



IMPACT REPORT 2025



westsussexmind.org

Improving wellbeing in the heart of our community

Welcome from Amy

It's a pleasure to introduce the latest Impact Report from West Sussex Mind, a charity that has become an important part of my life. I've had a difficult journey with mental health, experiencing anxiety from my early teens and struggling with an eating disorder. My mum and dad tried to get me support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) when I was 16, but I was deemed "not ill enough" to be treated and didn't get the help I needed.

Early on, I knew that I wanted to become the person I had needed when I was young. I was dismissed by a lot of people – by my teachers, by CAMHS, by my peers – and I wanted to be someone people could go to for help. So I began learning about mental health. After being diagnosed with Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder as an adult, I began studying for a Psychology degree with the Open University. I went on to do a Masters in Psychology, Mental Health and Wellbeing and while getting support for my mental health during lockdown, my support worker suggested I try volunteering.



Welcome to the Impact Report
from our CEO and deputy CEO

After volunteering with SHOUT, the text-based support service, for two years, I began volunteering with West Sussex Mind's Staying Well crisis support service, interacting with service users and making people feel welcome.

I found it really rewarding and a colleague suggested I apply for the charity's peer volunteer training. The training has been transformational. Doing the eight-week course to support others has given me my confidence back. I feel like I've finally taken ownership of my past and made it useful.

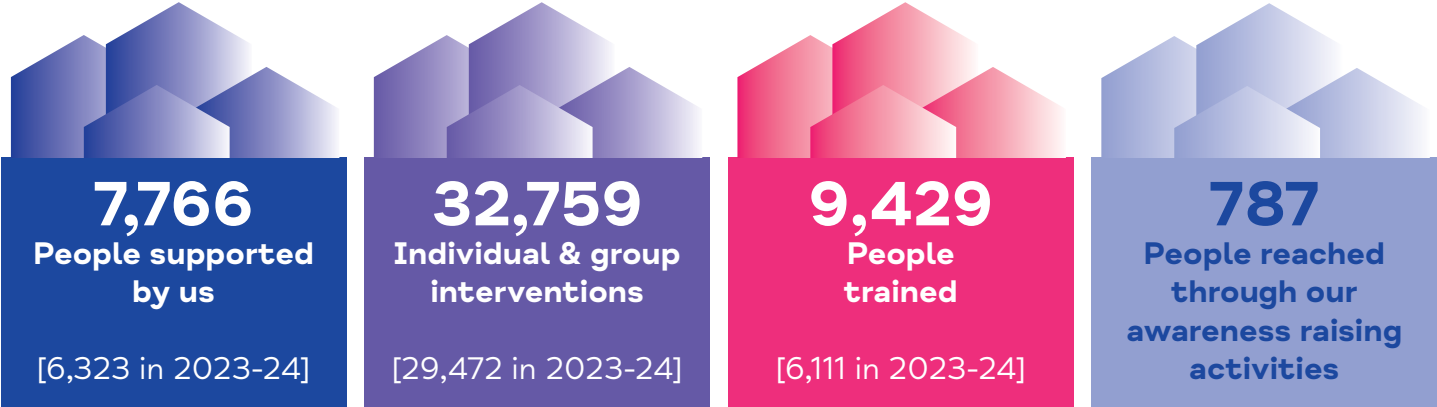
I'm now doing paid work with West Sussex Mind, using my lived experience to help others on their journey. I have the occasional mental health wobble, but it doesn't derail me anymore.

I'm learning all the time through my work in a supportive environment and I'm becoming what I wanted to be – that person I wish I had been able to talk to. I thank West Sussex Mind for the opportunity and hope that you enjoy reading about its work.

Amy, one of our peer volunteers, who uses her lived experience to support others



We support, we train, we campaign



Jo's story



“ I had postnatal depression and anxiety and I was stuck in a rut with no one to talk to and no coping mechanisms. But coming to Families in Mind and finding that community has been a lifeline for me... I don't feel like an outsider anymore – I always feel welcome and accepted.”

Jo who got support with our service for parents with young children

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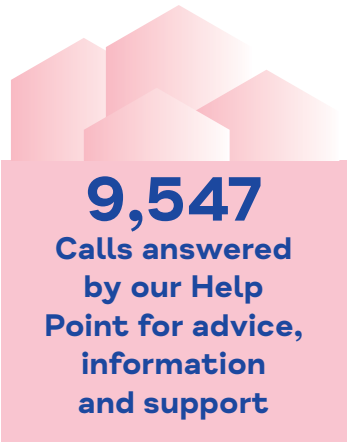
HIGH-QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

“If it wasn’t for West Sussex Mind, I wouldn’t be here today... I used to spend my life in my bedroom and sadly I’ve tried to end my life several times. So if I can play even a small part in stopping someone else doing that, that’s incredibly gratifying.”

Joe, one of our peer volunteers



Joe’s story



We supported more people than ever before during 2024-25. 7,766 people got support with us, that's a 22.8% increase on 2023-24, and testament to the expansion of our services to meet growing demand for support.

We continued to support adults, children and young people, families and older adults through individual and group sessions and a flourishing programme of social activities to help people connect, grow and build self-esteem in a supportive environment. We also support people at community venues, including in GP surgeries, where 1,489 adults got support in their familiar surgery environment with goal-orientated plans to help them manage their mental health better (see Amy's story).



A big change during 2024-25 was the introduction of a mental health practitioner from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to our Staying Well crisis support service in Worthing, allowing us to transform to a walk-in service for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. This change was carefully introduced to all the Staying Well centres across Sussex, including those run by our partners, providing an alternative to A&E and reducing the pressure on blue light services.



**Read Amy's story
about getting mental
health support in her
GP surgery**



**Read our story
about Staying
Well's change
to a walk-in
service**



**Watch a video
about the social
activities we run
for people getting
support with us**



**Check out this
video about
our community
allotment**

Service spotlight: children and young people

Against a backdrop of rising mental health demand among children and young people (recent NHS data found that one in four young people have a common mental health problem), we continue to do our utmost to support 8 to 25 year olds and their parents and carers.

- Our young people's service supports 16 to 25 year olds through the crucial child to adult transition period and provides one-to-one and group support through our main locations and community venues, as well as in schools and colleges.
- Our specialist children and young people's social prescribers support 8 to 17 year olds in GP surgeries across West Sussex, including the addition of practices in rural North Chichester this year.
- Our parenting service supports parents and carers who are concerned about their child or young person's mental health and emotional wellbeing, increasing their knowledge and understanding and helping them connect with other parents for peer support.

We've continued to innovate in our approach to young people's mental health, securing funding from national Mind to work with a steering group of experts, five other local Minds and 14 young people to co-produce a trauma-informed care approach and toolkit. Later this year, we will use this learning to train other Minds and community organisations

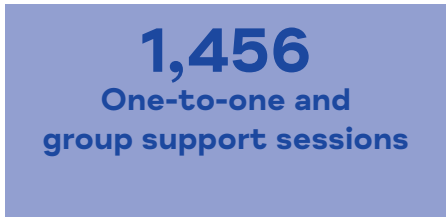
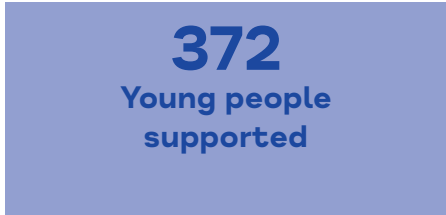
to work with young people in a trauma-informed way.

West Sussex Mind is also a 'link organisation' in a research initiative, called CATALYST, which rethinks support for young people's wellbeing in the community. As part of this project, we will cascade the psychologically informed approach we have learned to community partners, enabling even more young people to get support. Through these and other initiatives, our specialist team continues to learn and develop to make youth mental health a top priority for our charity.



**Check out this story about our
partnership with Northbrook
College to support their students**





TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

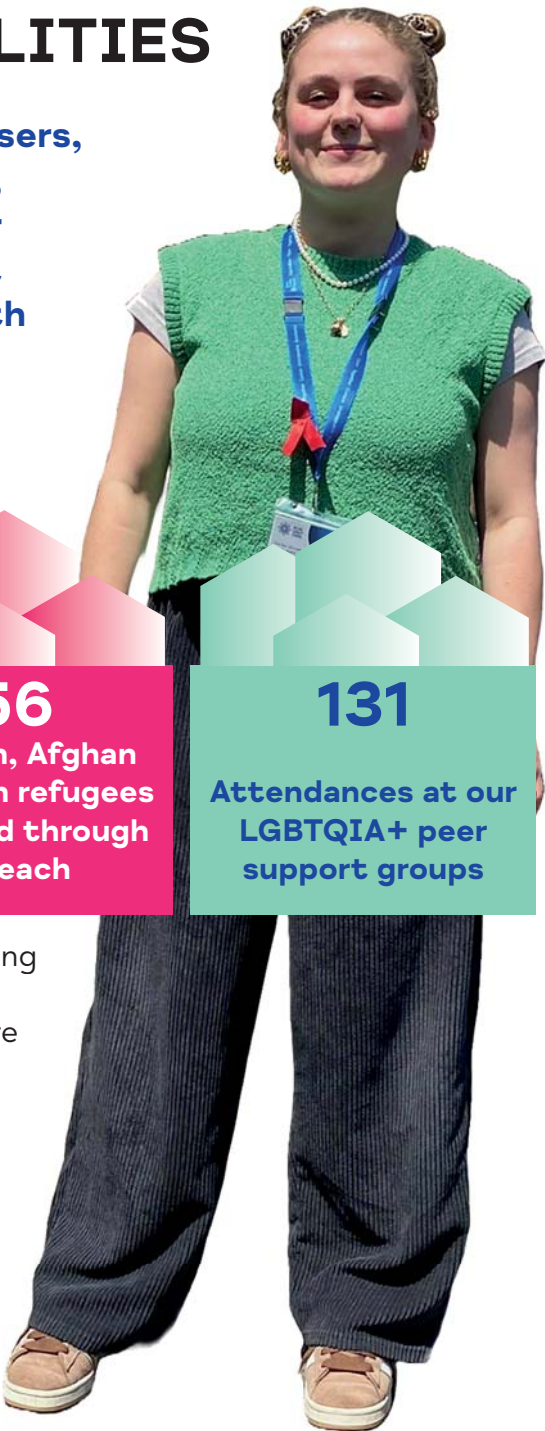
“From the feedback I’m getting from service users, I know what a positive impact my work is having, which is incredibly rewarding. There was a gap for specialist refugee mental health support in West Sussex, so it’s great to know that my work is both needed and impactful.”

Lapaz, who supports resettled refugees across West Sussex



We know that many in our community face barriers to accessing mental health support for different reasons. So we look at information about who is getting support with us and measure that against West Sussex Census data to identify gaps and develop ways to reach out to communities who may need us the most.

During 2024-25, we’ve continued to support local Polish communities and to help them navigate local mental health services and reduce the stigma around seeking support. We’ve extended our work with refugees, supporting Ukrainian refugees, and working in partnership with



Sanctuary in Chichester to support refugees and asylum seekers of 23 different nationalities. We've also secured a contract to provide mental health support for resettled refugees for two years across West Sussex, many of whom have experienced trauma and are struggling with issues, such as loneliness, stress and depression.

We've developed our monthly peer support groups for the LGBTQIA+ community and now offer these in person and online across all our locations. And we continue to support Pride events to raise awareness about our help, attending Worthing, Chichester and Witterings Pride in 2024-25.



We ran an event exploring men's mental health and the unique challenges men face with our partners Dad La Soul and AudioActive



Read about our Unmasking Masculinity event

Conscious of the stigma that surrounds mental health among men and the disparity in women and men seeking support with us (roughly two-thirds to one-third), our teams are working to reach more men directly and through partnership. A good example of this was our partnership with Dad La Soul, in which a peer support worker from our Families in Mind (FIM) team attended Dad La Soul meet-ups. This resulted in an increase in men finding support with FIM from 4% to 9% in 2024-25.

We've also started our journey towards becoming an anti-racist organisation with experts by experience from local minoritised communities helping us to develop an action plan to make this a reality.

TRAINING TO RAISE AWARENESS AND REDUCE STIGMA

Our training team expanded its activities this year, increasing the number of people receiving our training from 6,111 in 2023-24 to 9,429 in 2024-25.

From training people to spot signs of crisis and support colleagues, friends or family, to delivering bespoke mental health training to businesses around workplace wellbeing, our specialist team delivers a wide range of courses. These include Mental Health First Aid, suicide prevention, self-harm and other courses for professionals, businesses and parents.

Highlights for 2024-25 included:

- A training programme for Ukrainian refugees, their hosts and volunteers working with refugees, funded by West Sussex County Council
- Delivery of the Pan-Sussex Self-Harm Learning Network to support professionals, parents and carers to understand self-harm and better support young people
- Mental Health First Aid training for NHS Sussex primary care staff
- Two menopause courses for West Sussex County Council – one for staff and one for managers – to raise awareness and give managers tools to support staff during menopause and perimenopause.

“The trainer was knowledgeable, dynamic and engaging. The course held my full attention throughout and I will be recommending it to my colleagues.”

Attendee at a menopause course for staff at West Sussex County Council



Browse our training courses

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

In 2024-25, West Sussex Mind spent £3,714,091 to provide continuing care for people who need our support and to develop new projects and services. This was a 12.5% increase on our spending in 2023-24. Our principal funders during this financial year were:

- NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board
- GP practices and primary care networks
- West Sussex County Council and other local district and parish councils
- National Lottery Community Fund.

These sources of funding are generally linked to specific services. For example, the National Lottery Community Fund supports our Families in Mind service (and awarded us another three years of funding from July 2025), while the NHS funds our adult mental health, youth mental

health and Staying Well crisis support service. Other organisations fund specific projects, such as East Head Impact's continued funding of our peer volunteer training, which offers people experiencing mental health difficulties pathways to volunteering, employment and education.

We are operating in a financially challenging environment, where we face higher than normal inflationary pressures, alongside efficiencies in many of our contracts.

In response to this, we are looking to diversify our sources of income through a new fundraising strategy and continue to work alongside our voluntary partners to campaign for fair increases, highlighting the importance of preventative mental health support.

A group of peer volunteers celebrating their training, which is funded by East Head Impact



OUR YEAR IN FUNDRAISING

66 West Sussex Mind is a fantastic small charity doing excellent work for those that need it. Signing up for the Brighton Half Marathon and the thought of helping people through the charity really motivated me with my training and with the run on the day! **99**

Lesley, one of our Brighton Half Marathon runners



It's a challenging environment for fundraising; the cost of living is impacting donors and fundraisers and there's greater competition for grant funding.

However, against this difficult background, we were pleased to raise £695,000 this year towards our existing priority services and developing new projects and services.



£695,000

**Raised towards
priority services
and new project
development**



£427,110

**Raised through
donations and
legacies**

Our September Swim
virtual swimming event
raised over £6,000 with
more than 40 people
taking part

We ran our first ever sky dive in
2024-25 which raised over £3,000



SCAN TO DONATE



Some of our fundraising highlights in 2024-25 included:

- £78,562 over three years from the F Glenister Woodger Trust, enabling us to provide mental health peer support for children and young people in the Witterings and surrounding areas, as well as training courses aimed at parents, carers and organisations supporting children and young people in the area. We are sincerely grateful to the trust for this funding; because it runs over three years, the funding enables us to plan better for the future

- A new event, called September Swim, which invited people to swim 5km throughout the month of September to raise money for us. Forty people took part in September 2024 and they raised £6,392
- Our third Mental Elf 5k fun run and walk had to be cancelled this year due to Storm Bert, but our resilient supporters completed their runs remotely for us, still raising just under £9,000 for our charity. What a bunch of superstars!
- Our first sky dive event, in which nine brave skydivers raised £3,031 for our charity
- A Father Christmas at Goddenwick Farm event, which raised over £4,000 and brought the magic of Santa to local children.



Watch a video about
**Timmy Ovard, who hiked
the 64-mile Serpent
Trail, to fundraise for us
in memory of his friend**

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

During 2024-25, we co-produced and launched a new strategy and mission statement for the next five years. We're proud of what we feel is a truly co-produced vision for 2025-2030. We consulted with trustees, partners, employees and volunteers, and based our key aims on local and national data, structured interviews with key partners, feedback from trustee away-days and strategy roadshows across our key locations.

In order to achieve our strategy, our priorities for 2025-26 include:

- Campaigning for the children and young people social prescribing model to be adopted in mental health services for 8-17 year olds
- Understanding the ethnic disparity in our service offer
- Reducing stigma around men's mental health and reaching more men with our services
- Embedding trauma-informed practice across West Sussex Mind
- Integrating our adult services into Sussex-wide neighbourhood mental health teams with our partners
- Creating our plan to be a truly anti-racist organisation
- Developing a new fundraising strategy to diversify and grow our income.



**Our CEO Kerrin Page
with our deputy CEO
Kate Scales**



**Read more about our
strategy for 2025-2030
and our five key aims**



**Watch a video about
our new strategy**



**Thank you
to all our partners**

FINAL WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

It's been another busy and inspiring year at West Sussex Mind. A significant milestone has been the creation of our new strategy for 2025-30, which was co-produced with our employees, fellow trustees, people who use our services, partners and volunteers. I was impressed with how many people engaged and offered their insights throughout the year and helped us co-produce a new strategy and mission statement, reflecting where we are as an organisation and where we want to be.

The journey was as important as the destination and I'm confident we have a strategy that makes us fit for the future to ensure that everyone gets the mental health support they need and deserve.

This was also the year in which West Sussex Mind was assessed for its Mind Quality Mark, a process all local Minds go

Sue Hawker,
chair of West
Sussex Mind

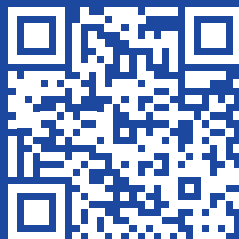
through every three years to remain part of the Mind Federation.

Following robust self-assessment, thorough evidence gathering and a site visit from the MQM review team, we were awarded our MQM with some fabulous feedback: "West Sussex Mind is an innovative organisation with a wealth of strengths... The review team were impressed by the passion, commitment and values demonstrated by the whole workforce and commend what is clearly a positive and inspiring culture."

The year hasn't been without its challenges, of course, and it's a time of significant change in the Sussex health system overall. But this has prompted us to work and act differently and to forge stronger relationships with key partners, which has meant we're well placed for new commissioning opportunities. We are increasingly working on a Sussex-wide basis and this is strengthened by us developing a closer relationship with Mind in Brighton & Hove as part of Mind's 'Federation First' strategy.

During in a year in which we supported 7,766 people – 22.8% more than the previous year – and innovated to meet demand, I'd like to personally thank all our dedicated employees, volunteers, trustees, partners and funders for their continued hard work and support for our charity. We couldn't do what we do without you!

**Together with those
experiencing mental health
problems, we will build inclusive
and empowering mental health
services, reduce barriers to
support and challenge stigma**



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Cover shot shows West Sussex Mind service
users and staff member on a trip to Shoreham.
Photo credit: All Ace Media

