

Annual Review

2020/21



oakleaf >

MAKING LIFE WORK WITH MENTAL ILLNESS



We have been a registered charity since 1997, working tirelessly to support vulnerable adults in the Surrey community who are struggling with their mental health. We help clients, aged 16-67, to overcome huge barriers and work with them to rebuild their future by providing three main pillars of support: work-related training, counselling services and wellbeing activities.

MISSION STATEMENT

We work to foster confidence and reduce social isolation by actively training, engaging and supporting individuals with mental ill-health to empower them to participate as active members of society.

VISION

Our vision is to improve the lives of people managing mental ill-health in Surrey and to promote awareness and reduce stigma.

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Thoughts from our Chair & new Oakleaf Patron

"This has been a year like no other for Oakleaf as for other organisations.

Our operations have had to be reinvented, we have had to approach our funders for exceptional support and our clients have found themselves in particularly challenging circumstances. However it has challenged the way we think about our services and there has been a silver lining.



Our regular, and some new, financial supporters have been amazing during this time, for which I would like to give immense thanks. Many donors recognised the importance of

supporting the mental health of the vulnerable members of our society as well as giving support to those more acutely impacted by the pandemic.

In response to demand we have increased our counselling provision; we have also been delighted to improve our technology platform and equipment enabling clients to access online services who wouldn't have previously been able to.

We have been working to design and implement a new social enterprise that utilises the creativity of our many talented artistic clients and supports them as they look to return to the workplace.

This busy year has also seen the start of a new project to prepare other clients for future employment."

Lorraine Andrews,
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES



"I was delighted and very honoured to be asked to become a Patron alongside Dame Penelope Keith and Shaun Attwood. Our family have been supporters of Oakleaf for many years.

I greatly admire all that the charity manages to achieve for the benefit of those less fortunate than themselves. I very much look forward to supporting Oakleaf in the years ahead."

Michael More-Molyneux,
HM Lord-Lieutenant of
Surrey OAKLEAF PATRON

Message from our Chief Executive

"I am very pleased that Oakleaf fared remarkably well dealing with the ramifications of Covid and growing numbers of mental health problems. Our team reacted quickly and effectively safeguarding all our clients, volunteers and staff. Many activities were immediately transferred online at the start of the first lockdown.



Alongside this, we ensured all clients were supported and contacted regularly by our Client Services team. This proved crucial for many who were isolated, scared, depressed, anxious, and lonely. The team delivered exceptional support with many

hundreds of calls being made every month which were vital lifelines for clients.

The lessons learned over the past year include understanding the benefit of delivering many of our wellbeing services in an online format, enabling greater flexibility for client attendance.

We are mindful that we do not want to create greater isolation for individuals through remote engagement but saw that with other elements of support we could help overcome this. Taking this learning forward to a post-pandemic world, we will continue with a "blended approach," combining both in-person and remote.

In many ways it has been an extraordinary year, one which has changed the way we will work forever, much of which can be seen as positive. The potential for more clients to engage with our service has grown

considerably, and we look forward to enabling more to access our exceptional support."

Clive Stone,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

LONGSTANDING OAKLEAF PATRONS



**Dame Penelope
Keith**



Shaun Attwood

Our Services

During the Covid-19 lockdowns, much of our support was delivered remotely; as a result we moved to a 'blended model' of delivery, providing support both in-person and virtually.

Work-Related Training

At Oakleaf we deliver tailored employment training and mentoring for clients, including our 'back-to-work' support workshops, to help them move forwards into work.



Our IT training offers clients a wide variety of courses, from a 6-week introductory course to courses in programming and cyber security, as well as the National Vocational Qualification for IT Users (ITQ) consisting of 2 levels.

Our gardening department is designed to teach our clients about soft landscaping and garden maintenance. They work on real customers' gardens with our trained and qualified staff.



We have developed our own upholstery course, created by a professional upholsterer and delivered by our three expert assistants. Clients participate in an initial 6-week introductory course, with the option to extend by a further 18 weeks.



Wellbeing Activities

Our Wellbeing Activities are designed to build confidence, physical health and wellbeing whilst reducing isolation and loneliness. We offer a wide range of courses which cater to each individual's different interests and abilities.

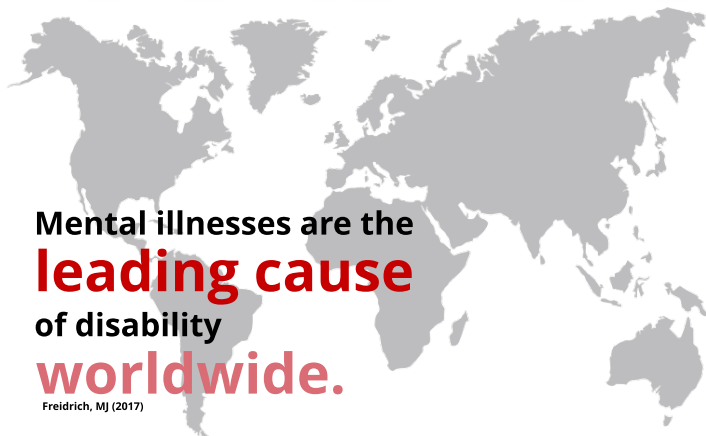


Counselling

We offer a counselling service registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, sourcing trainee counsellors from local colleges and universities including the University of Surrey.



Mental Health in a Pandemic



Mental illnesses are the **leading cause** of disability **worldwide.**

Friedrich, MJ (2017)

Covid-19 has been a mental health pandemic in addition to a physical health pandemic.

The need for meaningful support in our local communities has become paramount as we've navigated numerous challenges.

Many people do not feel entitled to seek help, and have difficulty accessing it when they do. **1 in 3 adults** and more than **1 in 4 young people** did not access support during lockdown because they did not think they deserved it.

Mind, 2020

During lockdowns, people were unable to see their friends, family, work colleagues and even therapists; this absence of connection left many feeling incredibly isolated and alone, according to mental health charity Mind.

Not being able to see people outside of your household negatively affected 86% of those with pre-existing mental health conditions during lockdowns.



Studies show that **10 million** (8.5 million adults and 1.5 million children and young people) people in England will need support for their mental health over the next **three to five years** as a direct result of the pandemic.

Centre of Mental Health, 2021

Our Impact

482

Individuals used our services

Total number of new clients

191

Total number of pandemic check-in calls

2,357

Work-Related Training

Unfortunately this year, both our gardening and upholstery training courses halted and restarted multiple times due to government restrictions. These courses (including IT) enable our clients to gain qualifications and practical experience.

Total number of attendances to our three training departments:

678

We delivered 54 different **IT workshops** and awarded 35 certificates. Alongside this, we also set up an online learning platform for clients to access IT training remotely during the pandemic.

Social Enterprises

Our social enterprises sell the services of our work-related training to the public and this income is then re-invested back into the charity. Following limited trading during lockdown, our gardening and upholstery services re-opened their doors to clients in August. We also introduced a new Business Manager role to enhance our revenue streams, creating vocational training and employment opportunities within Oakleaf.

In autumn 2021, we will be launching a new fully grant-funded social enterprise selling premium home décor products featuring the artwork and talent of our creative clients.

We served:

33 gardening customers

59 upholstery customers



Our Impact

Wellbeing Activities



This year we provided **56** distinct wellbeing activities online and in-person including:

Physical	Emotional	Creative	Life Skills
Tai Chi	Social Anxiety Course	Choir	CV Writing
Massage Therapy	Women's Group	Craft & Chat	Budgeting
Football	Mindfulness	Guitar	Maths
Hot Yoga	Confidence Building	Cooking & Nutrition	Literacy
Wellbeing Walks	Pets as Therapy	Art Therapy	Interview Prep

Total number of wellbeing attendances

7,462

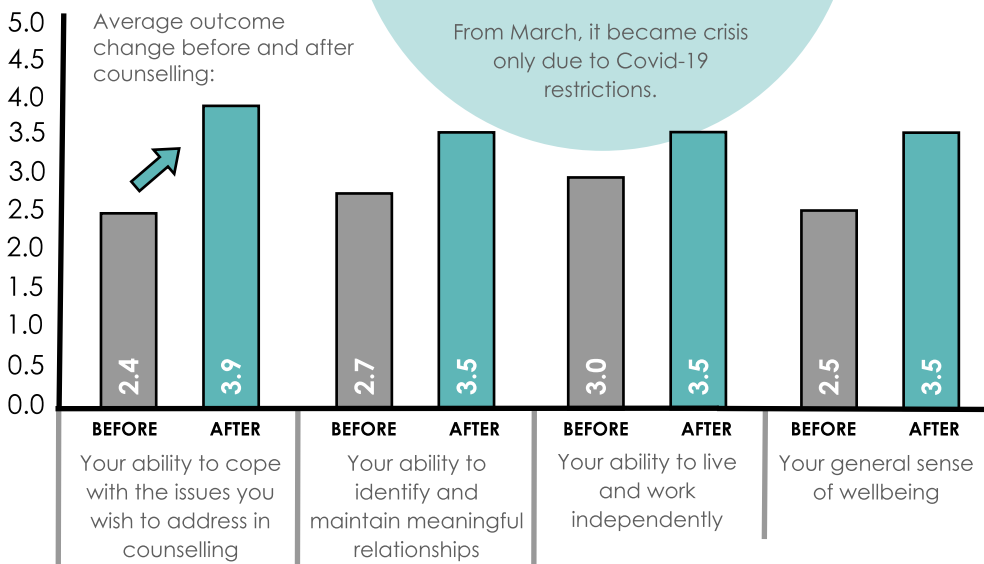
Total number of sessions

1,023

Our Impact

Counselling

Between April 2020 - March 2021 we doubled our counselling capacity and held **1,263** counselling sessions



Safe Haven

An evening drop-in service for people and their carers who are experiencing a mental health crisis or emotional distress. This service is delivered at Oakleaf, working in partnership with Catalyst and Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

From March, it became crisis only due to Covid-19 restrictions.

1,899

Safe Haven attendances

Client Satisfaction Survey

We conduct bi-annual client satisfaction surveys. Our January 2021 survey yielded these results:

87% of clients felt more confident



92% of clients felt their mental wellbeing had improved

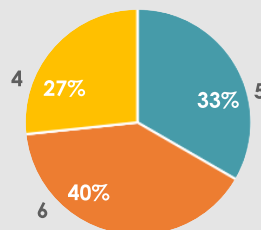


95% of clients felt less isolated



Clients who resumed employment:

■ Part-time
 ■ Further education
 ■ Full-time



Unfortunately the pandemic has had a detrimental impact on clients looking for employment. We anticipate this will change as we move forward into 2022.

Client Stories

"I had only just started with Oakleaf when the lockdown commenced, so as you can imagine it left me stranded and very isolated. I am doing a range of different courses through Oakleaf and I am thankful for all their time, kindness, help and support."

"These classes have given me a reason to get out of bed."

Every class and member of staff has shown so much commitment to help and understand every one of us, including myself. These classes have given me a reason to get out of bed and have provided me with a real drive and daily structure."

John, Oakleaf client



"Oakleaf really has been the backbone of my mental health support."

"The team at Oakleaf have been outstanding and have adapted to our new normal brilliantly."

Their new online sessions have given me a much-needed focus. We have the option to interact and engage with one another; something which I now look forward to and rely on.

Oakleaf really has been the backbone of my mental health support."

Jan, Oakleaf client



Russell's Story

"Oakleaf was recommended as a safe space to go to connect with people who are dealing with similar circumstances to myself. At the time I was very withdrawn and suffering from severe social anxiety and depression. It took me a little while to work up the courage to meet the Oakleaf team but I am so glad I did.

The team suggested that I might enjoy their gardening training, which involved going out once a week with a group of other clients and volunteers to work at customers' houses. This was a great experience as it allowed me to work as part of a team, make friends and learn new skills.



"It added structure to my week and gave me something to look forward to."

Alongside gardening, I was able to take part in Yoga, Meditation, Tai-Chi, Pilates and Mindfulness which gave me the skills to manage my anxiety and depression as well as improve my physical health.

I was also offered counselling which helped me process thoughts and feelings in a safe space and gain perspective on my life.

The team were all really understanding and supportive when I was going through a difficult time.

Even since I left, they have continued to contact me during the pandemic to check that I am okay; their kindness and dedication to helping people has really changed my life.

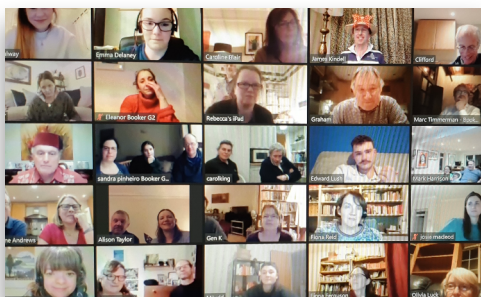
I continue to use the skills I learned at Oakleaf to manage my mental health on a daily basis. I even decided to apply to college and am now in my second year training to be a therapeutic counsellor so that I can help people the same way that Oakleaf helped me."

Highlights of the Year



In March 2020, due to Covid-19 we rapidly shifted our focus from hosting face-to-face activities to providing online alternatives to ensure our hundreds of clients could access support over the phone and via video. This included dozens of courses and workshops, wellbeing activities and support groups, including a virtual 'create your own spring bulb planter.'

We started offering 30 minute Check-In and Chat calls with our clients during the first lockdown, providing much-needed emotional support to reduce loneliness and isolation. We made a total of 2,357 calls between April 2020 and March 2021 and we continue to offer this service going forward.



While we were unable to host our 10th Annual Quiz Night in-person, we decided to take it online in the form of a 'Virtual Takeover' on 25th February, with 20 teams. During the year, we held a total of 15 virtual quizzes to help lift people's spirits during the pandemic, raising over £6,000.

In the week of 20th-26th July 2020, we held a virtual running challenge 'Side With 17', where participants ran 17 miles for the 17% of people who experience a mental health problem in any given week. Getting friends and family to sponsor them along the way, more than 40 runners raised an amazing £4,300!

Highlights of the Year



Following the cancellation of Prudential RideLondon, we decided to host a virtual alternative: 'Tour de Oakleaf' on 16th August 2020. We challenged businesses and supporters to match the Olympic legacy by cycling 50 or 100 miles in a location of their choice to help support mental health in Surrey, raising over £1,000.



We were delighted to announce that HM Lord-Lieutenant Michael More-Molyneux would become the newest Oakleaf Patron in October 2020. Mr More-Molyneux has been involved with an increasing number of charities and good causes, including his wonderful support of Oakleaf over the years.



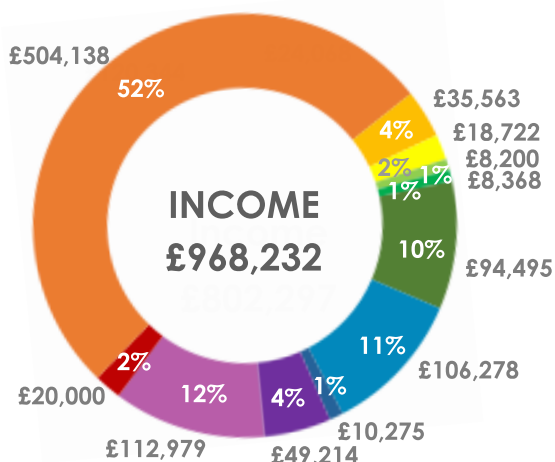
Unfortunately we were unable to hold our annual client Christmas party. Instead, we organised the production and delivery of 300 Christmas Care Baskets - a gesture to show our clients that they had not been forgotten during this particularly difficult festive season. 80 donors and 32 volunteers helped make the project a success.



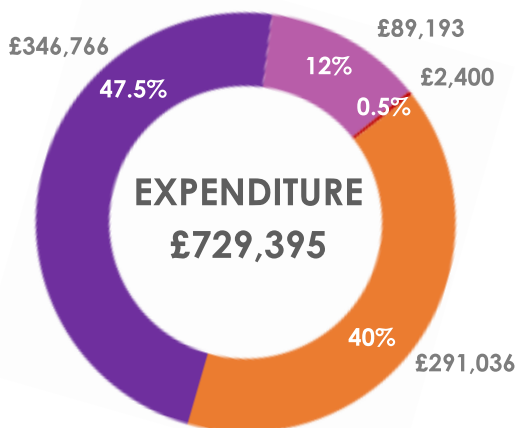
In January 2021 we began our Kickstart Wellbeing programme, a 12-week intensive project focused on helping clients take important steps towards a more positive and healthy lifestyle. Due to its success, we will be holding several iterations of Kickstart Wellbeing each year.

Our Finances

In spring 2020 as the pandemic hit the country, like many organisations we became alarmed about the likely impact on Oakleaf's financial situation and thus on our ability to provide our services. Income from our social enterprises, fundraising events, corporate and community support was of high concern. However, as the year progressed, we were overwhelmed by the generous support of many Oakleaf donors including individual supporters and trusts, who came to our aid and enabled us to increase our services at a time when they have never been more critical. It was an extraordinary year and through this we have seen a massive increase in our overall client numbers. Thankfully with the slight increase in revenue we will be in a stronger position to support more clients as we move forward. With pressures on mental wellbeing being so intense, we are hugely grateful to all donors who have been able to support our work this year.



- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Contracts for services | Events |
| Statutory Bodies | Donations |
| Charitable Trusts | Social Enterprise |
| Corporate | Client Fees |
| Community | Other |
| Lottery | |



- | |
|-----------------------------|
| Direct Charitable Costs |
| Direct Fundraising Costs |
| Governance |
| Charitable Activity Support |

Registered with



Thank You

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020, all face-to-face Oakleaf services were put on hold until August. Many of our fundraising streams were badly affected, from events being cancelled to businesses cutting back charitable support. We were aware that along with the impact of the pandemic on everyday life, lack of regular face-to-face support had a detrimental effect on clients, leaving many feeling lonely, anxious and uncertain about the future.

We worked hard to ensure that all clients could access online support via phone or video, and from August we resumed face-to-face activities in a limited capacity with Covid-19 procedures in place.

All of this would not be possible without the continued generosity of our supporters.

Whatever the coming year holds, we are committed to continuing our provision of mental health and wellbeing services to our hundreds of clients, to ensure they will be supported by us throughout this difficult period.

We therefore thank all donors including the individuals, businesses, community organisations, foundations and trusts, which supported Oakleaf in 2020/2021 and since Covid-19 began. We would be unable to deliver our vital services to clients without this support.





MAKING LIFE WORK WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

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