



We are
Leeds Mind

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Foreword

Since Leeds Mind was founded in 1972, the landscape of mental health and wellbeing in and around our city has changed a lot, but never more so since March 2020.

The coronavirus pandemic changed the way we all think of mental health and wellbeing, with more people than ever understanding that we all have mental health, just as we all have physical health.

This is partly due to an increased number of people struggling with their mental health under the unprecedented pressure from stressors such as health anxieties, decreased social contact, job insecurity and bereavement. The World Health Organisation estimated that incidences of depression and anxiety increased by 25% worldwide during this time.

But it is also thanks to the more positive aspect of more people having a conversation around mental health, which has helped to raise awareness and break down stigma. A 2021 study by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) showed that 83% of people think it's more socially acceptable to discuss mental health than five years ago, while 85% of people agree it's a good idea to seek support for a problem early.

With more people seeking and accessing support, this has put increased demand and pressure on voluntary and public services that were already overstretched.

Every 3 years, we put together our plan for the future. This includes looking at where we are now, why we exist and what values we live by. We call this our strategy.

Our new strategy for 2022 - 2025 is designed to meet the increasing demand for our services and the changed mental health landscape. We aim to meet the needs of more people – especially those who face additional barriers to getting support.

We also aim to make sure that we work sustainably so that we are here for the future.





TO CHAOS

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Our plan for mental health in Leeds and West Yorkshire

We are proud to be part of the Mind network of over 100 other local Minds across England and Wales. Together we work alongside Mind, the national mental health charity, and the Mind charity shops.

As an independent local charity, our work focuses on delivering life-changing support to those in Leeds, and more widely across West Yorkshire. Drawing on the strength of the Mind network, we work independently to meet the needs of our city and region.

Leeds neighbourhoods make up **13 out of the 137 most highly deprived neighbourhoods in the country**. Since poverty can have a big impact on our mental wellbeing, we know that financial wellbeing is a priority area for our support, and that we have to be available in the neighbourhoods that need us most.

Racialised communities are also in need of more support, as we know that racism and discrimination can have a profound impact on mental health. We also know that mental health stigma is a big factor in some communities. Since Leeds is such a diverse city, this is another area of focus for us.

Nationally, the conversation around mental health in children and young people has gathered pace, with children disproportionately affected by the pandemic with factors such as school closures and reduced contact with friends and family. We want to increase the support we offer this age group to really make a difference to their mental health.

Most importantly, our plans are made by listening to what our local and regional needs are from the people in our communities. **You can find out more about how we made sure we were hearing from our community on page 13.**



We Are Leeds Mind

As an independent local charity, our work focuses on delivering life-changing support to those in and around Leeds, as well as more widely across West Yorkshire.

At the same time, we are proud to be part of the Mind network, operating across England and Wales.

As such, our strategy is informed by that of national Mind.

Our four strategic pillars are:

1. **We connect minds**
2. **We support minds**
3. **We change minds**
4. **Together, we are Leeds Mind**



We Connect Minds

Bringing people together to make change in our communities.

- We will be inclusive, striving to engage and represent people across the region.
- We will welcome everyone and ensure our services are both culturally and practically accessible to all.
- We will build on our digital and face to face offer and deliver new, creative ways of working.
- We will develop strong partnerships across West Yorkshire to enable us to create new services and support more people.

We Support Minds

delivering life-changing support

- We will value lived experience and make sure our clients' voices inform all our service design.
- We will increase the services available for children and young people.
- We will focus on areas of need aiming to deliver support where it is most required.
- We will provide one to one or group support that is right for each individual in a place of their choice.

We Change Minds

speaking out and making mental health everyone's business

- We will increase awareness of Leeds Mind and reduce stigma, changing public perceptions around mental health.
- We will share a range of stories, with a focus on some of the least heard mental health experiences.
- We will influence and challenge locally, using our profile to improve mental health services in our region.
- We will work with organisations to promote positive understanding of mental health in the workplace.

Together, we are Leeds Mind

Working together to become a more inclusive and sustainable organisation

- We will be courageous in our decision making to ensure we deliver our aims.
- We will build a diverse workforce that reflects our local community with an inclusive culture so Leeds Mind is a great place to work.
- We will use our resources responsibly to invest in our services and reduce our environmental impact.
- We will work with our fantastic supporters to grow our income engaging more people to support Leeds Mind.



Our Vision

Better mental health for all



Our Mission

**Leeds Mind enables people with
mental health difficulties to flourish**

Our Values

Kindness

We treat everyone with compassion and care

Hope

We believe recovery is possible for all

Empowerment

We encourage people to make informed choices in a safe environment

Respect

We value everyone's contribution and background

Inclusion

We welcome anyone with a mental health need

Support

We support people to live with their mental health difficulties and to achieve their goals



How this strategy was developed



A special thank you to Impact Group members and Board members for volunteering their time to improve our work. We couldn't do what we do without you.

It is very important to us that our work reflects the needs in our local area. With that in mind here is how we developed our plans for 2022 – 2025 to make sure that we deliver the services people need in and around Leeds.

Apr 2021

We saw the launch of the new national Mind strategy. As a proud part of the Mind network, our strategy is informed by this, including strategic development priorities, and tackling climate emergency

Jun 2021

Leeds Mind Senior Leadership Team continued research and development

Aug / Sep 2021

We took our progress to the Leeds Mind Impact Group for their input (this is a group of people who have previously used our services who use their voice to improve the work we do)

Dec 2021

We presented our progress to the Leeds Mind Board of Trustees

Spring 2022

Approved by Leeds Mind Board of Trustees

May 2021

We discussed initial ideas with the Leeds Mind Board of Trustees. This is a group of people who volunteer their time and expertise to oversee the Leeds Mind strategy and governance

Jul 2021

We presented progress to all Leeds Mind staff for their input

Nov 2021

We launched an online survey that anyone in our community could fill out (including offline/assisted options for those who couldn't access it online) to input their thoughts. We also ran a small focus group with people impacted by our services to have their say

Mar 2022

We presented progress to all Leeds Mind staff for their input and final tweaks were made

There are lots of ways to get involved in the Leeds Mind community, and add your voice, skills and time towards making mental health everyone's business.



1. Access our services or signpost to others – go to the website to see what's on offer, or **call 0113 305 5800** if you want to talk about which support might be best for you
2. Tell us your story – One of the biggest ways we can break down the stigma surrounding mental health is by amplifying stories from a diverse group of people. By showing that **“it's OK not to be OK”**, your bravery will inspire others to take the first step in seeking support. Email **stories@leedsmind.org.uk**
3. Raise money and awareness – fundraising can be fun, fulfilling, and good for your mental health! Challenge yourself solo or get a group together to raise money and awareness. Get in touch with **fundraising@leedsmind.org.uk** if you'd like to be involved
4. Get involved via your workplace – come on board as a corporate supporter, get training on mental health awareness or mental health first aid, and promote better workplace wellbeing. We have a package of Help For Employers, so please get in touch: **helpforemployers@leedsmind.org.uk**
5. Volunteer – there are lots of opportunities to volunteer as a part of Team Leeds Mind, from supporting in services to participating in Impact Group, which has input on service and campaign design. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact **volunteering@leedsmind.org.uk**
6. Other ways to get involved – Even small actions add up to make a big impact. Follow us on social media and share our latest campaign; mention our services to a friend who might benefit from them; suggest us if a local event wants to donate proceeds to a good cause...the list goes on!







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