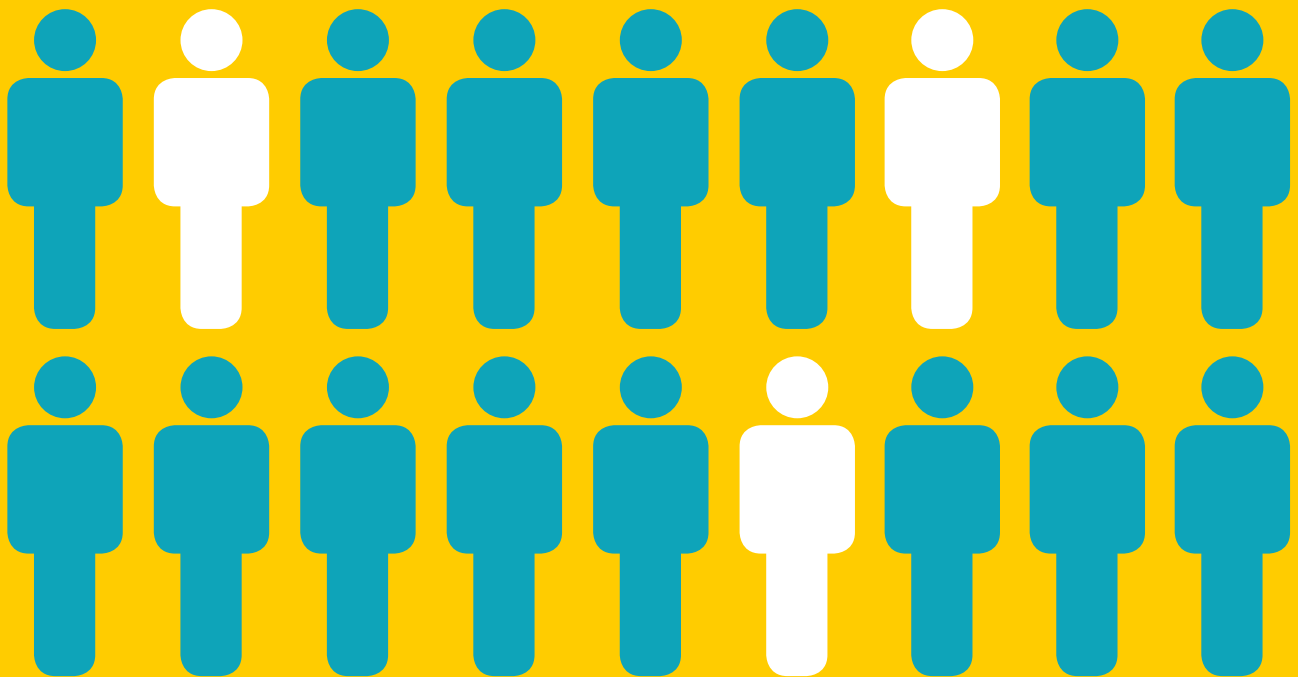


# Southmead Project

Counselling and support for  
survivors of abuse across  
Bristol and surrounding areas



# Foreword

Imogen McCabe, CEO



**We are thankful to have navigated a way through the pandemic and that we could transition our services to offer online and phone counselling from April 2020.**

This year has been exceptionally difficult for our clients and it has been crucial to support survivors through such a period of uncertainty and isolation. Throughout the initial lockdowns, we provided tools and resources to help clients manage their mental health and wellbeing through weekly email updates. We are in admiration of the tremendous strength and commitment our clients have shown to their healing process with the attendance rate of sessions averaging 85% across the whole year. We re-opened our office in September 2020 and were delighted to provide face-to-face counselling for clients who were unable to access support remotely.

Our waiting list was significantly impacted by the high volume of referrals received. We consequently recruited additional counsellors and supported double the existing number of weekly clients, holding over 100 counselling sessions a week and offering 2,079 sessions across the year. Our pre-counselling group was transitioned online in order to provide support for clients who were waiting for counselling.

Our Active Recovery Project is one

of a kind and provides community-based activities for current and past clients to help build their peer support networks, self-esteem and confidence. The activities were adapted during the pandemic to offer remote support and helped tackle loneliness and isolation, from 'seed post' to a collaborative art piece. As face-to-face activities resumed, our members enjoyed taking part in water-sports on the harbourside and wreath making at Christmas.

The success and clear need for online and phone counselling has meant that we will continue to offer it as a longer-term mode of therapy. We value the opportunity it has given to provide an accessible service to a wider range of clients, who may not otherwise have been able to access this support.

We are deeply grateful for the dedication and perseverance of our team, who have provided this support during such a challenging year and often whilst working from home. We are extremely proud of what they have achieved and their unwavering resolve to put clients first. We also want to extend a huge and heartfelt thank you to our many funders, including the larger trusts and foundations, Avon and Somerset Police, and personal donations, for their ongoing support that has enabled us to thrive as well as survive this unprecedented year.

# Trustee Report

## Simon Craker, Chairman of the Board of Trustees



**This year has been a challenge not only for our Leadership Team, but also our counsellors and trustees. We were delighted to welcome two new trustees to our Board, Helen Gunson and Alistair Brown. Both have brought excellent skills to enhance the Board in support of our team. In addition, we have engaged a specialist bid writer to strengthen our fundraising efforts.**

During the year, all trustees engaged in monthly online meetings to ensure that we could assist the Leadership Team as much as possible, since significant changes were made to how we delivered our services. As Chair, I cannot thank them enough for their efforts during this difficult time.

Part of the work that we took on as trustees included a Governance Review and developing an updated Business Plan. This support through the Lloyds Enhance Programme was exceptional and we have been able to enhance our processes accordingly.

Funding has been one of our challenges, but I have to thank all of our many funders, including those who provided emergency support during the year. This has enabled us to maintain our services, transition to online and phone counselling, fund additional training for our

team and take on new counsellors. We are now in a position to plan and develop our services for 2022 with more confidence, providing greater certainty for counsellors and clients accordingly.

I would like to thank our counsellors and staff for their efforts, willingness to adapt and flexibility during this last year. It is a credit to the team that we have been able to continue our services so effectively and at such a high level. Lastly, I add special thanks to our Leadership Team, whose fortitude and patience through one of the most challenging of times has been immense.

**“I have enjoyed being able to do online counselling from home. I wouldn't have been able to come into the office and I probably would have dropped out fairly fast. This supported me to move forward and I would recommend anyone to do it online.”**

**Counselling client**

# Counselling and Support

## Long-term counselling

We offer up to 24 sessions of counselling, both face-to-face and online or by phone, for survivors of any type of abuse. This includes sexual, physical and emotional abuse, domestic violence and neglect. We support people of all genders aged 16 years and above.

## Nexus counselling

We offer this unique counselling service for survivors of abuse who have a current addiction to drugs or alcohol for up to 12 sessions. The focus is on becoming more stable, reducing drug or alcohol intake and developing practical strategies to deal with trauma symptoms. The sessions take place at the Southmead Project, BDP, Wick House and One25.

## Family Support Group

We hold a weekly drop-in group for those who support someone with an addiction to drugs or alcohol, or for anyone affected by someone else's addiction. The sessions take place every Wednesday at 7-9pm at the Southmead Project. Someone can attend as many or as few sessions as they wish.

## Pre-counselling Group

We support clients on our waiting list with pre-counselling groups, which took place online during the pandemic. This helps develop self-care tools, such as mindfulness and grounding, communication skills, support with managing triggers, flashbacks and nightmares, and psycho-education around the impact of trauma. Alongside this, clients report a sense of community and a feeling of being less alone with their experience.



Active Recovery sailing on the harbourside

Read the full report at [www.southmeadproject.org.uk](http://www.southmeadproject.org.uk)

“Trying new activities with the Southmead Project, pushing through fears and meeting new people has been a lovely experience. It has been a privilege to be part of a couple of sessions and sailing was amazing”

“You’ve been the best I’ve had out of all the services I’ve ever been with. You’ve done something good to my head and really helped me – thank you so much.”

“It really helped during the lockdowns and social isolation to know there are people out there that haven’t forgotten about me”

## Active Recovery Project

**The Active Recovery Project supported 18 people this year, providing remote support and community-based activities.**

During the lockdowns our members received weekly email support, phone calls and texts if they wished. They also participated in Active Recovery projects at home, such as ‘seed post’ where participants were posted everything that they needed to grow their own seedlings and share the results of their nurturing with each other. Other activities included recipe

swaps, mindful colouring, puzzle post, nature journaling and a collaborative art project.

Once the pandemic restrictions eased, we arranged Covid-secure activities on Bristol’s harbourside such as sailing, kayaking and gig rowing, and had a wreath making session in time for Christmas. The sessions created opportunities for members to make connections with others in their community, boost their self-esteem and build their self-confidence in trying new and fun things.

# Who we supported

In 2020-21, the main reason that brought clients to counselling was...



## Also...

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**91% of clients** experienced abuse in childhood

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**26% of clients** described their gender as male

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**20% of clients** were from an Asian, Black British, Black Caribbean, Mixed or Other White background

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**19% of clients** were from the LGBT community

Read the full report at [www.southmeadproject.org.uk](http://www.southmeadproject.org.uk)

# The impact of our support services

In 2020-21 we delivered the following support...

2,079 counselling sessions offered

85% of all sessions were attended

155 clients received counselling

18 Active Recovery members took part in activities

5 clients attended a pre-counselling group online

As a result, counselling had the following impact on clients...



**97%**  
had improved  
coping  
mechanisms



**72%**  
saw an improvement  
in their overall  
well-being



**94%**  
felt better informed  
about the effects  
of trauma



**65%**  
had improved  
communication with  
family members



**80%**  
felt better able to  
cope with aspects  
of everyday life



**63%**  
had greater  
self-esteem

# Southmead Project Accounts 2020-21

## Income

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Grants	433,171
Donations	30,402
Sale of services	5,000
Miscellaneous	1,637
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>470,210</b>

## Expenditure

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Staff costs	202,432
Overheads	45,413
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>247,845</b>

**Surplus/deficit** **222,365**

Funds brought forward 125,531

**Funds carried forward** **347,896**

Consisting of:

Restricted funds 288,270

Unrestricted funds 59,626

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A copy of our full audited accounts is available on request

## Southmead Project

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Twitter: @SouthmeadProj

**A heartfelt thank you to all our supporters  
who help make our work possible.**