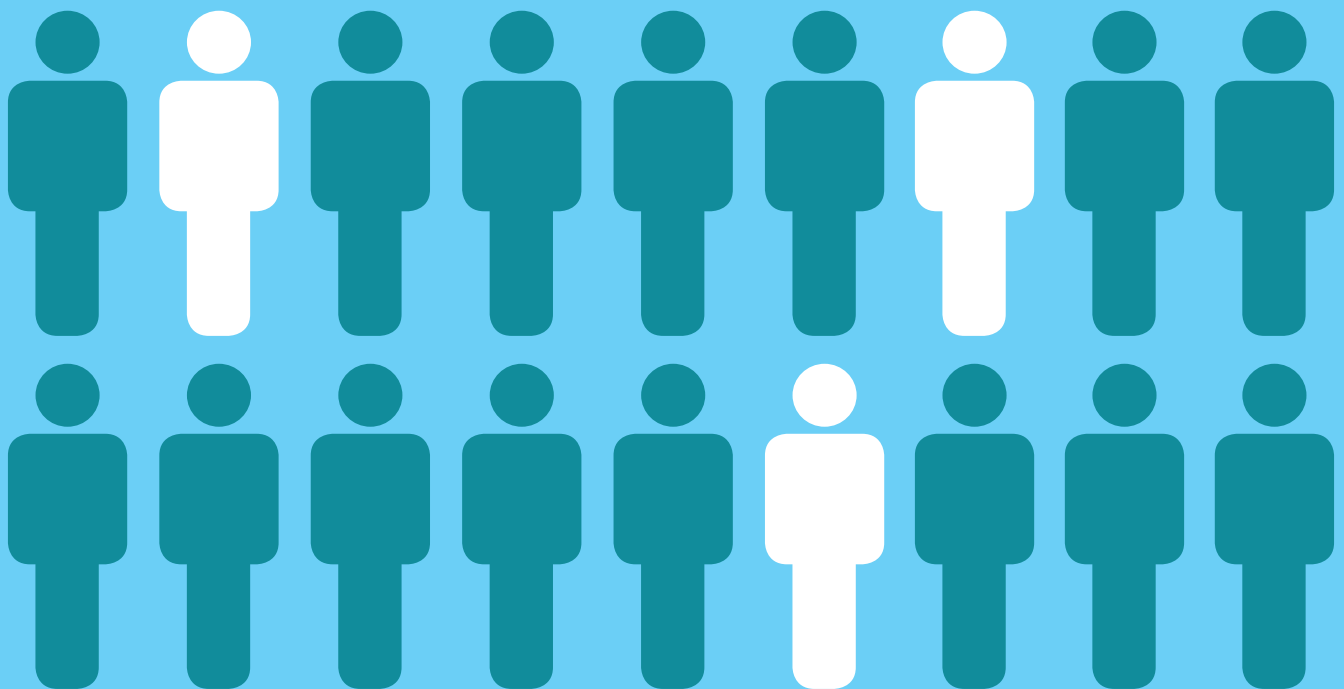


Southmead Project

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



Foreword

Imogen McCabe, CEO



We are very thankful to our Southmead Project team, clients and supporters for the past year and for helping us to emerge from the Covid pandemic.

We expanded our counselling team during Covid and have endeavoured to maintain this high level of support since then. Our Head of Counselling, Helen Biggs, sadly left this year, and so we have reflected on our organisational staff structure and how we could provide better clinical and managerial support. We therefore welcomed a Head of Therapeutic Services, Emma Bull, to oversee all of our therapeutic work, and a Counselling Lead, Rachel Morse, to manage our team of counsellors. Our new Admin Assistant, Ros Vitkovitch, has increased our administrative support to better help our staff team and clients. They have made significant progress in sustaining and developing our services, which has enabled us to support the highest number of clients that we have to date.

This year we saw 246 clients in counselling and offered 3,260 sessions. We have supported over 90 clients a week and continue to offer online and phone counselling (as well as face-to-face) as an ongoing core service. It is testament to our clients that they have attended as many as 80% of all booked sessions. Our Nexus counsellor has also provided sessions at outreach locations across the city, such as Bristol Drugs Project (BDP), Wick House and One25. In addition, our pre-counselling groups took place online to support clients on our waiting list. Our Family Support Group re-commenced in person every week and has supported 20 people who are affected by someone else's addiction to drugs or alcohol.

The Active Recovery Project has expanded to provide activities each week for groups of up to 12 members, which has supported 40 people this year. We are delighted to have secured long-term funding for this project through the National Lottery over the next 3 years.

We have also developed key areas of the charity, such as transitioning to an online case management system to enable more comprehensive data collation and outcomes monitoring. This has better supported remote working by having a centralised and secure system that our counsellors can use from home. In addition, we are grateful to Lloyds Bank Foundation for the help we received through their Enhance Programme, including developing an income diversification strategy with the Foundation for Social Improvement and a CEO peer support network across various charities in the South West.

We would like to thank our team for its incredible work over the past year and their ongoing dedication to our clients. We are also extremely grateful to the range of funders who have made this work possible and for enabling us to extend our services to more clients at this challenging time, including the larger trusts and foundations, Avon and Somerset Police, and the personal donations we have received.

Trustee Report

Simon Craker, Chairman
of the Board of Trustees



This year has seen a number of changes at the Southmead Project. Helen Biggs left her role as Head of Counselling and we wish her all success with her Doctorate. I would like to thank her for the contribution that she made to our work. We were delighted to welcome our new Head of Therapeutic Services, Emma Bull, to the Leadership Team.

The pandemic saw our waiting list rise to over 300 people and so the counselling team has continued its excellent work to reduce it. They have held sessions in person, online and by phone, and we will continue to offer counselling both face-to-face and remotely.

Once again, the Leadership Team have been amazing. Their care of the counselling team and all staff was exemplary, and on behalf of all the trustees I would like to thank them.

The board worked closely with them on an income diversification strategy with the FSI (through the Lloyds Enhanced programme) which was most useful.

The financial position was helped once again by the support of numerous grant providers and foundations. In addition, I must also thank our bid writer, Jo Byron, for the work completed through the year and the funds raised.

The support from everyone has created a more secure financial position over the next year and I cannot thank them all enough.

The trustees continued to meet online every month and eventually re-commenced meetings in person. At the end of the year all trustees were re-appointed to continue to support the Leadership Team, help maintain the charity's services and to expand them throughout the next year.



Counselling and Support

Long-term counselling

We offer up to 24 sessions of counselling for survivors of any type of abuse (including sexual, physical and emotional abuse, domestic abuse and neglect). We support people of all genders, aged 16 years and above, who live in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, BANES and North Somerset.

This year the sessions took place both in person at the Southmead Project, and remotely (online and by phone). We will continue to offer both options for our clients in future. We had a significant increase in referrals during the pandemic and so we have increased our counselling capacity to support over 200 people this year and offered 2,845 sessions.

Nexus counselling

Our Nexus service provides up to 12 sessions of counselling for clients who have experienced abuse and are using drugs or alcohol to help them cope with their trauma symptoms. We take referrals from drug and alcohol treatment agencies and clients are usually working with a drug/alcohol worker to reduce their reliance on substances. Most clients find that as their substance use reduces, the trauma symptoms increase which encourages them to use more drugs or alcohol to help cope with their feelings. The Nexus programme can provide support at this time and provides practical strategies to deal with anxiety, depression and flashbacks. It can also help to understand more about post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health difficulties, and explains how the brain processes trauma and triggers. This can be very enlightening and empowering, especially for clients to know that they are not alone. The counselling sessions have taken place in person at the Southmead Project, Bristol Drugs Project, Wick House and One25, and also online and by phone.

Pre-counselling Group

We hold pre-counselling groups to support clients on our waiting list for counselling, which took place online this year. This includes developing self-care tools, such as mindfulness and grounding; managing triggers, flashbacks and nightmares; and psycho-education around the impact of trauma. The support reduces isolation and feelings of being 'the only one', which helps people to feel less alone with their experience. Our waiting list grew significantly during the pandemic, so it has even more important to offer this support and sense of community while people have been waiting for counselling.

Family Support Group

We have a Family Support Group for people who support someone with an addiction to drugs or alcohol, or for anyone who is affected by someone else's addiction. This has been facilitated by Emma Summerill for 14 years, who is a qualified substance misuse specialist. The group provides a confidential and non-judgmental space for people to share their experiences, where they can attend as many sessions as they wish. It takes place on a weekly basis at the Southmead Project, on Wednesday evenings at 7-9pm.

Active Recovery Pottery Painting



Read the full report at www.southmeadproject.org.uk

"I was astounded at the level of care and thought that goes in to the Southmead Project... I could see my progress over the period of time. I think it has helped me make huge improvements in understanding myself and also in helping me to work out how to move forward and improve my quality of life."

"It has been the most effective service I have ever had in regards to processing trauma/abuse."

"[Active Recovery] has massively affected my life. I have more confidence in myself and this spreads out into everything else. Relationships, friendships, doing new things. I am making more connections with people, my social anxieties have reduced. People are ok. For me it's HUGE."

"It's that you listened and I think you understood me better than I understood myself. The important bit is that you cared and you were understanding. You let me be myself... I would recommend people to come here."

Active Recovery Project

The Active Recovery Project is open to current and past counselling clients and provides weekly activities to help build self-esteem, confidence and peer support networks, as well as reducing loneliness and isolation. We grew the service this year to provide weekly activities for between 8 and 12 members per group. We now have over 40 members who have formed a supportive community of survivors.

Active Recovery provides a unique service for survivors who benefit in many ways. It brings joy, connection, safety, grounding, skills and compassion into members' lives. We are usually fully booked each session and have a steady flow of new referrals.

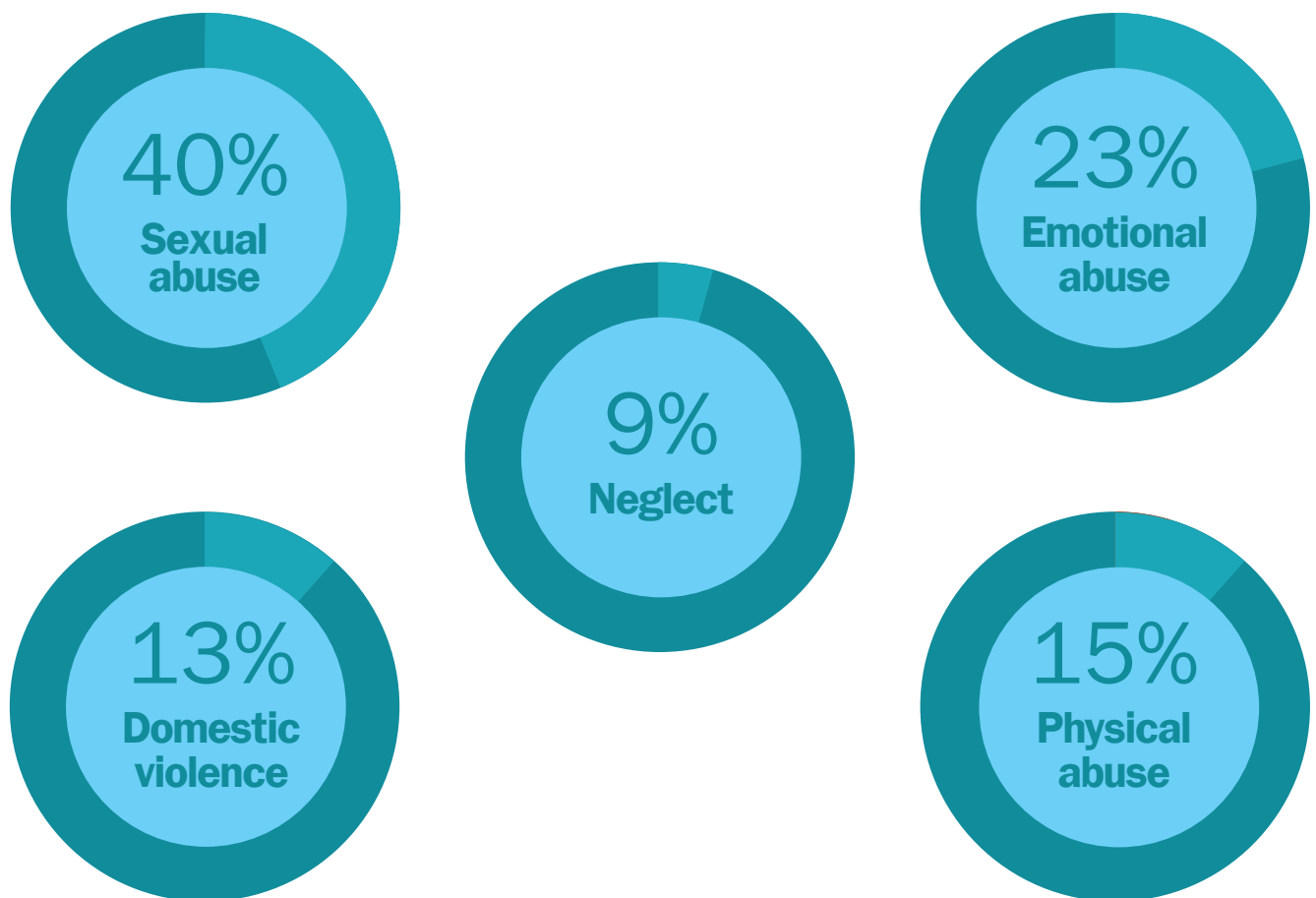
We have undertaken a lot of work to ensure our members' voices and needs are at the heart of what we do.

We have set up processes to ensure we listen carefully to all of our members' views and that all activities are ideas that are put forward and voted for by them. This year we have enjoyed rowing, sailing, kayaking, gardening, surfing, art therapy, zoo trips, farm trips, a campfire, yoga, crafternoons and more.

We use the experience and skill of our trauma-informed charity to enable survivors to access one of the most powerful recovery aids available – safe and genuine human connection. The impact for our members has been very positive and the project has been going from strength-to-strength. We have fortunately secured a further 3 years' funding courtesy of the National Lottery and will be continuing to offer it as one of our core services.

Who we supported

In 2021-22, the main reason that brought clients to counselling was...



Also...

91% of clients experienced abuse in childhood

32% of clients described their gender as male and **1%** as transgender

12% of clients were from an Asian, Black British or mixed ethnicity background

20% of clients were from the LGBTQ+ community

The impact of our support services

In 2021-22 we delivered the following support...

3,260 counselling sessions offered

80% of all sessions were attended

246 clients received counselling

40 Active Recovery members took part in activities

20 people attended the Family Support Group

5 clients attended an online pre-counselling group

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



92%
felt better informed
about the effects
of trauma



83%
had healthier
coping strategies



79%
felt better able to
cope with aspects
of everyday life



72%
saw an improvement
in their overall
well-being

Southmead Project Accounts 2021-22

Income

Grants	346,880
Donations	56,124
Sale of services	10,000
Miscellaneous	1,501
Total Income	414,505

Expenditure

Staff costs	263,817
Overheads	55,300
Total expenditure	319,117
Surplus/deficit	95,388
Funds brought forward	347,896
Funds carried forward	443,284
Consisting of:	
Restricted funds	316,033
Unrestricted funds	127,251

Southmead Project

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