together with a team of qualified counsellors, offering their time in return for paid supervision and the opportunity to work in a thriving mental health charity.

We provide a supportive and confidential service and offer up to ten counselling sessions.

We offer a sliding scale in terms of payment, so that the service is affordable for most people who may otherwise be denied counselling provision.

During the pandemic we were able to secure additional funding for our counselling service. This enabled us to provide fully funded counselling sessions to people who were experiencing financial hardship.

1,841
Counselling
sessions provided.

Our Mental Health Training is another fast growing source of income generation being delivered in both the private and public sector.

We have extensive experience within the field of mental health training and are recognised as a leading provider of mental health-related training in Hertfordshire. We delivered training to voluntary, statutory and private sector organisations locally (and nationally) with a focus on mental health and wellbeing.

We provided a wide programme of training for managers and employees, supporting local companies to improve their support for their employees and champion mental health in the workplace.

137
training courses
provided to external
organisations.

We will be developing our training offer along with a new bespoke website to enable local organisations and companies to book training for their staff teams.



“In all previous jobs, stress has been something to ignore. This course switched a light on for me as it validated that stress is a real issue if not handled correctly and moreover, bad stress can be avoided.”

Company Training delegate

Our services....

Peer Support

We are a specialist provider of peer support and have led the development of this service countywide.

Our high quality one-to-one peer support is for adults experiencing mental ill health and those that care for and support them.

The service is staffed by a team of Peer Support Workers who have a lived experience of mental ill health and have overcome similar challenges to those that clients may be facing. By using their lived experience, the Peer Support Workers work alongside individuals to resolve real-life difficulties and improve their independence, quality of life and wellbeing.

The relationship is more equal and focuses on the practical concerns of the client e.g. debt, housing, relationship breakdown, while not losing a sense of where that person is aiming to be long term.

Support is provided through:

- One-to-one advice at our Wellbeing Centres
- Telephone and email support
- Zoom video calls
- One-to-one outreach support
- Group work at our Wellbeing Centres or other venues

Our Peer Support Groups and one-to-one sessions have taken place online using Zoom. Many clients have identified that they have really valued this way of accessing support. As we transition back to face-to-face provision, we will continue to provide online support options as well.

568
people were supported through
4,259
Peer Support sessions.

We also provide a Peer Mentoring service. This is a one-to-one person-centred support service offering emotional and practical support.

The service is staffed by trained volunteers with a wide range of experience, and they work with each person to look at what support they need and the goals they would like to work towards.

110
people were supported through
1,291
Peer Mentoring sessions.



Our services....

Children & Young People

The Children & Young People and Engagement team works to address the needs of young people and a range of other diverse groups, including LGBTQ.

We work with a number of schools and voluntary organisations in Hertfordshire and offer a range of activities from assemblies, to mental health workshops, staff training and fundraising events. We provide direct one-to-one support through BBO Herts Youth Futures and the Children and Young People Helpline.

We also have our 'Spot the Signs' Young People's campaign, which aims to remove the stigma of talking openly about suicide among young people and those who support them.

We recognise the need to work with young people to Spot the Signs of self-harm and suicide, both in themselves and others.

This award-winning project has now funded us to employ a worker to engage with school children, in order to establish stronger links and raise greater awareness with people aged 11-18 years.

Our engagement work also includes supporting access to statutory services through our Wellbeing Access partnership with Hertfordshire Partnership NHS University Foundation Trust (HPFT).

This project aims to reduce barriers to accessing Hertfordshire Mind Network and the HPFT IAPT Wellbeing Service, promoting awareness of mental health and support services available to residents of Hertfordshire.

Our numbers...

2,426

Children and young people were supported during this twelve-month period through a range of CYP services.

1,040

Young people were supported through workshops and assemblies at schools throughout Hertfordshire.

521

Professionals who work with children and young people were provided with training through our Spot the Signs and Emotional Wellbeing programme.

794

Parents attended our Children & Young People workshops.

856

71 young people accessed 856 one-to-one support sessions provided by Herts Youth Futures.



Volunteering....

Volunteering with Hertfordshire Mind Network

Our Wellbeing Centres, services and teams are supported and enhanced by a large team of skilled and committed volunteers.

The support of our volunteers is invaluable and we wouldn't be able to provide all of the services that we do without their help, time and dedication.

Team of
116
Volunteers.

For many volunteers their role also provides a stepping stone back to learning, training and/or employment.

Meaningful occupation is well accepted as the basis of recovery and community inclusion. Clients often use the training and work experience as the first step to employment, working initially a few hours a week and building confidence and skills in the process.

We offer a wide variety of Volunteering Opportunities throughout the organisation, both within our services and other teams such as Administration, Marketing and Fundraising.

Light-Touch Telephone Support

The Light-Touch Telephone Support service was launched in May 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The service aimed to help individuals to cope with the loneliness and isolation caused by lockdown restrictions. It was available for anyone not already accessing another one-to-one service.

This service was provided by a team of volunteers who were supported by our Volunteer Coordinator.

Short weekly calls from a team of volunteers provided individuals with access to some light-touch emotional support and the opportunity to discuss ways to manage their mental health and wellbeing, both during lockdown and when restrictions started to ease.

The service has provided a lifeline to lots of our clients, thanks to the hard work, passion and dedication of our amazing volunteers!

842
Light-Touch
calls were made.



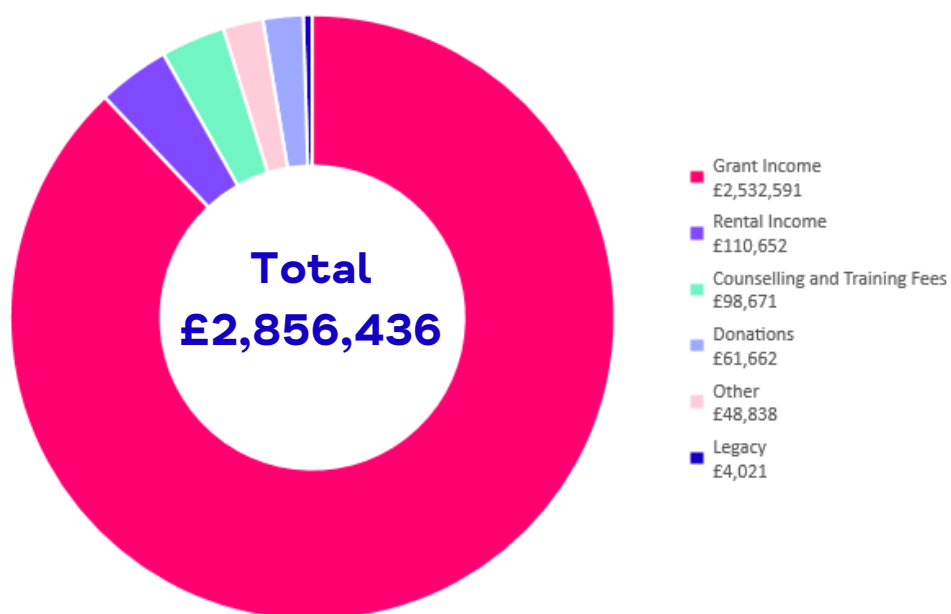
“The team are fantastic, and extremely supportive to all staff. As a volunteer you know you are very valued and that your own wellbeing is important.”

Volunteer

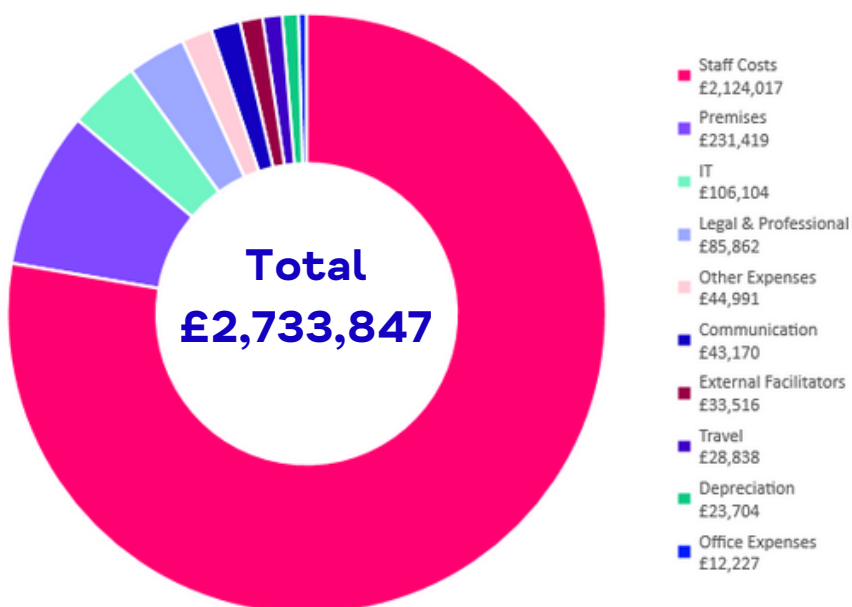
How we spend our money...

Please see below for a summary of our income and expenditure for this financial year:

Our income 2020/21



Our expenditure 2020/21



We couldn't have done this without you...

Hertfordshire Mind Network is always grateful for the kind donations from our supporters, which help to fund our services. Quite simply, we would not exist without the significant financial contributions provided by our supporters.

The challenges we face over the coming years as a local charity helping local people means that situation is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future.

If it were not for you, then thousands of people across Hertfordshire would face the prospect of dealing with their mental ill health alone.

On behalf of Hertfordshire Mind Network and the people who use our services, a sincere and heartfelt thank you to each and every one of our supporters.

Thanks also to our Board Members and all our volunteers, who give their time and expertise to us throughout the year.

Thank you!

You helped us to support **5,383** local people during 2020 - 21

1,040

young people were supported through workshops and assemblies at schools throughout Hertfordshire.

521

professionals who work with children and young people were provided with training through our Spot the Signs and Emotional Wellbeing programme.

794

parents attended our Children & Young People workshops.

1,367

Initial assessments were completed.

255

HAFSL Learners were supported through 33 HAFSL courses.

4,259

Peer support sessions were provided.

1,200

Clients were contacted through GP practices to offer practical support through our PCN project.

856

71 young people accessed 856 one-to-one support sessions provided by Herts Youth Futures.

604

Support sessions were provided through the Domestic Abuse Service.

2,383

Attendances at Meeting Place groups.

10,129

Nightlight Helpline Calls were responded to.

255

Community Support Service sessions were provided.

1,841

Counselling sessions were attended.

137

Training courses were provided to external organisations.

1,291

Peer Mentoring sessions were provided.



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