



MAKING LIFE WORK WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Impact Report

2022/23



We have been a registered charity since 1997, working to transform lives and build new futures with adults managing their mental health. We help clients aged 16+ through a wide range of wellbeing activities and support groups, work-related training, employment support, and counselling.

OUR MISSION

To transform lives through the provision of support, training and wellbeing activities, building new futures with adults managing their mental health.

VISION

People are empowered to manage their mental health and wellbeing and are supported to achieve their goals.

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Message from our Chief Executive

As I look back over the past year I feel a sense of **Expectation, Pride and Relief.**

Expectation comes in the form of delivering ongoing and new projects, which are engaging and supporting large numbers of people. I am excited by the continued growth of our Pathways to Work project as the team develops more creative ways to engage our clients, helping them to prepare, secure and sustain employment. One of the most successful approaches has been our Learn, Lunch, Learn events. Another is our Job Club, which has given clients full access to IT support for all work-related material.

Further, expectation (and a little anxiety) was felt overseeing our Bridge The Gap project as I worried about sufficient referrals for this complex client group. I am pleased to report that our team achieved maximum caseload. They work in great depth with individuals of high need. This entails helping them secure accommodation, welfare support, fixing broken lines of communication with mental health services and navigating meaningful relationships.

Pride in the fact that we celebrated 25 years of providing meaningful support, care and development opportunities for people affected by mental health issues. From a very small team, we have evolved into a much larger charity, with hundreds of clients attending venues across Guildford and Waverley.

Relief came in the shape of our first ever black tie Gala event, concluding our 25th anniversary celebrations. It was meticulously planned and ran like clockwork. There were presentations of awards, a heart-warming talk from one of our clients whose progression through adversity was truly inspirational and an auction coupled with some incredible donations.

Finally, our work within the community and businesses has continued to be strengthened through our Mental Health Leaders Network. This has provided far reaching benefit for many organisations ranging from IT, health, entertainment through to insurance; all of which are receiving training and support to help them better understand their employees and the mental health of their community.



CLIVE STONE

Thoughts from our Chair



"This last year has seen Oakleaf grow from strength to strength. The 'Cost of Living' crisis has had a disproportionate impact on those with mental ill-health. The challenges that financial pressures have brought to bear on the more vulnerable members of our society has also driven an increase in the number of people seeking help from Oakleaf. Despite the increased demands on Oakleaf, its staff and its volunteers we have enabled more clients than ever to bring their lives back to a place of stability.

We are providing services to an ever-increasing number of clients and through our Pathways to Work project have seen a record number of those clients find sustained employment. We are working in partnership with Surrey County Council to deliver specialist services to those in our community who have the most complex of needs through our 'Bridge the Gap' team.

Our Client Services team remain at the core of our offering, developing tailored programmes for each client as they move along their journey back to good mental health. They provide the consistency and sense of community that many of our clients lack outside of their time at Oakleaf.

Counselling continues to be the bedrock upon which many of our clients are able to move forward, enabling them to develop the techniques and gain the confidence to take back control of their lives.

The Board and I are extremely proud of all that the volunteers and staff do to enable the most vulnerable in our society to get back on their feet. We are also very grateful to all of our donors who make the work we do possible, your support is invaluable." - **Lorraine Andrews, Oakleaf Chair of Trustees**



How we help

Work-Related Training & Employment Support

Courses in IT and Gardening help clients gain new skills, qualifications and work experience. Our 'Pathways to Work' employment project delivers tailored training and mentoring to help clients move forward into the workplace.

Wellbeing Activities

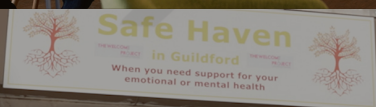
We deliver a variety of in-person and online wellbeing activities designed to improve confidence, physical and mental wellbeing whilst reducing isolation and loneliness. Including: Art, Fitness, Cookery, Football, Yoga, Upholstery, Tai Chi and more.

Counselling

We offer a low-cost (from £5 per session) and accessible (face-to-face and online) counselling service of up to 18 sessions, to give clients a safe and confidential space to talk with a counsellor on a weekly basis.

Safe Havens

The Guildford Safe Haven, run by Oakleaf, Catalyst and Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust is a drop-in service open 6-11pm, 365 days a year that provides out-of-hours support to individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis. The Young Adult Safe Haven, run by Oakleaf and Catalyst, is open 5-9 pm daily for 18-25 year olds in need of emotional support.



1,874

Safe Haven
attendances

231

Young Adult
Safe Haven
attendances

Our Impact

Total number of
Check-in and Chat calls

476

993

clients registered
with Oakleaf

220

new clients

Work-Related Training

Courses in IT and Gardening help our clients gain new skills, qualifications and work experience.

There were **1,374** client attendances to our two training departments

GARDENING



Teaches clients about soft landscaping and garden maintenance, while working on real customers' gardens with our trained and qualified staff.

IT TRAINING



Improves clients' digital skills in preparation for the workplace. We offer a wide range of courses including Microsoft Office packages, cyber security and more.

Bridge the Gap

We provide support on a one-to-one basis for people with multiple disadvantages through 'Bridge the Gap' - an assertive outreach programme offered through Surrey County Council's Changing Futures initiative.

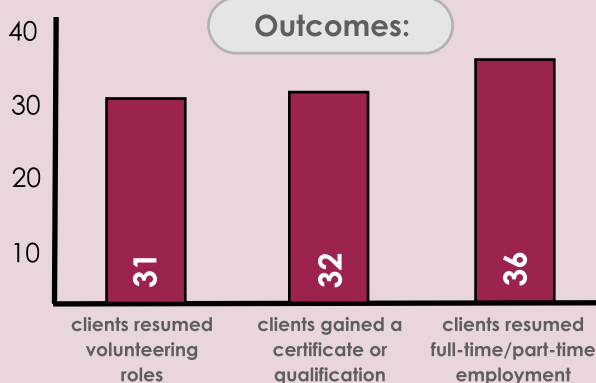
Covering but not limited to: physical and mental health care, assistance with finding/sustaining accommodation, daily living tasks, referrals, substance use and harm reduction and financial arrangements.

Employment Project

Our 'Pathways to Work' employment project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, delivers tailored training and mentoring to help clients move forward into the workplace.

194 clients were supported by our employment project

Outcomes:



Our Impact

Wellbeing Activities



Oakleaf delivers a variety of in-person and online wellbeing activities designed to improve confidence, physical and mental wellbeing whilst reducing isolation and loneliness.

This year we provided **over 60** distinct wellbeing activities online and in-person.

Total number of clients who took part in any wellbeing activity

325

Physical	Emotional	Creative	Life Skills
Qi-Gong	Wellbeing Café	Poetry	Writing
Fitness	Women's Group	Craft & Chat	Budgeting
Football	Mindfulness	Guitar	Self-Care
Seasonal Yoga	Stress Management	Spanish Lessons	Literacy
Wellbeing Walks	Positivity Hour	Crochet	Confidence Building

Total number of wellbeing
attendances

5,597

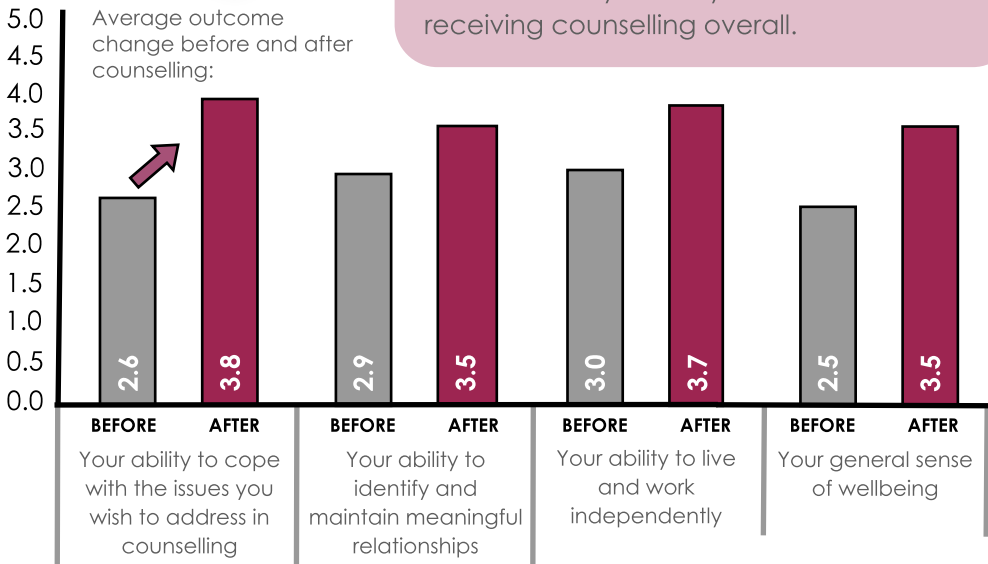
Total number of wellbeing
sessions

950

Our Impact

Counselling

We delivered **2,037** counselling sessions - a **24%** increase year on year - with **192** clients receiving counselling overall.



Client Satisfaction Survey

We conduct bi-annual client satisfaction surveys, which yielded these results in 2022/23:

96% of clients felt more confident



98% of clients felt their mental wellbeing had improved



97% of clients felt less isolated



"Oakleaf has been a safe space for me to come to, and that stability has been so important through my recovery journey. I am now more present and more connected to myself and others." - **Oakleaf client**



Ash's Story

"I have had an interesting and rather long journey with my mental health. As a teenager I became aware that I had ups and downs and was diagnosed with anxiety and depression.

2015 is when my breakdown happened. I would struggle with severe headaches and feeling overwhelmed all the time. The fatigue was beyond anything I'd experienced before. I was exhausted and couldn't think straight or make decisions.

I admitted myself to hospital five times in four years. This led to my diagnosis of Bipolar 2.



"It took a long time to get to a point where I was functioning again but I knew I wanted to get my life back."

I was introduced to Oakleaf in 2018. Having not had a daily routine for a long time, I was nervous about the practical side of work, like committing to a regular schedule. The staff at Oakleaf were very understanding and

made me feel at ease right away.

I joined one of Oakleaf's IT courses to refresh my Excel skillset and learn some new skills. The IT suite was set out like an office, which helped prepare me for a busy call centre.

As I had been extremely isolated for a long time, I felt anxious about having chit-chat conversation with people I didn't know, but being at Oakleaf reminded me that those skills were still there.

I have been back at work for four years and I now manage 30 people. I believe that Oakleaf's support made all the difference in my return to the workplace being successful."

- Ash, former Oakleaf client



Highlights of the Year



Our art classes made a hugely positive impact on our clients, with 305 attendances. We ran 54 sessions, covering lots of different mediums, including: illustration, palette knife painting, watercolour and marbling.



We were delighted to host our annual Client BBQ in September 2022. 75 clients attended and had a fantastic time, enjoying a delicious barbecue at The Guildford Pavilion alongside some acoustic music and games.



A huge congratulations to our three fabulous runners: Jordan, Joe and Tasha for taking part in the TCS London Marathon in October and running 26.2 miles in aid of Oakleaf, which raised an amazing £4,000.



In October, we carried out our grandest fundraiser to date - Oakleaf's 25th Anniversary Gala, raising an incredible £55,000. We are beyond grateful for the support we received, including from our headline sponsor Something Big.

Highlights of the Year



We were absolutely thrilled to win the 'Community Hero' award as part of the much-anticipated Surrey Business Awards in November 2022 - the largest awards ceremony of its kind in Surrey.



We had a great time hosting our Client Christmas Party at Oakleaf in December 2022. Over 60 clients got into the festive spirit while celebrating everyone's achievements, including a delicious meal and gifts for all.



As part of our Employment Project, we introduced 'Learn, Lunch, Learn' - drop-in sessions where clients complete Digital College Courses such as social media or bookkeeping. We're pleased that 22 certificates were awarded.



In March 2023, our annual Oakleaf Quiz Night managed to raise £6,711. Well done to all 17 teams (155 attendees) who took part and a big congratulations to 'The Victoria Sponges' for winning first place.

Social Enterprise



We act as a social enterprise, selling the services of our work-related training to the public; the funds of which are fed back into the charity.

Our gardening team provides a first-class service for households, businesses and organisations, whilst giving clients on-site training in real customers' gardens to complete their 12-week course in soft landscaping and garden maintenance.



"Oakleaf is an extraordinary group and I'm proud to be associated with you all"

"We were thrilled with the work that Jackie and crew did - they were amazing and delightful to have"

- Gardening customers

Client Quotes

"Oakleaf's Employment Advisors support me in my journey to employment. This includes building confidence, being a disability advocate, interview preparation, tackling imposter syndrome, and negotiating reasonable adjustments. They also provide valuable insights that are reassuring and encouraging and are great mentors and excellent listeners." - **Oakleaf client**

"Oakleaf has saved my life. Attending has helped me feel positive about actually having a future, and pulled me back from the edge many times." - **Oakleaf client**

"Getting out of the house has made me feel less isolated and has given me a purpose and goals. I have mixed more with people and built on my CV - a great way to fill up my weeks. Oakleaf has left me feeling so much more confident about becoming re-employed in time, and has provided me with a much-needed support network." - **Oakleaf client**

Julie's Story



Julie became a client with Oakleaf following a mental health relapse and was referred by the hospital after being diagnosed with mild depression.

"When I first joined Oakleaf, I really enjoyed working through all the books and courses IT had to offer. I was new to it all and didn't always understand it but I found faith in the process and achieved several certificates at the end of it all.

"The art classes at Oakleaf also really helped me to focus, which brought out the best in me. They gave me back my confidence."

Julie has also published several books since her time at Oakleaf. "Writing can be great for your mental health; it stretches the mind and distracts you from the worries of everyday life. It's so brilliant to be able to create something that's your own, which people can love and be proud of."



When asked what message Julie would like to share with others who might be struggling with their mental health, she said: "Try not to hurt yourself with your thoughts. Be gentle with your mind and your feelings. Find something that you used to be passionate about and reignite that passion again. But above all else, be kind to yourself."

- Julie, former Oakleaf client

Our Finances

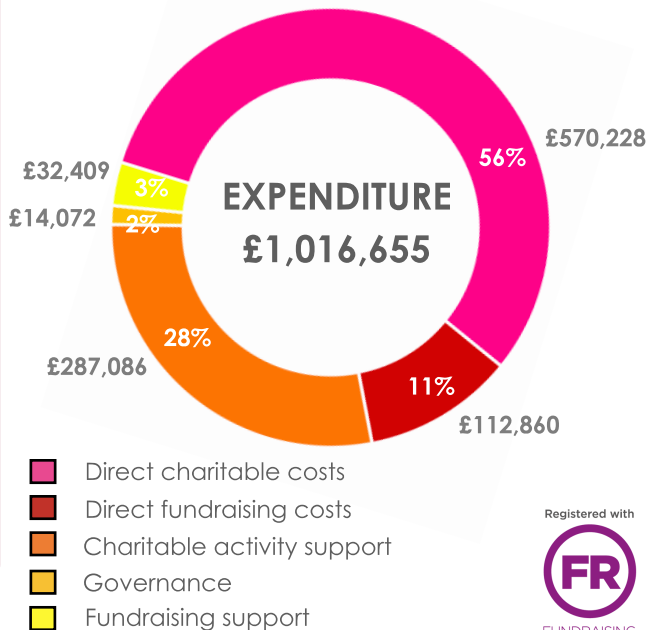
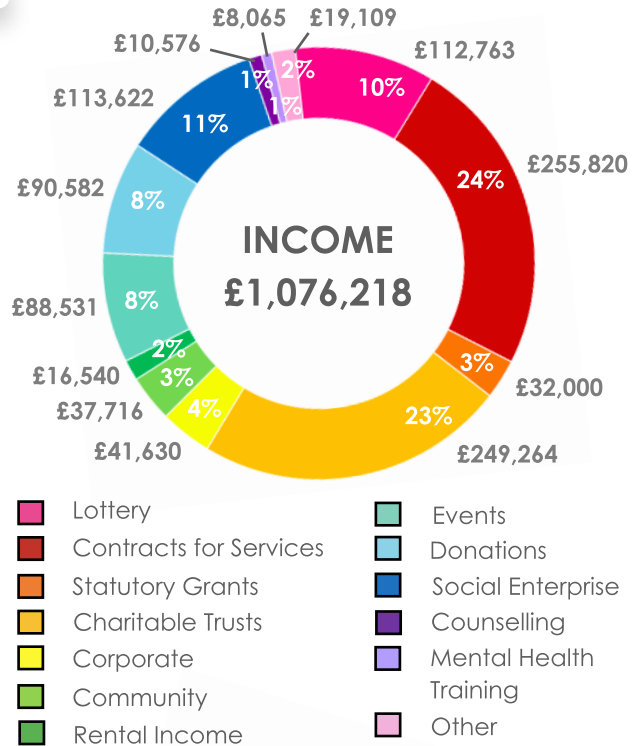
Our support for local people managing mental ill-health grew in 2022-23, and our income and expenditure reflect this.

We began our Bridge the Gap project in May 2022, a new service for clients with multiple disadvantages. We increased the variety and scope of our wellbeing activities, and delivered more counselling sessions than ever before.

This corresponded with the highest number of registered clients at Oakleaf in our 25-year history.

As the need for local services continues to grow, we are working hard to attract sustainable funding from a range of sources.

We are hugely appreciative of all financial contributions to Oakleaf and our relationships with donors, customers, supporters and grant makers are crucial to ensure help continues to be available for those who need it.



Registered with



Thank You

Our ability to support clients is determined hugely by the generosity we receive from supporters and donors.

With a substantial increase in need for accessible mental health, employment and wellbeing support, we have expanded our services to meet demand.

We therefore thank every single individual, community group, business, charitable trust, funder and customer who supported Oakleaf's mission in 2022-23 to transform lives and build new futures with adults managing their mental health.

If you feel able to help our work in any way, please visit:

www.oakleaf-enterprise.org or contact us through:

info@oakleaf-enterprise.org/01483 303649.





MAKING LIFE WORK WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

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Registered Company no: 3388671



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