



Mind Leeds

# Impact Report

April 2024 – March 2025



## Who is Leeds Mind?

# We are your local mental health charity

We provide mental health support across Leeds and West Yorkshire for adults and young people.

Our vision is better mental health for all, and our support is for anyone who needs it.

Our support is rooted in over 50 years of working alongside people in our community who are living with mental health challenges. This legacy shapes who we are as individuals who truly understand the importance of mental wellbeing and the power of lived experience in guiding meaningful mental health support.

Our services are shaped by the needs of local people. We work closely with individuals who have lived experience of mental health difficulties, involving them in every aspect of our work to help break down stigma and raise awareness. We're committed to listening, learning, and evolving, so we can provide the right support and continually improve what we offer.

Our work is focused on early intervention and prevention. That means support is aimed at improving outcomes and preventing escalating need or risk.

We are an independent charity, responsible for our own strategy and funding. That means all money raised for Leeds Mind goes into delivering local support in Leeds and West Yorkshire.

Proud to be part of the network of over 100 local independent Minds, we work closely with Mind to make mental health matter and aim to ensure it is a priority on a local and national level.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging is critical to the work we do. This is to make support available to the people who are most affected by mental health difficulties, but least likely or able to access support. We have so much more to do to ensure communities experiencing the poorest mental health can access support that is right for them.

We're here to fight for your mental health. For support. For respect. For you.

For more information on any of the support services or projects mentioned in this report, please visit: [www.leedsmind.org.uk](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk)



The support from Leeds Mind through WorkPlace Leeds has restored my confidence in my working life and the support that is out there for mental health and work-related issues.



## Khalid's story

# Finding Support Through Befriending

All our work is led by a commitment to listening to and uplifting lived experience voices. We want to ensure the support is high quality, and tailored to what people, like Khalid, want and need from us.

I have lots of mental health issues that I struggle with. Living alone and dealing with personal issues has made me feel low, depressed even. On many occasions I have had suicidal thoughts, which was very disturbing. I knew I needed help, and I found the Befriending Service at Leeds Mind.

At first, I had worries. Would I connect with my Befriender? Would they understand my emotional needs, my struggles with eating, sleeping, drinking, relationships, and even simply going out? There were many things in my mind, but as soon as I started talking to the Befriender, I realised he was someone I could trust. He encouraged openness and honesty in a way that felt safe, not alienating. He's been helping me work through things in a way that feels natural and supportive.

It felt reassuring to know that someone could meet me in my own environment, and not just see me as a diagnosis, but as a person. This was exactly what I needed: someone to truly listen and understand the issues I was struggling with.

I appreciate my Befriender's patience and understanding. He took time to learn about my mental health and the daily challenges I face—things that might seem small to others but can completely overwhelm me. It's been comforting to have someone check in every week, someone who understands my safety, respects my confidentiality, and is flexible about where we meet.

Having the Befriender in my life has helped me build a routine. He never pushes me when things feel too much, but he helps me regulate my activities. When I was at my lowest—full of panic over a family issue—he was kind and compassionate, and that moment made a real difference. I would have struggled alone, but with his support, I felt safe.



Watch Khalid talk about his experience with Befriending.

Since receiving support, I've started to structure my day better. My meal times are improving (I was losing weight, not eating enough), and he helped me set up appointments to address my physical health. Even simple conversations have opened doors for me to learn how to better take care of myself. I've started keeping my home tidier, although I still miss things sometimes. But my Befriender helps me work towards a routine, which really eases my mental distress.

More than anything, this support has given me a sense of emotional stability. My Befriender's approach is always supportive, never judgmental. He has helped me think through my relationship with my daughter in a way that doesn't add more pressure or turmoil.



I am grateful for this service—it's been a lifeline for me. Support like this makes a real impact, helping to break down the stigma around mental health and providing a safe, welcoming space for people who need it.



## Letter from the CEO

# Creativity and resilience in the face of uncertainty

**Over the past year, Leeds Mind has navigated continued uncertainty and instability with remarkable resilience and unwavering commitment to our purpose. Despite funding cuts and enduring the loss of provision, the team's output has been fantastic, and we have maintained forward momentum to sustain core services, launch new initiatives, develop the support we provide and deliver our strategic priorities.**

Reflecting on the year fills me with immense pride as we celebrate the collective work and commitment of our staff, volunteers and working partners.

We are delighted at the appointment of our new Chair, Kate Lupton, during the year. Our connected and resourceful approach has been instrumental in ensuring that a turbulent landscape does not compromise the quality of support we offer to those who need it most.

We've navigated national and local spending cuts, always making the case for more parity in mental health. We've worked alongside colleagues in the wider health system to navigate grand scale change and challenge.

During this period, a new Government took office. Just a week later, we hosted a ministerial visit where officials sought our insights on mental health in relation to employment and job retention.

Alongside young people with lived experience, together we took the opportunity to emphasise that while meaningful work can be a vital part of recovery, the person's voice must always be heard (more on p.18).

We continued to be resourceful in the face of ongoing changes to welfare legislation, for instance by expanding our financial wellbeing support to help more people cope with the cost of living increases.

We bravely met the loss of some services with determination to take on new opportunities.



**Lucy Hancock**  
CEO

For example, after saying goodbye to our longstanding community-based Inkwell creative wellbeing service, we began work with the established Arts & Minds Network, bringing together people in Leeds who believe the arts can promote mental wellbeing (more on p.20).

We mobilised new services continuing to increase access to lived experience mental health support across West Yorkshire. For example, we launched our Stepping Stones suicide and self-harm prevention work across a broad regional footprint, building on the vital region-wide work already done by our Suicide Bereavement Services (more on p.22 and 23).

Our dedication to being an open and accessible organisation is stronger than ever. We've demonstrated our commitment to change by championing initiatives like our ongoing cultural learning and development programs, and by centring lived experience involvement in our support.

Our work has continued to address healthcare inequalities, all the time recognising there is much more we must do (see p.10-15).

We've influenced change locally by making connections and partnerships with others, working to build system collaboration and influence with our commissioners, and by working with local partner organisations and funders to develop our support to underserved communities and shift towards neighbourhood health working closely with community mental health transformation partners.

Another great example of connectivity was the Leeds Mindful Employer Conference, held in May, a brilliant partnership of organisations, supporters, partners and the team making for a first-class day that demonstrated Leeds Mind's strength in this space and the importance of mentally healthy workplaces (more on p.24).

Events like the Mindful Employer conference and many others would not be possible without our fantastic supporters. Thank you to all our supporters – your continued backing is needed now more than ever to ensure mental health is a priority and everyone has access to support that is right for them.

As 2025 marks the conclusion of our strategy period (2022–2025), I am fuelled by possibility and determination as we look to next year. We've built the foundations for sustainable growth, and now look to build on our strengths, listen and learn from our communities to ensure we deliver support that is right for them.

## Letter from the Chair of Trustees

**On behalf of all Trustees at Leeds Mind, I want to thank the whole team of staff and volunteers for continuing to deliver such high-quality services and putting the needs of the community first, in another challenging year for the sector.**

In my first year in the role of Chair, I have seen how the whole organisation has pulled together, not just to withstand the increasing external pressures and change but also innovate and grow.

We have found time for reflection and influencing change, to end the year in a position of strength. This is a strong foundation to build on for our new strategy period.

It is fantastic to see these efforts recognised, as Leeds Mind was awarded Great Place To Work certification, ranking 57th in the UK's best workplaces (medium enterprise category). Meaningfully, organisations are ranked based on feedback from their employees, so this is a first-hand account of what it's really like to work at Leeds Mind; something that we should be enormously proud of. (more on p.16)

This work has influenced an action plan that aims to continue our work towards becoming an even more accessible, inclusive and welcoming organisation. Which is key to delivering the vital, high quality support that people in Leeds and West Yorkshire need and deserve.

What you see in the pages of this report is the result of the team's unerring commitment to improving people's mental health experience. Whilst we cannot overlook the challenging environment in which we are operating, I am optimistic about what we will achieve together as we take forward our new strategy. To see how you can get involved and join the fight for mental health, see p.31.



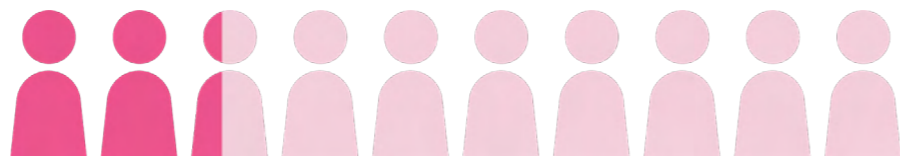
**Kate Lupton**  
Chair of Trustees

# Who we supported

Between April 2024 and March 2025, we reached **8,719** people through our work.

This included:

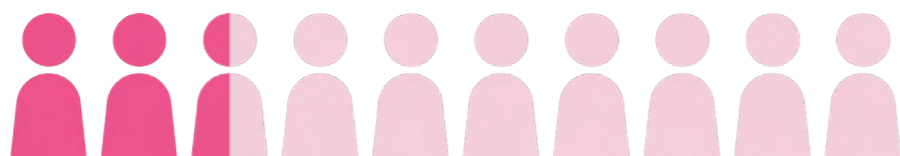
24% of the people who accessed our support were under the age of 25



54% of the people who accessed our support were from areas of deprivation



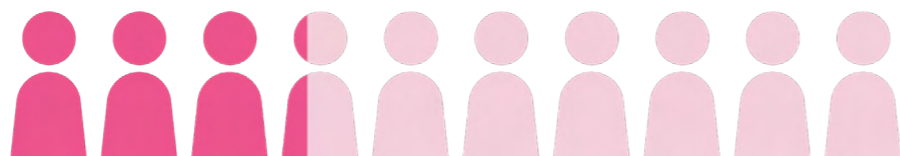
25% of the people who accessed our support were from culturally diverse communities



20% of the people who accessed our support identified as LGBTQIA+



33% of the people who accessed our support disclosed they were Neurodivergent



# 115

people supported through financial wellbeing groups

# 253

people supported through 1-to-1 counselling (up 53% on last year)

# 1,092

people supported through our suicide bereavement services

# 574

people helped through peer support

# 229

people supported through creative arts therapies

# 1,709

people received mental health training (up 38% from last year)

# Leeds footprint

Our offices are in Kirkstall and Horsforth, but we work right across the city and West Yorkshire\*. This is so that our support is available where people need us.

\*Select services operate across West Yorkshire.

## 54%

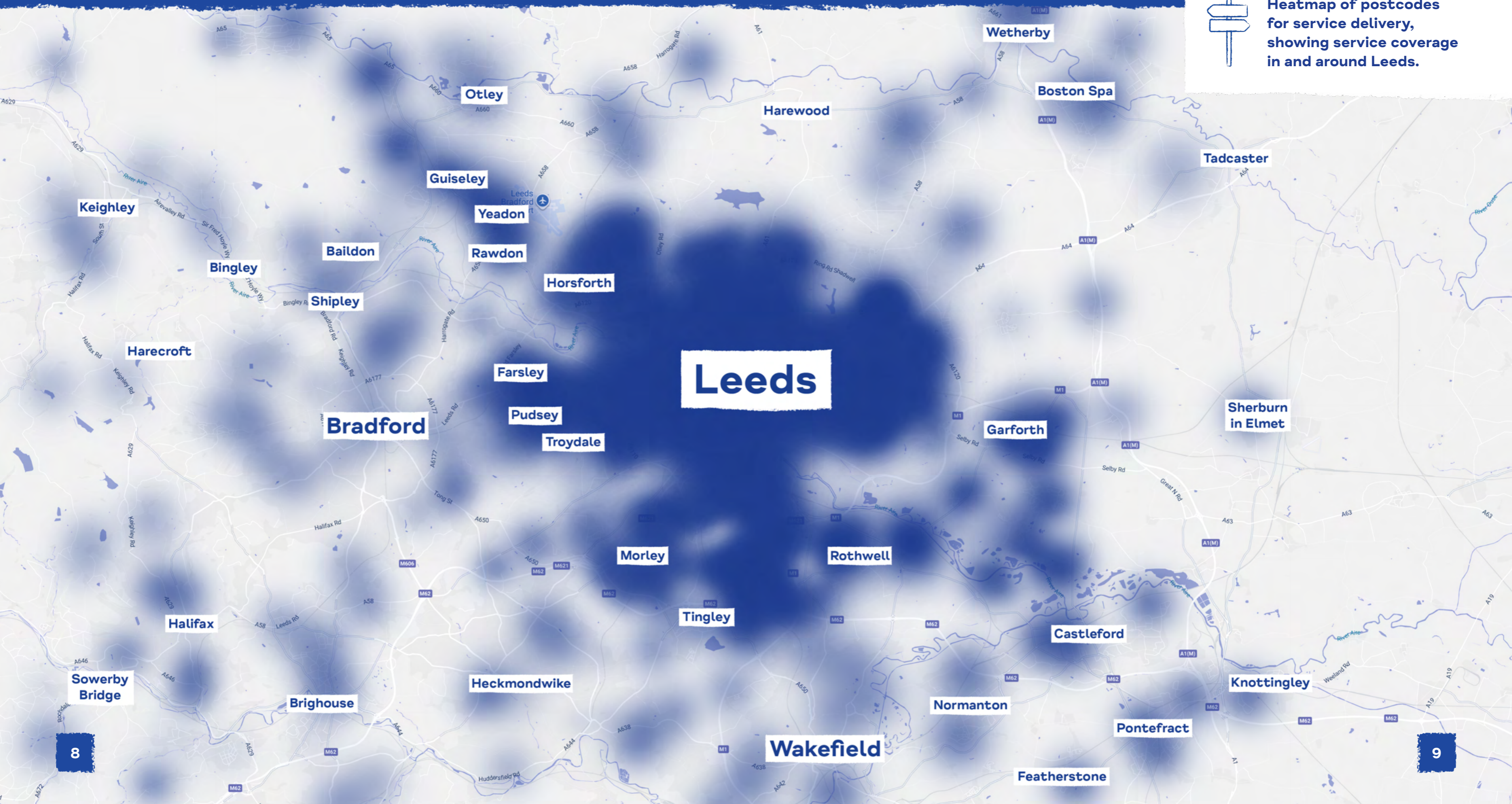
Of people who accessed our support were from areas of deprivation

## 31%

Of people accessing our support were from decile 1 – that means the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England



Heatmap of postcodes for service delivery, showing service coverage in and around Leeds.



# Priority communities

Our strategy outlines our priority communities, based on the need for mental health support and focusing especially on those who face additional barriers to getting support.



## Culturally diverse communities

25% of the people who used our services were from culturally diverse communities. This was proportionally higher than at population level where “non-white” people represent 21%.

Serving these communities is important to us due to health inequalities that we know exist; for example, experiences of racism has been linked to increased likelihood of developing depression and other mental health experiences.

We continued our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging work, which included: being part of Synergi Leeds, an innovative and ambitious citywide approach to tackling ethnic inequalities in mental health; and developing our Race Equity Steering Group, which published its Race Equity action plan.

## Using video to increase reach for Barber Project

Leeds Mind’s Barber Project produced and published a series of short films, Barber Talk: Looking Good, Feeling Better.

The Barber Project helped barbers from African, Caribbean, and South Asian backgrounds improve their confidence with the conversations around mental health and suicide that many of them were already having with their customers.

The aim was to create safer communal spaces in barbershops to help tackle the health inequalities faced by men from African, Caribbean, and South Asian backgrounds.

These videos were developed in collaboration with experienced barbers from these communities, and The Lippy People, a video storytelling charity that collaborates with people to share their lived experiences.

The videos provided insight from barbers and from a Leeds Mind Peer Support Trainer for spotting poor mental health, having difficult conversations, barber boundaries and barber self-care. We also developed a barber’s resource page with further information.

**“We barbers, we have the opportunity to speak to people. It’s not just about cutting hair.”**



# Reaching Culturally Diverse young people through Youth in Mind

Our children and young people’s services continue to provide tailored support for young people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Culturally Diverse Minds is designed for 10 to 25-year-olds who are struggling with their mental health. This may stem from issues such as discrimination or racism.

Grounded in empathy and shared lived experience, the support focuses on strengths, helping young people build skills and strategies to maintain their mental wellbeing. The programme is co-designed with participants to ensure it meets their unique needs. Around one-third of those accessing our Youth in Mind service come from culturally diverse communities.



**It has been great to talk to someone who I share some common ground with. To talk to someone who understands my culture, and be able to relate and share our similar experiences and values, especially in relation to our culture and families.**



## Impact Group session on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

When developing our Race Equity Plan, we sought input from our influence and participation group, to hear what the people who access our support thought.

In September 2024, Eloise Bell (Director of People, Culture & Governance) was invited to speak to the Impact Group, our lived experience forum, about how the organisation makes sure it’s inclusive. Rosie, an Impact Group member who attended the session, said,

**“I found the session with Eloise last year really valuable. It created space for honest, important conversations around equality, diversity, recruitment, and how to foster a culture of acceptance, including how to respond when views differ.”**

The conversation ranged from responding to problematic behaviours, to how we support staff and volunteers to feel confident enough stand up for our values, to how we celebrate events like Black History Month.



Reflecting on the session, Eloise said,

**“As senior leaders, it’s vital we are open and brave in connecting with our communities. We are a values-led charity, and inclusive practices are a fundamental aspect of our work. Our commitment to our values and inclusivity is central to everything we do.”**

# People experiencing financial hardship or poverty

**According to the Institute for Health Equity. 24% of people in Leeds lived in the most deprived area (decile 1), compared to 10% on average in England (IHE 2024).**

One third of the people who accessed our services came from some of the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England, and over half (54%) were from the top 30% most deprived areas.

This matters because financial hardship can significantly affect mental health and in turn, mental health difficulties can impact how people manage finances. Economic barriers also make it harder for individuals to access the support they need.

We are committed to reaching and supporting communities most affected by inequality, ensuring that mental health care is accessible to those who need it most.

We had services specifically designed to address the impact the Cost of Living crisis would have on people's mental wellbeing, and worked to break the stigma around mental health and finances.

## Expanding our Money in Mind financial wellbeing support

We expanded our Money in Mind financial wellbeing support, to meet increasing demand. Where our Help Through Hardship service had come to an end, we took the learning and networks built through that project and used it to improve and expand Money in Mind. This allowed us to support 49% more people, and also offer group work.

**"I had been disconnected from my community and friends out of fear...my support worker helped me get a second phone number to avoid harassment from creditors, and this improved my wellbeing."**



## Making counselling more accessible

We've redesigned our counselling service to make it more accessible and responsive to the needs of our community. Previously, we operated a monthly waiting list with fixed opening times, which helped manage demand but created challenges for many.

Listening to feedback, we recognised that this system didn't work for everyone especially those with busy schedules or limited online access. In response, we've introduced a more flexible and user-friendly approach, making it easier for people to access the support they need, when they need it

We introduced a tiered pricing structure for our counselling service to make support more accessible to everyone. Sessions are offered at £60, which is aligned with or below typical private practice rates, with a subsidised option available for those who need it.

This flexible approach also allows us to better match counsellors to individual needs, ensuring a more personalised experience. The impact has been clear: 100% of people who accessed our counselling said they would recommend the service.

Over the year, we supported 253 individuals – a 53% increase from the previous year across more than 2,000 sessions. We're proud that 43% of our caseload benefited from subsidised sessions, and that we reached those who need us most, with 35% of service users coming from the 30% most deprived areas.

**"I appreciate the cost of the sessions are at half price for people like myself who is on benefits."**

**"I cannot recommend attending counselling with Leeds Mind enough – this investment I have made in myself will help me be happier and healthier."**

## Sharing 'Supporting Your Employees Through Welfare Reform Changes' with local employers

The Leeds Mindful Employer Network produced guidance around welfare reform, targeted at employers. This aimed to increase knowledge around the issues so that employers and managers could better support their employees affected by the benefit reform and cuts that came out of the Spring budget.

Guidance included how to have judgement-free conversations, ideas for support that employers could offer, and signposting further support.

Here at Leeds Mind, we also followed the advice by putting on an information session for staff and volunteers with Money Helper, a free, impartial advice service backed by government.



**...reiterate your commitment to ensuring no employee feels stigmatised or discriminated against...**

**Remember, creating a supportive environment where employees feel safe discussing these matters not only shows your dedication to their wellbeing but also helps maintain a positive, productive workplace where everyone can thrive despite external challenges.**



# Children & young people



Almost a quarter (24%) of the people who accessed our services were under the age of 25.

Children and young people are a strategic priority audience for us because young people in the UK have higher mental health need than ever.

1 in 6 young people in England (aged 5 to 16) experienced a mental health problem in 2020, up from 1 in 9 in 2017. This is in the context of rising prevalence of common mental health issues, self-harm and waiting times for statutory services – especially in aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are more young people in Leeds than on average in England and Wales (33% of people in Leeds are aged under 25, compared to 29% nationally) so there needs to be more support than elsewhere.

However, there's underfunding of young people services in the city, with average waits for NHS mental health support in West Yorkshire being 326 days – nearly a year.

## Supporting young women, girls and non-binary people

Youth in Mind provides dedicated support for young people aged 10 to 25, starting from school year 6, who are navigating mental health difficulties linked to hard or distressing experiences.

We're proud to have secured new funding for a specialised project focused on supporting young women, girls, and non-binary people.

This initiative strengthens our commitment to inclusive, trauma-informed care, ensuring that those most affected by complex experiences receive compassionate, tailored support.

**“I was nervous I would be judged or feel like I wouldn't belong, but since I have joined I feel like I am part of the 'community'”**



## Supporting children and young people affected by suicide

Leeds Mind's Suicide Bereavement Services launched a peer support group for young people. Offering face-to-face and online options, the groups aimed to give young people a safe space to explore their grief, and use their shared experiences to support each other.

Through this group, the young people led a piece of work to produce a video. They aimed to share their experiences in the hope that this would encourage other young people impacted by suicide to access support.

One of the young people was also supported to do a pre-recorded interview for BBC Radio Leeds, sharing their experience around losing a parent to suicide. This used a local platform to amplify their voice and break stigma.

**“I felt comfortable talking about my experiences - it was nice to be around people of a similar age with a loss of the same nature.”**

# Neurodivergent, LGBTQIA+ and older people: Broadening our work with marginalised communities

We offer tailored support to these groups because the stigma, social isolation and/or discrimination they face can increase their risk of mental health difficulties.

20% of people accessing our services disclosed that they were LGBTQIA+, up from 18% the year before. The non-disclosure rate went down (indicating trust). 18% were older people. 33% disclosed that they were neurodivergent (e.g. they have ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia etc. or are Autistic)

## Year-round Pride

We attended Leeds Pride, and marched as part of Leeds Charities Together, a collective of local Third Sector organisations taking part in the event. We take part to show to our LGBTQIA+ communities that we're here for them and welcoming to all.

For us, it's important that Pride isn't just one day or one month; it's a year-round commitment. This work includes: running our staff LGBTQIA+ Voices group; celebrating awareness days and using them as opportunities to share and learn; and running a series of educational events including Tea & Talks.

**“You can really be yourself and that is celebrated. They are very supportive in a variety of different ways.”**



## Supporting older people

We secured some funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to revive our Befriending service, which had ended due to lost funding.

The service works with people over 50 in and around Leeds, who may be struggling with loneliness or social isolation. Studies show 15% of older people in Leeds are socially isolated – this is around 37,000 people.

We offer one-to-one befriending partnerships with a like-minded befriending volunteer. With a befriender, a befriender can share what's on their mind, or just enjoy having a chat.

**The team supported 102 socially isolated people, recruiting 44 volunteers.**

**“I do not feel so alone anymore, and have something to look forward to each week”**

**“Befriending saved my life!”**

## Centring Neurodivergent Voices

We're delighted to have secured funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to relaunch our Befriending service for older people.

This vital service, which had previously paused due to funding challenges, is now back offering meaningful connection, companionship, and support to older individuals in our community.

Reviving this service reflects our ongoing commitment to reducing isolation and promoting wellbeing among older people, ensuring they feel valued, heard, and supported.

The project was co-produced by autistic people with support from Leeds Mind facilitators. That meant that neurodivergent voices were developing neuro-affirmative services.

The autistic people involved in the project decided to cover a variety of topics, including: late diagnosis, communication struggles, waiting for diagnosis, self-esteem, emotional regulation, masking and more.

**We supported 201 people through these workshops.**

**“It hasn't only made a positive difference to my life but it has saved my life.”**



# Leeds Mind is a Great Place to Work®

And that's what makes our support great

Leeds Mind was proud to rank **57th in the UK's Best Workplaces™ 2025** List by Great Place To Work, demonstrating our commitment to inclusion, quality, and growth.

Considered the 'gold standard' of employer awards, the UK's Best Workplaces™ Awards are independently assessed based on confidential employee survey feedback. So the results reflect the culture employees actually experience.



## Our survey results told us that:

**100%**

People are treated fairly regardless of their sexual orientation

**98%**

People are treated fairly regardless of their gender

**96%**

People are treated fairly regardless of their age

**98%**

People feel the work has special meaning, **it is not "just a job"**

**99%**

People feel good about the ways we contribute to the community

**98%**

People are willing to give extra to get the job done

**96%**

People are proud to tell others they work here

**100%**

Colleagues are willing to listen to work related problems

## A diverse and inclusive team is what makes us great:



We know that making Leeds Mind an accessible, inclusive and welcoming place to work, means that it will be the same for those seeking support.

We have continued our work towards building a diverse and inclusive workforce, to better represent the communities we aim to serve.

**30%**

of employees from culturally diverse communities

**28%**

of staff identify as LGBTQIA+

**5%**

of employees trans and/or non-binary

**40%**

of employees disabled or with long term health conditions

**25%**

of staff with a mental health diagnosis

**26%**

of the team are neurodivergent

**“ I have had the best client, volunteer and employee experience with this company. I have benefited directly from services, given back, and contributed to its evolving values, which I have found allows me to be authentic. I am proud of how far I have come. I am grateful to be able to create positive influence with my colleagues, working across areas of deprivation in Leeds. ”**

**“ It's great that I'm in a role where I can share some of my lived experience with my clients in order to support them to achieve their goals. I also feel comfortable sharing my lived experiences with colleagues and I don't feel as if I will be judged for this. ”**

# Local Influence



## Influencing a new government

**Within one week of Labour being elected, Leeds Mind received a visit from Sir Stephen Timms, Minister for Social Security and Disability and Baroness Sherlock, Minister for Lords, alongside colleagues from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).**

Our guests joined us at Leeds Mind premises, DeLacy House, where we run our Employment Support, Financial Wellbeing and Young People's Services.

They were welcomed by CEO, Lucy Hancock, and the team, and met and heard the experiences of two young people who have been using our services. Finally, all attendees came together for a roundtable discussion.

The ministers were keen to discuss the increased level of economic inactivity amongst young people, and we described how mental wellbeing and lack of accessible support is a major driving factor in this.

**During the roundtable discussion, we were able to advocate for:**



How critical it is that the planned young people's hubs are focused on collaborative support over clinical interventions.



The need for a change to short-termist thinking around funding, for Third Sector organisations like ours to be able to continue to deliver meaningful impact.



The critical involvement the Third Sector must have in rising to the current challenge around mental health and wellbeing.

**CEO of Leeds Mind, Lucy Hancock, commented:**



**We felt privileged to be able to offer them firsthand insight into the difference our support makes to young people's lives, and people's employment. We hope our advocacy and insight during this meeting plays some part in shaping future policies that support mental health services at both local and national levels.**



## Driving systems change through partnerships and purpose

Leeds Mind collaborates across public, private and voluntary sectors to strengthen mental health and social care systems in Leeds and West Yorkshire. Our aim is lasting, systemic change by influencing policy, reshaping services and amplifying community voice.

### Key partnerships and initiatives include

01

#### Community Mental Health Transformation Board

We work with the NHS, social care and Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSEs) partners to redesign mental health support around individuals. Our goal is a connected, person-centred system where people access the right support at the right time – without having to repeat their story.

02

#### Synergi-Leeds Partnership

This citywide initiative addresses ethnic inequity in mental health services. Together we tackle overrepresentation in crisis admissions, improve community-based care experiences for minority communities and embed cultural and health considerations across the system.

03

#### Leeds Suicide Prevention Network

We lead a coalition of mental health and social care organisations to shape suicide prevention strategy, share best practice and channel lived experience voices into the Public Health Suicide Prevention Board.

04

#### Leeds Mental Health Alliance

In partnership with Touchstone, BARCA and Northpoint, and supported by Forum Central, we influence the local system to respond to community needs, drive decision-making and service design.

05

#### Young Lives Leeds Forum

Hosted by Voluntary Action Leeds, this forum unites youth services to improve cross-agency collaboration. Our involvement has strengthened our young people's offer through closer links with social care, housing, training and education partners.

# Services and lived experience voices



## Arts & Minds

We were thrilled to continue our arts provision, recognising how deeply valued it is by our community. Securing the tender for Arts & Minds allowed us to build on this passion and expand our reach.

The Arts & Minds Network brings together people across Leeds who believe in the power of the arts to support mental wellbeing.

Now run in collaboration with the NHS, the network is open to anyone living, working, or volunteering in Leeds who shares a vision for growing arts and health - whether they're mental health service users, carers, artists, healthcare professionals, or part of third sector organisations.

We actively promote the use of arts within NHS services and

empower creative individuals in the community to use artistic expression to support their wellbeing.

**During this period, we supported 229 people through creative therapies, demonstrating the transformative impact of art on mental health.**

“If anyone is thinking of being creative I would say DO IT, have a go. It's amazing what you can do if you try, it heals the mind.”



## Peer Support: Community Mental Health Teams Transformation

Our Peer Support service offers both one-to-one and group-based support for individuals facing mental health challenges.

What makes this service unique is that our peer support workers draw on their own lived experience, creating a compassionate and relatable environment for those they support.

In addition to delivering direct support, the team plays a key role in the wider NHS transformation across Leeds working closely with clinicians and partners to promote joined-up, person-centred care.

This includes outreach to underrepresented communities, ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible to those who need them most.

Over the year, Leeds Mind led a partnership to establish a brand-new peer support service, developed in collaboration with organisations such as Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service, Yorkshire MESMAC, and Health for All. The service became fully staffed and active in summer 2024, and by year-end, was **supporting 152 people** referred through clinical pathways.



“I have found having someone who listens to me without judgement very supportive. I really like the shared experience side of Peer Support because it makes you feel heard and understood.”

“I've found it very helpful speaking to somebody who also experiences similar issues. After a session I feel more free and more relaxed in myself.”

## Peer Support: Self-Harm Lived Experience Training

“The facilitator really emphasised certain things that many others without lived experience may not truly understand.”

Over the year Leeds Mind developed a project aiming to co-design a series of courses about self-harm using lived experience.

The training, targeted at employers and people supporting those who may self-harm, has been created with lived experience and co-produced with others through 15 workshop sessions.

Already, some of the new training has been delivered across the Leeds area, helping to raise awareness and boost confidence.

Attendees told us that their knowledge and sense of compassion has grown since the training, with employers feeling much less “overwhelmed by the thought of supporting someone who self-harms”.

## Peer Support Training

Using personal lived experience to support others is an important skill, and we've been busy making sure anyone who wants to learn can receive training in peer support from experts. By devising, developing and delivering a training programme in the last year we upskilled **102 people from 14 different organisations**, including local authorities, hospices and universities – a brilliant foundation to build on in future years.



**I felt it was both hugely informative and practical and bespoke to our team's needs.**



## Supporting people after suicide attempt or self-harm

We launched a new service, Stepping Stones, aiming to reduce suicide and admission rates to A&E in relation to self-harm and suicide attempts.

Stepping Stones began operating across Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield, representing a continuation of our broadening work across the West Yorkshire region.

The service draws on the peer support model, with staff using lived experience and a person-centred approach.



The team did lots of outreach worked with professionals including A&E staff, police, primary care and crisis services, to ensure they knew the service was available.

**With the service just getting off the ground by the end of this reporting period, we supported 67 people so far.**



**After everything I have gone through, the service was fantastic. Feel so much happier in myself**



## Suicide Bereavement Services



**Leeds Mind's Suicide Bereavement Services offer compassionate support for people bereaved or affected by suicide. It's delivered by staff who understand because they've been impacted by suicide themselves.**

The service offers a safe space to talk and get practical guidance. We support people of all ages across Bradford and Kirklees, and people aged 11+ across Leeds, Calderdale, Craven and Wakefield.

Support – which happens in 1-to-1 or group settings – is for anyone affected by suicide, not just those who have been 'bereaved'. The loss can be recent or historic, and it doesn't matter how close someone is to the person who died.

The support aims to tackle the 'ripple effect' seen after a death by suicide, which can affect an estimated 115 people on average, and leave people 65% more likely to attempt suicide themselves.

In 2024/25, 1,092 people benefitted from our suicide bereavement services – an increase of 18.6% when compared to the previous year.

Around 1 in 5 of those people were aged under 25, 17% were from culturally diverse communities, and 46% were from areas of deprivation.

The team also offered 65 instances of training and outreach – for example, community stalls, memorial events and events for World Suicide Prevention Day. These activities helped us continue to tackle the stigma that still exists around suicide, and impacts those affected by suicide.

See more of the Suicide Bereavement Services life-changing and life-saving work on pages 14 and 24.



**It was so positive to talk to someone about my experience and know they truly understand and normalise how I feel**



# Workplace wellbeing

Leeds Mind has a huge strength in knowledge and practice around workplace wellbeing. We offer mental health training, run a network for employers who care about mental wellbeing in the workplace, work with employers in getting people with mental health experiences back into meaningful work and much more.

## Bringing 100+ organisations together around wellbeing at work

Leeds Mindful Employer Network hosted its 2024 conference at Leeds Beckett University on Tuesday 21st May, with more than 100 Leeds businesses and organisations in attendance.

Around 200 delegates turned out to discuss “Creating Mentally Healthy Cultures for All”, from organisations big and small across many and varied sectors.

The 40+ speakers and exhibitors included: Mind, Leeds Mind, Touchstone Support, Thrive Law, Leeds Autism Services, The Jordan Legacy, Forward Leeds and Leeds City Council.

The event was made possible by sponsors: Barca, Hippo Digital, madeby.studio and Touchstone.

Sessions included: creating an anti-stigma culture and challenging discrimination; suicide prevention at work; being a racial trauma-informed employer; neurodiversity and mental health in the workplace; being a recovery-friendly employer; mentally healthy workplaces for parents and carers; and feedback to promote psychological safety.

As well as the illuminating seminars and workshops, delegates enjoyed wellbeing activities including yoga, massages, breathwork and a lunchtime walk.

### Conference attendees commented:

“If you’re not part of the Mindful Employer Leeds network you’re missing out on so much important advice, resources and expertise that can make your company a place your employees love to work.”

– Thomas Nadin,  
Few and Far

“It’s always so heartening to meet and learn from people genuinely dedicated to driving positive change and putting mental health at the top of their business’ agenda. I am thankful to all the brilliant speakers at the event and my peers for sharing their insight, expertise and lived experiences.”

– Daniella Colton,  
Irwin Mitchell

“We had a wonderful day at the conference! From the second we walked through the university doors we were made to feel welcome! I met likeminded employers and it was a pleasure to spend the day in such a safe place.”

– Bridget McDonagh,  
Dynamic Support Services

# Leeds Mindful Employer Network



As well as the Mindful Employer conference, the Leeds Mindful Employer Network made a number of key achievements in 2024/25.

The network, running since 2013, is commissioned by Leeds City Council (Public Health) and led by local mental health charity, Leeds Mind, in partnership with local employers. It aims to bring local employers together to champion positive mental health at work.

Over the period, **136 individuals from 109 different businesses and organisations** joined the network. This surpassed our target.

49% of those new members represented employers with a high-risk workforce and/or low security/low wage jobs (catering/food, community advice and support services, construction, health and care, hospitality, retail and transport).

**32 new members (24%) are based in an area of deprivation in Leeds.**

We delivered four network events, which brought together 149 attendees representing 92 unique organisations.

In addition, we held 30 one-to-one meetings with employers, offering tailored support and engagement.

**51% of one-to-one meetings held with employers from our business engagement priority areas.**

“The network offers us great newsletters, access to training and inspiration and ideas. It’s great to link up with others at conferences and events. It’s got a great ‘tribe vibe’ and it’s fab to be able to cascade information and ideas and see teams develop the ideas and run with them.”

– Mia A Cameron,  
Senior Manager, Turning Lives Around

Read more about our Mindful Employer Network on Page 13.

# Breaking stigma through mental health training



Our training team delivered more than 580 hours of workplace training such as mental health awareness, skills for managers and Mental Health First Aid. Its bite-size courses were responsive to need, developing new offerings such as menopause awareness.

We were proud that our mental health training met the enhanced standard in Mind’s quality assurance framework,

showing our commitment to developing and delivering an outstanding quality of workplace training.

We trained 1,709 people (up 38% against last year), and received a 97% approval score in our feedback.

“The training provided by Leeds Mind was probably the most valuable that we undertook as a team this year. It helped us have wider and more open conversations around mental health, and a broader understanding of the different forms it can take and the impact it can have.”

– Aberfield,  
Participant on the Mental Health Awareness course



# Sharing knowledge to help break stigma in other workplaces



We shared knowledge from Leeds Mind to help promote workplace wellbeing in other organisations and industries. Meaningful work can be an important part of recovery, and so the workplace is a powerful touchpoint for breaking stigma around mental health.

Our Suicide Bereavement Services developed a resource for employers, to help them better support employees affected by suicide. This was developed in partnership with Leeds Mindful Employer Network and Punch Creative.

We continued to run our quarterly Leeds Mind Business Connections networking event, sharing information about our training, corporate fundraising and CSR and other workplace wellbeing initiatives. Our People & Culture team shared their expertise around developing a culture that prioritises wellbeing at work.

As part of National Inclusion Week, we shared a workplace 'Inclusion Toolkit', to help other employers strengthen their workforce through diversity and inclusion.



Click this QR code to see our Inclusion Toolkit

## Specialist Workplace Wellbeing Support

Our Employment Support services embed mental health into every stage of the work journey, ensuring people in Leeds and West Yorkshire can access, sustain and benefit from meaningful roles.

### Recovery Through Employment

**Our Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service is built on the principle that anyone experiencing mental health challenges who wants to work should be supported to do so.**

Delivered in partnership with clinical teams, IPS offers personalised, one-to-one support to help find and maintain employment that suits someone's strengths and aspirations. It's a rapid, integrated model that treats employment as a key part of recovery, not a separate goal.

We've embedded IPS in mental health transformation hubs, opened referrals via primary care and piloted a self-referral option. Three additional years of funding – with the potential for more – ensures we can sustainably support the most underrepresented people of Leeds to return to work.

## Of the 325 unemployed individuals referred to our IPS service:

They gave us an average rating of **4.5/5** in participant satisfaction

**33%** were from culturally diverse communities

**73%** felt an increase in their confidence

**£9.22** estimated return on investment for every £1

## Preventing Job Loss, Promoting Wellbeing

Our Job Retention support provides a vital safety net for employees at risk of losing roles due to mental health difficulties. Although funding cuts in 2023/24 reduced capacity, integrating job retention into our IPS service has maintained continuity of support.

We advocate for reasonable adjustments, demonstrate coping strategies and empower individuals to stay in work with confidence and dignity. We aim to expand this provision so that more people with mental health experiences can access the guidance they need to thrive in their roles.

**98** individuals whose job were at risk accessed our service

**60%** were able to retain and sustain their role

We have saved employers in Leeds over **£135,700** in staff turnover

## Coming in 2025/26 IPS-Informed Support for Under-25s

**To counter rising youth economic inactivity, Youth Employment Connectors offer trauma-informed, strengths-based guidance tailored for people under 25.**

Working collaboratively with young people on goals, values and lived experience, this pilot – launching in 2025/26 – bridges the gap between mental health support and sustained and meaningful employment opportunities.

This is part of our broader commitment to shaping youth-focused mental health services that prioritise recovery through opportunity, not just clinical intervention.

## Influencing Future Practice: Student Placements

**In 2024/25, we hosted placements for trainee clinicians within our Employment Support services.**

By witnessing first-hand, the intersection of mental health and work, students gained insight into person-centred approaches, systemic barriers and the critical role of economic inclusion in holistic care.

This work is part of our mission to influence change across the health and social care system, advocating for models that prioritise dignity, inclusion, and recovery.

Total income in the year was

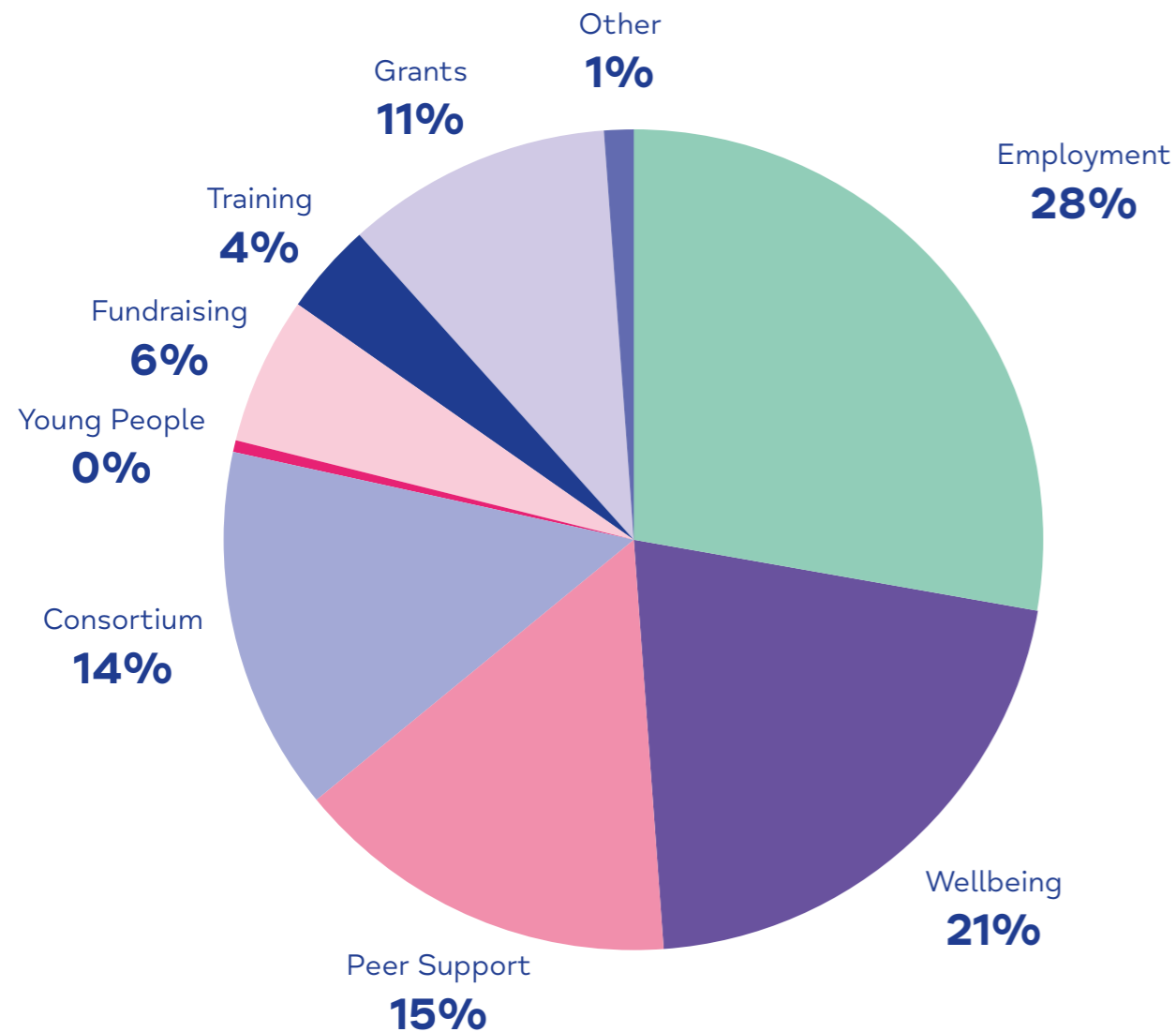
**£3,682,279**

and is an increase of 5%  
on prior year (£3,500,346).

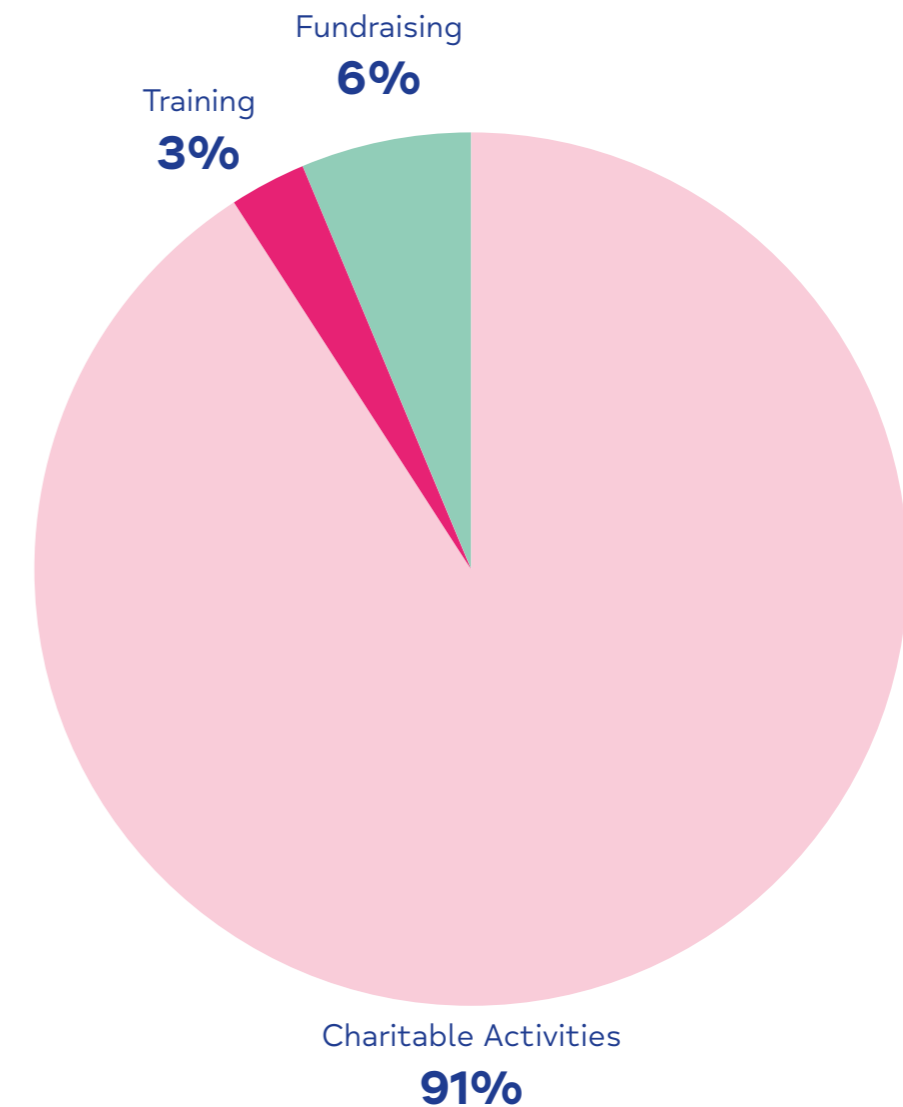
Expenditure in the year was

**£3,683,961**

and is an increase of 2%  
on prior year (£3,598,168)



28% of funding relates to Employment Services and 21% to Wellbeing.



Expenditure in the year is tightly controlled and within budget. The full accounts can be found at Companies House.

# Thank you to our fundraisers and supporters!

We couldn't do what we do without our incredible supporters - your commitment makes it all possible

Our supporters and funders are at the heart of everything we've achieved this year. Your generosity, dedication, and belief in our work make all that we do possible.

From marathons and food festivals to our mammoth Get Together Through Gaming event and heartfelt donations, support poured in from every corner of the city and beyond. Businesses, schools, community groups, event organisers, and individuals united with a shared commitment to making mental health everyone's business.

Every fundraiser, every event, and every act of kindness contributed to an incredible

**£215,056.92**

raised in 2024/2025, helping us continue to support those in our community who need it most.



Total Warrior



Food Fest



Fluffy Fundraisers



Great Yorkshire Abseil



Gardening Volunteers



When we were choosing our festival charity partner, Leeds Mind was a natural choice for us. We have seen first hand the incredible work done and how the charity supports the local community.

On a personal level, several team members including myself have lost loved ones to suicide. This is devastating for everyone involved, and anything we can do to support a friend, cousin, parent, aunt, uncle, sibling on their mental health journey is important to us.

A charity that focuses on improving quality of life for the people of Leeds is one that we can get behind.

– Michael,  
North Leeds Food Festival



# Thank you to our volunteers!

Volunteers are an essential part of the Leeds Mind team. In 2024/2025, **90 volunteers** gave us over **1,700 hours of their time** and skills. **That's over 220 working days!**

From sitting on the board of trustees and helping to steer our charity, to supporting our services including peer support, suicide bereavement services, counselling and IT, as well as supporting on our steering groups, the impact group and events.



Being able to contribute both my time and lived experience to Leeds Mind has genuinely been a pleasure

– Rosie,  
Impact Group volunteer



Get

involved



How you can get involved

Access or help promote our services

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/services](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/services)

Have your say

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/impact](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/impact)

Raise money and/or awareness

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/fundraising)

Learn more about mental health

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/training](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/training)

Volunteer

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/volunteering)

Join the team

[www.leedsmind.org.uk/work-for-leeds-mind](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/work-for-leeds-mind)

Click this QR code to access our Get Involved links





## Contact

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Horsforth  
Leeds  
LS18 4LB

**Opening Hours:** Monday – Thursday 9am – 5pm  
Friday 9am – 4:30pm

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