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Welcome from our Chair and CEO



Once again, it is with great pleasure that Jo and I, as stewards of our amazing charity, introduce our annual Impact Report.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the remarkable, frequently moving, and always impressive work of Hertfordshire Mind Network over the past year. This is not about Jo or me, nor the trustees and leadership team. It is dedicated to our colleagues, our volunteers, and our partners. They all work together to support the most important aspect of our charity - our clients. Every day, we hear truly inspiring stories about our colleagues. They make a positive difference in the lives of those in our communities who need our help and support.

As we said last year, since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in referrals and the level of support required. This is undeniable. Our partners have experienced the same. For this reason, working with partner agencies across the county has become even more critical, as we seek to deliver our vision: that every person in Hertfordshire will feel supported with their mental health.

We also know that we cannot be everything to everybody. Sometimes our role is to facilitate, connect, and enable people to connect with peers, services, and support that will give them the most important element of mental health care - HOPE!

Co-production and seeing our clients as equal partners in the design and delivery of services is in our DNA. Our best ideas and innovations come from those best placed to guide us—our clients. For this, we say a massive thank you again!

This report is full of details about our services and the experiences of our clients and colleagues. These inspire and humble us in equal measure. As we look ahead to the coming year, we expect to continue growing and developing our charity for the good of our communities. We aim to make our services more accessible, available, and diverse in the range we offer.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and that you share in the pride and privilege that we both feel, given our small roles within this incredible charity. A charity that above all else is about its people, a community of like-minded, inspiring, and dedicated individuals. They give so much every day, making their own lives and those around them better.

Best wishes

Jess Lievesley & Jo Marovitch





Who we are

For over 50 years we have supported the people of Hertfordshire with their mental health.

We deliver essential mental health support, providing a diverse range of services from our eight Wellbeing Centres and other locations across the county.

Funded locally, our services are available to all residents in Hertfordshire over the age of 18 and we offer separate services for 5-18 year olds.

We help individuals experiencing mental ill health to make choices, find their solutions, build resilience and manage their wellbeing.

We offer opportunities for individuals to get support to allow them to recover from or live with mental ill health.

Each year, we help **15,000 people** experiencing mental ill health.

We are a local Mind, affiliated to national Mind, the leading mental health charity in England and Wales.

This means that we are an independent charity responsible for raising our own funds through contracts,





Our vision and values



Hope

We believe in choice, freedom, change and a better future for every person experiencing mental ill health.



Together

We share learning, build relationships and connect with others to promote better mental health across our community.



Courage

We are determined, bold and unstoppable.



Responsive

We take time to listen, to learn, to share and to act.





Every person in Hertfordshire will feel supported with their mental health

Our services are grouped in the following areas:

- Crisis
 - Intervention
- Wellbeing & Counselling

- Complex Needs & Community
- Training & Education

- Peer Support
- Children & Young People





8,887Children and Young People have accessed our services.

1 Crisis services

We have continued to develop the Nightlight countywide out of hour's mental health crisis service during this financial year. The centres provide a safe, homely and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed. Each centre is staffed by a team of skilled and experienced non-clinical mental health workers, many of whom have a lived experience of mental ill health.

Nightlight Crisis Helpline

Our helpline provides a listening ear, emotional support, advice and information for anyone feeling distressed and in a crisis.

It is open every day of the year from 7pm to 1am on **01923 256391.**

Nightlight Crisis Cafés

Our Crisis Cafés are open every evening for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis, providing a safe, homely and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed and going through a crisis.

Open every day of the year from 7pm to 1am.

We have café's operating from our Watford Wellbeing Centre, Ware Wellbeing Centre, and Stevenage Arts and Leisure Centre.

We also recently opened a café in partnership with Mind in Mid Herts in Hatfield.

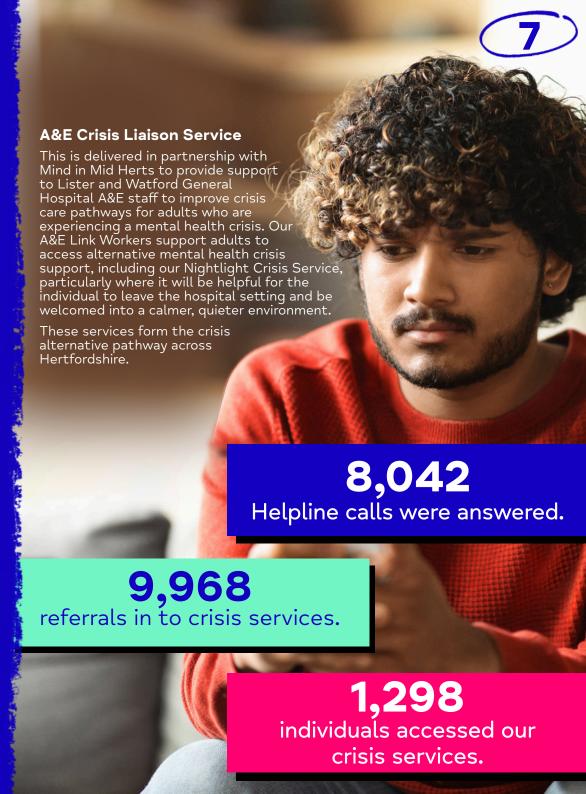
Nightlight Crisis House

Our Nightlight Crisis House provides an overnight safe, homely and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed and experiencing a crisis.

Open 24/7 with 4 beds. Individuals typically stay for 3-5 nights.

Daylight

Helps individuals aged 18 or over across Hertfordshire through one-to-one support. Our Daylight workers support individuals for an average of 4-8 weeks, facilitating access to community support to help individuals manage their mental health crisis within the community.





We are experienced providers of complex needs services within the county.

Community Support Service

provides advice, information, onward referral, and holistic support to people who are experiencing mental ill-health or need help with their mental wellbeing. These teams provide one-to-one outreach support in a variety of areas such as emotional and practical support; housing need; benefits; access to services; signposting; help to reduce episodes of crisis and building life skills. In Watford and Three Rivers we also provide intensive support for people experiencing domestic abuse.

Bounce Back

service forms an integral part of Hertfordshire Mind Network's (HMN) Community Services, providing one-to-one outreach support to facilitate a smooth, timely and supportive discharge from hospital back into the community. This service is present in Kingfisher Court and Albany Lodge as well as running out of both A&E's (Watford and Lister) in the county.

Housing Support Service

provides housing advice, information, representations, onward referral and holistic support to people who are experiencing mental ill-health or who need help with their mental wellbeing and housing issues (not including homelessness).

Complex Needs Housing Service

provides advice, information, onward referral and holistic support to people who are experiencing mental ill health or need support with their mental wellbeing. The service is for clients who are presenting to the housing teams as homeless at District and Borough councils. We work alongside the person to develop a tailored package of support that meets their needs, working with them to find the solutions that are right for them.



704

Domestic Abuse support sessions provided.

7,709

Community support sessions provided.

Domestic Abuse Service

is available in Watford and Three Rivers. Our Domestic Abuse Caseworkers can provide support to anyone over the age of 16 who are experiencing domestic abuse. We deliver an easy-to-access, high quality service, providing a range of support, based on the needs and wishes of the individual. We will listen without judgement and will help the person to explore their options and make their own choices, taking actions at a pace that is right for them.

We can also help individuals to access alternative accommodation, safety planning and access to health care if needed.

Primary Care Network Service

is here to provide advice, information, onward referral and holistic support to individuals aged 16+ who are experiencing mental ill health and would like to access 6-10 sessions of tailored one-to-one support to improve their wellbeing. The team work closely with local GP practices, ensuring that individuals can access the support that is right for them.



2 Complex needs & community support services

Flourish

Our countywide Flourish service is here to provide advice, information, onward referral and holistic support to refugees and asylum seekers who are experiencing challenges that are impacting their mental health.

The service provides one-to-one support to help individuals settle in the UK. It is available to those aged 16 and above, offering up to ten sessions of holistic support. The service also has peer support groups across the county both in local hotspots and asylum hotels.

Flourish has become closely associated with refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire, and even won the Hertfordshire Mind Network's Spotlight Award. Originally, Flourish was created to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine and coming to the UK. However, recognising the broader need, Flourish expanded its support to refugees and asylum seekers from all backgrounds. We stand by the principle that everyone in Hertfordshire deserves to have their mental health needs addressed, regardless of race, religion, gender, or background.

Flourish has started important conversations about mental health and wellbeing for many refugees and asylum seekers, giving a voice to those who often slip through the gaps in the mental health system.

The service operates countywide from 9am to 5pm, reaching out to service users in the community, including holding hotels and temporary accommodations. Alternatively, individuals can visit one of our seven wellbeing centres if they prefer. The service provides both emotional and practical outreach support, helping users with integration into Hertfordshire. We also help with visa applications, and referrals to relevant agencies as needed.

In the last financial year, Flourish supported individuals aged 16 to 84, representing over 67 different ethnicities.

Flourish is **responsive** and adapts its services to meet the evolving needs of asylum seekers and refugees. We establish groups where they are most needed, and when hotels close, we end those groups and focus on identifying new areas of need across Hertfordshire. This includes distributing promotional materials and delivering presentations. We continue to build relationships with hotels and refugee hosts to support the best possible mental health and quality of life for these individuals.



Flourish has been active in more than 10 hotels, offering one-to-one support and peer support groups.

Flourish Peer Support Groups:

In addition to one-to-one support, Flourish also runs peer support groups across the county at various locations, including hotels and community centres.

These groups offer drop-in sessions and urgent emotional and practical support, providing a safe space for individuals to connect with others who share similar experiences and can relate to trauma. One group in Hemel Hempstead regularly sees over 100 attendees.

The groups have grown beyond their original purpose, facilitating the distribution of practical items through partnerships with charities. These items include car seats, children's toys, clothing, food, laptops, furniture, and home essentials like white goods for our service users.

Flourish has built strong relationships with other agencies, including securing funding for Herts Welcomes Refugees. This funding has supported a cooking project for refugees and asylum seekers in accommodations with limited food options, helping to meet their nutritional needs.

I am very grateful for your services, the weekly meetings are emotionally uplifting and useful in areas like volunteering and employability advice, improving how I feel

(Flourish, Service User)



3 Peer support services

Peer Support Service:

Our one-to-one Peer Support Service is dedicated to adults experiencing mental ill health and those who care for them.

Staffed by a compassionate team of Peer Support Workers who have personal experience with mental health challenges, this service leverages their unique insights to help service users overcome real-life difficulties. Our Peer Support Workers collaborate with users to enhance their independence, quality of life, and overall wellbeing.

Peer Learning Courses:

Our online Peer Learning Courses offer a supportive environment where users can acquire new skills, build resilience, boost confidence, and improve their health and wellbeing.

Peer Mentoring Service:

Our Peer Mentoring Service provides personalised, one-to-one emotional and practical support. Trained volunteers, who bring a wealth of experience, offer up to 12 sessions of dedicated assistance, helping users navigate their challenges with confidence.

549 Peer Mentoring sessions provided.

Peer Support Groups:

Our weekly online Peer Support Groups create a space for participants to discuss topics relevant to their needs. These groups cover themes such as wellbeing, self-care, resilience, community resources, coping strategies, and practical support.

Peer Support Academy:

The Peer Support Academy offers training courses designed to harness lived experiences of mental ill health. Service users will learn to use their experiences to support themselves and others, fostering personal growth and potentially inspiring change in mental health services.

Carers Support Service:

Our Carers Support Service provides customised emotional support, practical assistance, and social interaction for carers. Available through one-to-one or group sessions, this service is tailored to meet the unique needs of each carer.





2,876 Peer Support sessions provided.

Our groups and activities provide the chance for people to meet in a safe and relaxed environment. We now run 23 weekly groups across the county. They take place face-to-face and online. These groups encompass:

DBT Peer Support Group:

This is a drop-in group for those who have attended Dialectical Behavioural Therapy or Structured Clinical Management and would like to continue practicing using the skills learnt.

Offered as a set programme by Hertfordshire University Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT).

Meeting Places:

Are a safe and welcoming social drop-in where service users who are Hertfordshire residents can feel supported.

Meeting Places are open access i.e. there is no need to have an initial appointment and service users can also attend while waiting for one of our other services.

6,429 Attendances at Meeting Places.

Music Groups:

An opportunity to sing along to a host of songs spanning the last seven decades. Sessions are held by a guitarist with songs suggested by service users. Fun discussions are held in between the songs, but the aim is to fit as many songs into the two hours as possible.

Online LGBTQ+ Group:

This is a weekly online Zoom meeting group in partnership with HMN. Zoom meetings are run by a LGBTQ+ facilitator and hosted by LGBTQ+ Herts Pride and CIC volunteers and allies. Groups have a mix of wellbeing and social support meetings.

13

Mums Matter:

This is a perinatal mental health service designed and developed by mums for mums of children 0-2 years old. The service aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of new mums by empowering them with knowledge and understanding of perinatal mental health and expanding social networks.



Mums Matter is a facilitated peer support group made up of eight online sessions as well as structured one-to-one peer support.

We support individuals with:

- Perinatal mental health support
- Groups and 1:1 support
- Psychoeducation and peer support
- Social activities

We have continued to develop this service, facilitating volunteering opportunities for those who have completed the course, to hold monthly peer support groups. Through this expansion, we have been able to embed social interaction and community connection after the Mums Matter course has finished.



Volunteering Opportunities:

Volunteering is a great way to support us and get involved with your local community.

Around 150 people give their time to us each year and this time is worth tens of thousands of pounds. More importantly, our volunteers change lives.

We offer a range of exciting volunteering roles across Hertfordshire, open to volunteers aged 18 years or over.

Paid for Counselling

With a team of experienced placement counsellors employing a client-centred approach, we provide a supportive and confidential environment, offering up to 10 counselling sessions.

Anyone can make referrals to this service, and we strive to make it accessible by offering reduced fees through a sliding scale ranging from £40-£10.

Talking Therapies

This is staffed by experienced Talking Therapies counsellors, providing eight free sessions of one- to-one counselling, giving individuals a safe and confidential space to reflect on their experiences.

GPs can refer to this service for Hertfordshire residents aged 16 and over.

Hertswise service

This is a countywide service dedicated to supporting individuals living with dementia, low-level memory loss, or mild cognitive impairment, as well as their family, friends, and carers.

It is a community based service providing wellbeing groups, 1:1, peer support and carers support. We deliver this in partnership with Age UK, HILS and Carers in Herts as part of Hertswise.

We are responsible for the emotional wellbeing and mental health provision across West Herts.

126

Volunteers support our services.

1,267

Counselling sessions provided.

4,008

Talking Therapies Counselling sessions provided.

422

Carers have been supported in Hertswise.

2,175

People have been supported in the Hertswise partnership.

11,660

Group attendances took place in Hertswise.



5

Training and Education

Championing Mental Health Training and Workplace Wellbeing

We are leaders in mental health training in Hertfordshire, offering a diverse range of high-quality services to workplaces and organisations across the voluntary, statutory, and private sectors. Our dedication to promoting workplace wellbeing and raising mental health awareness has driven our efforts over the past year.

Our training programmes cover an extensive range of topics, including mindfulness for teaching staff, self-compassion for male carers, emotional resilience for rugby referees, suicide and crisis training for construction companies, and peer support for walking group members. With over 60 different mental health and wellbeing-related training topics, our catalogue continues to grow and adapt to meet emerging needs.

What Sets Us Apart

Our training programme's adaptability is its key strength. Recognising that each workplace has unique challenges and goals, we offer customised training by blending various topics and incorporating specific elements tailored to the organisation's needs. This personalised approach ensures our training remains

relevant and impactful. Additionally, involving individuals with lived experiences in developing and delivering our courses adds authenticity and depth to the learning experience.

Quality and Accreditation

We regularly review our training content, incorporating feedback from those with lived experience to ensure it remains relevant and effective. A significant milestone is the accreditation of five of our training courses as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certified, highlighting our commitment to maintaining high standards.

Internal Growth and Collaboration

We have expanded our staff and volunteer training, emphasising continuous learning and development.

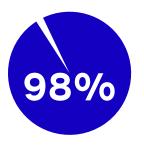
MHFA England Accreditation

We have also obtained the nationally accredited Mental Health First Aid (MHFA England) Training qualification. This achievement enables us to deliver the 2-day accredited training courses to individuals and businesses locally, furthering our mission to equip more people with the skills and knowledge to support mental health in their communities.



New Website Launch

We are excited to announce the launch of our brand-new website dedicated to training and learning at Hertfordshire Mind Network. Our marketing team has worked diligently to create this platform, offering information about each course and online booking.







Good or Excellent Content

Good or Excellent Interaction

Good or Excellent knowledge

307

Training sessions delivered.

1,071

Training hours delivered.

3,616

Training attendees.

36

Workplaces trained.



Our Children & Young People (CYP) services

Hertfordshire Mind Network has a dedicated Children and Young People's website with bespoke branding, providing information about all our services and training: www.withyouth.org

With Youth

Our open access With Youth service provides online support to children and young people experiencing mental health needs or would like support with their emotional wellbeing.

This is a countywide service available for any Hertfordshire resident aged 5-18, as well as parents, carers, and professionals.

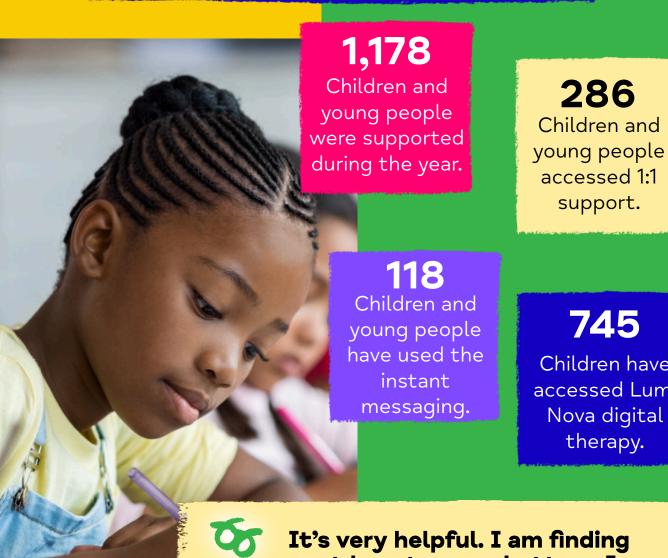
The service is open every day from 2pm – 10pm creating a safe, supported space for children and young people to get the help they need.

The service helps children and young people, and their families, to build resilience by working with them to problem solve and develop coping strategies, coming up with solutions that will enable them to improve their own health and wellbeing.

We do this through a range of digital platforms, to provide 1:1 support, groups, and immediate help via our helpline and instant messaging service. We also provide advice and guidance to parents/ families/carers and professionals - creating a network around the young person to empower and enable positive change.

We have partnered with BFB Labs to offer young people across Hertfordshire free, instant access to Lumi Nova: Tales of Courage, a digital therapy delivered through a fun and engaging mobile game to help 7-12 years olds learn how to manage and reduce symptoms of anxiety.

We provide wrap around support where required as children complete challenges in the game, based on exposure therapy for anxieties around social anxiety; separation anxiety and/or phobias. The game helps the child learn how to manage and reduce symptoms of anxiety whilst building resilience and skills to gain confidence and thrive.



accessed 1:1 support.

745

Children have accessed Lumi Nova digital therapy.

It's very helpful. I am finding out how to cope better... I feel happier.

Young person





Future Youth

Our Future Youth service offers one-to-one mentoring for 12-18 year olds in East and North Herts.

The support is face-to-face in the community and lasts up to 6 months. It's funded by donations and local fundraising efforts.

We provide practical and emotional support to help young people achieve their goals related to mental health and wellbeing.

Each young person is paired with a dedicated mentor who supports their needs and builds a strong relationship, empowering them to overcome any barriers they face.

Young people have accessed 96 support sessions.







SPARK

A creative group for 12-18 year olds to support their emotional wellbeing. We operate three across the county – Letchworth, Bishops Stortford, Watford in the evening. Examples include mask making; sock puppets; clay modelling; creative writing; artwork.

Spot the Signs and Emotional Wellbeing

This is a fully funded programme offering training and workshops to children and young people (CYP), and parents/carers and professionals working with young people.

The programme provides psychoeducation, emotional resilience and signposting support to empower young people and the adults around them to feel confident enough to manage their mental and emotional health. This work is an integral offer within Hertfordshire's Suicide Prevention Strategy.

We deliver a series of workshops and training to children/young people, families and professionals supporting CYP. Topics include:

- Five ways to wellbeing
- Introduction to mental health
- How to have conversations about mental health
- Emotional wellbeing and coping strategies
- Managing exam stress
- Spot the Signs (suicide prevention training)
- Understanding eating disorders in CYP
- Young children's mental health and development

1,036

Professionals working with CYP, attended suicide prevention training.

7,585

Young people attended emotional wellbeing workshops in schools and community groups.





Herts Haven Cafes

Our Herts Haven Cafés launched in July 2023, starting in Stevenage and Watford, with a Hemel Hempstead location added later to extend our reach across Hertfordshire.

We provide young people with a safe, welcoming drop-in space to help with their emotional wellbeing or mental health. This service is available to all 10 to 18 year olds in Hertfordshire, as well as their parents, carers and other professionals involved in their care. Our unique set-up allows us to see those needing support immediately; there is no need for referral, nor do we have a waiting list. Young people can attend by themselves, or with friends/family etc.

All interactions are centred around the individual, working on what is needed in that moment; whether this is lending a listening ear, partaking in activities to help reduce stress or more practical solutions where worksheets can assist with the current challenge. We provide the tools for them to become happier, healthier and safer, as well as more independent, ambitious and resilient.

6 Children and young people attended.

Herts Haven Café visits since opening in July 2023.

Your team do fantastic work with many young people, and I feel like my colleagues and I are always singing your praises in the meetings with medical professionals! Thank you for your hard work and continued support with this family!

Professional



Young person

Herts Haven Café

When young people came to the service, they reported:

- 25% of CYP presented with low self esteem
- 13% of CYP presented with support for self-harm
- 56% of CYP presented with school difficulties
- 37% of CYP presented with feelings of anxiety

After support, young people reported:



improved sense of connection and support network



improved confidence in accessing support and opening up





Raising awareness

Our Marketing, Fundraising, and Engagement team has had a productive year raising awareness of mental health in the local community. They've worked diligently to ensure that local residents know who we are, what we do, and how to reach us if they ever need support.

Our websites, printed materials, social media accounts, and Wellbeing Centres serve as the 'front door' to our services, and it's crucial that they are welcoming, helpful, and encourage people to take that first step towards getting help.

Our Wellbeing Access Workers promote and raise awareness of our services and support referrals into our various services. They also promote the range of services delivered by the HPFT Talking Therapies Services, provided by the NHS.

116

Community events attended across the county.

3,500

People engaged with our stalls and activities in the community.



www.hertfordshiremind.org

30,802

Unique visitors to our website.

130,682

Page views of our website.

Top pages: Areas we cover, Work for us, Services for Adults.

www.withyouth.org

17,880

Unique visitors to our website.

65,536

Page views of our website.

Top pages: Lumi Nova, Herts Haven Cafe, Useful stuff.

Our social media



Over the past 12 months, our social media presence has grown significantly. This has helped us connect with those in need, attract potential employees and volunteers, and engage fundraisers and supporters more effectively.

We've developed a range of materials to promote our services, training, volunteering, fundraising, and recruitment opportunities, as well as to encourage conversations about mental health.

In August 2023, we launched our TikTok account, focusing on content for young people.



2,109 followers

56,785 accounts reached



254 followers

39,000 post views



4,084 followers

165,365 accounts reached



3,321 followers

160,646 accounts reached



2,844 followers

28,936 accounts reached



39 followers

610 unique viewers



450 followers

Lived experience, engagement and involvement



Our Lived Experience Coordinators have created a new Client Engagement & Involvement strategy for 2024-2026 to guide our engagement and involvement activities at Hertfordshire Mind Network.

This strategy is key to ensuring that people with lived experience of mental ill health help shape our charity, bringing authenticity, empathy, and effectiveness to our work.

Their unique insights strengthen our services, shape our approach, and boost our impact.

By involving people with a lived experience, we gain a deeper understanding of mental health issues, reduce stigma, and tailor our support to better meet the needs of our community.

The team have developed a training course to ensure that individuals are fully supported in any involvement opportunities that they undertake, such as:

- Interview Panellist
- Training Course Advisor
- Events Volunteer

Involving those with lived experience also empowers them, fostering a sense of community, breaking down barriers, and creating a welcoming environment for everyone affected by mental ill health.

People have completed the lived experience Induction Training, preparing them for roles within the charity.

People with a lived experience have helped to review and develop our internal and external training courses.

Lived experience roles have been created within the organisation.

Young people reviewed our With Youth website and recommended changes to improve accessibility.



Donations, legacies and fundraising

We would like to say a massive **THANK YOU** to our donors and everyone who has supported Herts Mind Network throughout the 2023-24 financial year.

Whilst everyone is feeling the pressures of inflation and an increasingly difficult cost of living situation, people have still taken the time to donate to our cause, and hold their own fundraising events, which is a true reflection of the generosity across our community.

We are also incredibly grateful that Corporates & Community Groups across Hertfordshire have really stepped up to support us this past year.

We wouldn't be able to provide the services we do without the support of our donor's, so thank you once again to all.

We are looking forward to increasing our fundraising throughout the 2024-25 financial year.

If you would like to support us or find out more information about fundraising, please - contact us at:

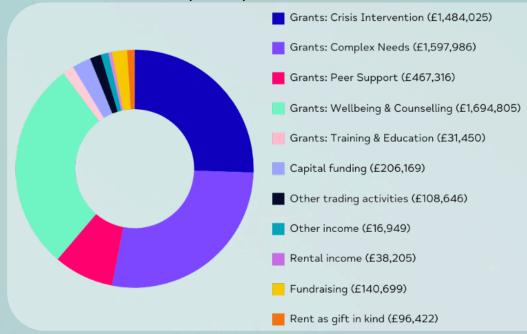
fundraising@hertsmindnetwork.org





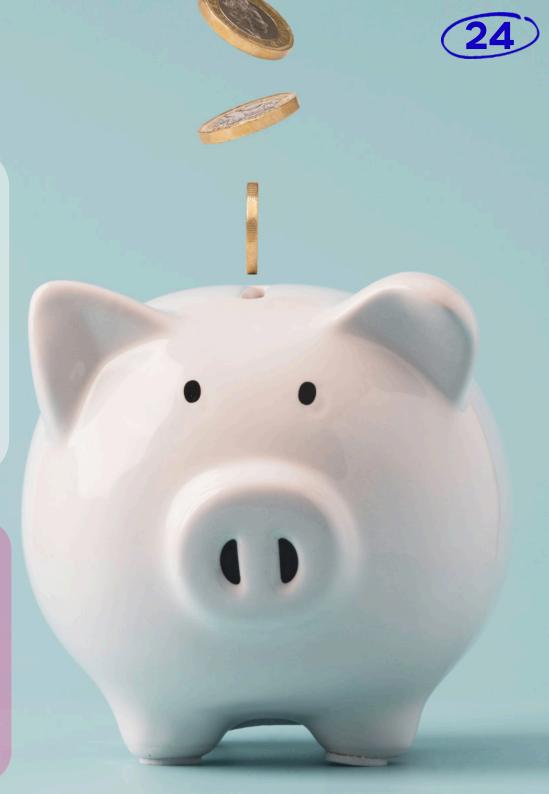
Our finances 2023/24

Our income: £5,882,672



Our expenditure: £5,321,729







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Charity No. 112487/ Company No. 5532977

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