

Annual Report 2018-19



Southmead Project

**Counselling and support
for abuse and addiction
across Bristol**



Healing is possible. southmeadproject.org.uk

Foreword

Dr Mike Peirce MBE,
Founder



It is with so many mixed emotions I sit and write my contribution to the 25th annual report of Southmead Project. When I look back and reflect on those very difficult formative years of the charity's life, with nothing but hope and a dream with which to call upon, the very fact the charity is still here permits a great sense of achievement.

During this time there have been many ups and downs, but never has there been capitulation. It is perhaps fitting and noticeable that most of those pioneers who first joined me had lived experience of child abuse, self-harm and overcame addictions to drugs or alcohol. Academic and therapeutic-based study and learning following their recovery ensured sound, trauma-informed knowledge on tap and the formation of an extremely formidable, determined operations team.

Our successive management teams have included GPs, community activists, service users, police representatives, and educational and social services experts. Their values and endeavour, together with that of the practitioners, have formed the solid bedrock upon which the charity stands today. It was trust that allowed this charity to secure a foothold in the local community,

make the funding breakthrough and consolidate the service we provide. It is the sustaining of this trust that will determine the life of Southmead Project here on in. The challenge is to cement and maintain the level of trust that has enabled us to deliver a top-class service for the last 25 years. Upholding the ethos, values and principles that has seen Southmead Project ascend to a privileged position of trust – within and without the local community – is equally essential.

The charity is, without doubt, in an extremely strong position: Tudor Trust, Henry Smith, Lloyds Banking Trust and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) have all committed major funds, while smaller donations continue to come in.

Even more encouraging are the breakthroughs my fellow pioneers and I have longed for. First, the publishing of the NHS's guidelines on drug misuse and dependence*, which recognised the high rates of trauma exposure in substance misusers and promoted an awareness and understanding of this trauma among patients and the workforce. Second, the support from our local MP Darren Jones, whose tireless work has resulted in a

Parliamentary debate on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The full Hansard report is available at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright

The delivery and operational capability of our therapeutic work is second to none and I am delighted to say the hopes, dreams and values of our utterly determined colleagues – past and present – have been fully realised. Any perceived success is testament to their sheer tenacity, faith and dogged determination. It is also testament to the people of Southmead and all those who have walked through our doors seeking help with their plight.

From an individual perspective, my race has been run and so I have decided to step down and leave the charity's operational activities to the excellent current team in order for me to concentrate on strategic direction and funding. There are so many people who have backed me when the going was tough but most of all it was my wife, Carol, who was my rock throughout. It is she who deserves any credit that may be due; always allowing me the freedom to pursue my dream of building something that would help others.

She sought no plaudits, gave counsel and solace when the chips were down, and remained content in the belief that what I was doing was right. Carol passed away on 11 March 2019. I dedicate my work to her memory.

Trustee report

Simon Craker, Chairman of Trustees

As Chairman of the Trustees I have had the privilege to work with other trustees and especially Mike to help place Southmead Project in a position to enable it to continue its fantastic work. We are now in a position to look forward and ensure the legacy Mike has created develops and has longevity.

Without doubt the last 12 months has seen us take big strides towards this goal. The new Leadership Team has worked extremely hard to ensure we can continue to provide our valued counselling services in the future. In addition, thanks to the diligence and dedication of our counselling team, our waiting list has reduced by more than 80%.

Our governance has developed and it provides a strong base for the future. The additional funding secured over the last year will allow us to plan pre-counselling and post-counselling groups for 2019-20, which are so valued by our service users.

We have also seen two trustees join the Board, bringing further therapeutic and corporate skills to enrich the charity.

We all thank Mike for his unbelievable efforts over the last 25 years and hope to see his legacy move forward for the next 25 years at least!

Long-term counselling

Counselling for survivors of abuse

We are a year on from our much-needed overhaul of the therapeutic services and the team have embraced all the changes going on around them. We are happy to say that we have made significant progress with the waiting list and have reduced it from 120 to less than 20 clients. We are aiming to reopen our waiting list next year which will enable us to provide counselling to those who have had the incredible courage to ask for support.

Waiting list reduced from 120 clients to 20 clients

We have expanded our counselling team, taken on paid employees and are committed to taking on volunteers. All counsellors, whether an employee or volunteer, bring a unique set of skills and experience which adds a richness to the counselling work. As always, the charity and excellent service provided would not be possible without our team of committed and dedicated counsellors.

We have also focused on updating our counselling rooms and resources to make them as client friendly as possible, as well as expanding the outcomes data that we collect to gain a broader picture of the impact of our support services.

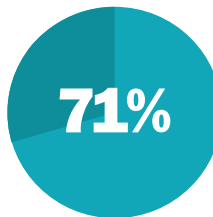
Senior leadership team



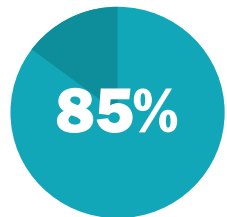
Senior Leadership Team: Helen Biggs (Head of Counselling), Pete Wraith (Head of Finance) and Imogen McCabe (Head of Operations)

Counselling for abuse, including sexual, physical and emotional abuse, domestic violence and neglect

24 sessions of one-to-one counselling for adults



71% of clients felt less socially isolated



85% of clients had greater self-esteem

Nexus counselling

Counselling for survivors of abuse who also have an addiction to drugs or alcohol

The Nexus Programme provides a unique service in Bristol and the surrounding area as we can support clients who have experienced trauma through abuse and are still actively using drugs and alcohol to help them to deal with trauma symptoms. We work with clients who are engaging with drug and alcohol services but are struggling to maintain recovery from drugs and/or alcohol due to the intensity of the trauma symptoms. Their only way to cope with life is by using substances and when this is taken away they struggle to deal with their emotions and feelings. The Nexus Programme provides support and practical strategies to help individuals deal with anxiety, depression and flashbacks and helps clients to understand post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and associated mental health difficulties.

Jo Kelley

Nexus counsellor



Jo Kelley
Nexus Counsellor

Counselling for addiction to drugs or alcohol for survivors of abuse

12 sessions of one-to-one counselling

Focus is on becoming more stable and reducing alcohol or drug intake

Can be referred for long-term counselling if appropriate

Need to be referred by drug or alcohol worker

Sessions at Southmead Project and outreach locations across Bristol

100%

100% of clients felt better informed about the effects of trauma and abuse

72%

72% of clients felt their coping mechanisms had improved

Group work

Support for clients before and after counselling, as well as for their family members

Family support group

Who for? Family members who support someone with an addiction to drugs or alcohol or who are affected by someone's addiction

How many sessions?

As many or few sessions as family members wish

When? Every Wednesday from 7-9pm at Southmead Project

Pre-counselling groups

Groups are run throughout the year for clients on our waiting list. The peer support they receive can help reduce isolation and those feelings of being 'the only one', which can enable a huge shift for clients working with their trauma. We have a range of self-care tools that we offer including mindfulness, grounding, managing triggers, flashbacks, nightmares, communication skills and psychoeducation on the impact of trauma. We have been able to extend the programme from six to eight weeks as a result of client feedback.

Post-counselling groups

We are thrilled to announce that we have secured funding to start post-counselling groups for clients that have had counselling with us in 2019-20. These sessions will provide support following one-to-one counselling.

Year-long group

We ran a group between March 2018 and January 2019 that used creative tools to support survivors of abuse. The participants gained many skills and a deeper understanding of their trauma. Clients told us the benefits of the group included...
"Having PTSD properly understood";
"Learning ways to cope in everyday life";
"Gaining knowledge that I am not alone"



Emma Summerill
Family Support
Group Facilitator

Community projects

Our range of support continues outside the therapy room with hands-on activities designed to increase self-confidence and reduce isolation

Art of Survivors

We ran eight art workshops for survivors of abuse to use their creative skills to help support their healing process. This gave the opportunity for survivors to express themselves through activities such as painting, sculpture and poetry. The inspiring works of art were proudly displayed at two safeguarding conferences in Dorchester and Bournemouth in early 2019.

Active recovery project

We have secured funding from the People's Health Trust for a project to give survivors of abuse the opportunity to take part in community-based activities. The aim is to build their self-esteem, confidence and peer support networks and to help reduce their feeling of loneliness and isolation. This will be the first physical activity programme of its kind where people can socialise with others who share or understand their experience in a safe and supportive environment. The activities will include gym-based activities, rowing, canoeing, sailing, kayaking, walking, art, dance and singing. The project will last for two years with activities taking place each fortnight.



Claire Smith (Admin Assistant), Tracy Brooks (Counsellor) and Hayley Davies (Counsellor)

8 art workshops held for survivors of abuse

“[I gained] the possibility of healing my past by approaching it from a non-verbal angle.

Powerful” Art of Survivors participant



Nick Tuftnell (Counsellor), Sophie Bayley (Counsellor) and Kate Carruthers (Counsellor)

Accounts to March 2019

Income

Donations	33,053
Charitable activities	259,020
Other income	595
Total income	292,668

Expenditure

Charitable activities	244,457
Raising funds	6,664
Total expenditure	251,121

Net income/outgoing **41,547**

Funds brought forward **32,279**

Funds carried forward **73,826**

A copy of our full audited accounts is available on request

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

To read more about them and what they do, please visit southmeadproject.org.uk/supporters