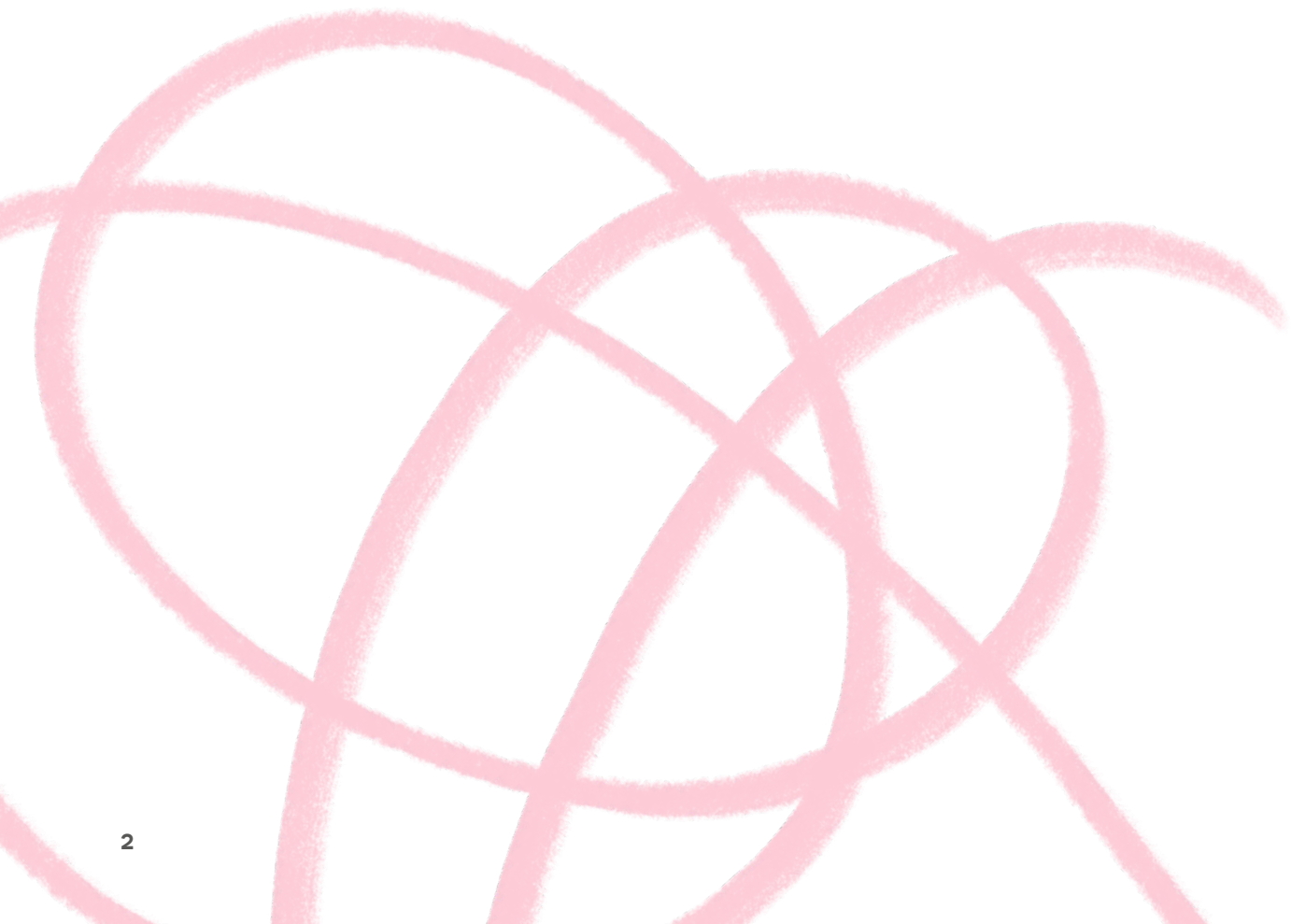




**Mid Kent Mind
Annual Report 2021**



Contents

Our Vision 4

Meet the Team 6

Trustee’s Report8

Chief Exec’s Report.....10

Our Services12

Working in Partnership 20

Volunteer Project 21

Fundraising & Donations 22

Financial Report (Follow the link below)

<https://www.maidstonemind.org/2021-financial-statement-trustees-report/>

Our Vision

We are Mid Kent Mind and we are passionate about supporting people with mental health issues and promoting positive wellbeing.

We recognise people as unique individuals and not as a diagnosis or a label.

We aim to equip people with the tools they need, empowering them to reach their potential.

We encourage diversity, challenging stigma and discrimination.



Meet the Team

Board of Trustees



Phil Fuller
Chairperson



Hazel Webb
Treasurer



Zak Khan
Deputy Chairperson



Donal Watkin
Trustee



James Godfrey
Trustee



Lewis Kinch
Trustee



Jennifer Parris
Trustee



Paul Murray
Trustee

Management Team



Julie Blackmore
CEO



James Walker
Operations Manager



Heidi Featherstone
Team Leader



Deborah Hope
Finance Manager

Team Members



Ron Reeder
Lead Counsellor



Ashlea Clarke
Lead Trainer



Tom Fishenden
Marketing Assistant



Xenia West
Reaching Communities Lead



Nicole Griffiths
Community Development



Kayleigh Fuller
Wellbeing Worker



Yvonne Irvin
Wellbeing Worker



Josie Ledger
Wellbeing Worker



Sam Reid
Wellbeing Worker



Kelly Lee
Wellbeing Worker



Suzanne Middleton
Wellbeing Worker



Stacey Smith
Wellbeing Worker



Warren Card
Wellbeing Worker



Kim Harris
Receptionist



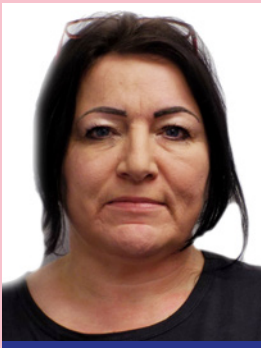
Becky Slingsby
Office Administrator



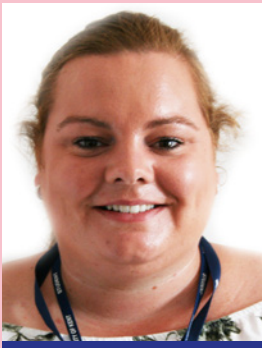
Martin Bagshaw
Wellbeing Worker



Michelle Older
Wellbeing Worker



Pip Chandler
Wellbeing Worker



Amy Wallen-Dunk
Wellbeing Worker



Jane Sampson-Darke
Wellbeing Worker

Trustee's Report

Well, although it is a bit less than a year since the last AGM took place (which was delayed) who would have thought that Covid would still be at the forefront of our thoughts and actions.

This time last year we knew vaccines were being produced and many (I was one of them) thought we would be back to normal by now. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, we have just been told that the majority of restrictions will continue until 19 July.

In last year's report, we mentioned how we had been able to re-profile our services for online provision. These changes have evolved and matured and Mind has continued to meet the challenges Covid is causing. Funders have also been active in recognising that online services are here to stay. One area of our service we have not been able to deliver, due to the restrictions, is on-site work for schools, which we hope to return to before too long.

We have also undergone a change of name to Mid Kent Mind to more accurately reflect the broad, north to south, range of services we provide in the County.

The Trustees would like to thank the Management and Staff of Mid Kent Mind for their perseverance and sheer hard work over the last 12 months and the care they have continued to give to those who use our many services.

The Trustees and Staff recognise that Covid (and its variants) is here to stay for the foreseeable future. We will continue to fine-tune our current services and work alongside our Funders to provide new provision in coming months.

We thank you for your continued interest in Mid Kent Mind. To keep up to date with our services, please visit our website and media channels. We are hoping to launch a brand new website soon.



Chief Exec's Report

I never thought in my lifetime I would be reflecting on a year that was affected by a global pandemic. The lock-downs that Covid 19 brought with it, set up new challenges to Mid Kent Mind that we never thought we would have to address.



With a few days' notice, at the end of March 2020, we relocated our staff to delivering virtual services from their homes. It was a mammoth task and thankfully we were able to purchase laptops, phones and equipment at short notice and so began a year of home working. We put plans in place for 3 months, thinking we were being prepared for a 3 month lock-down at the most – obviously this was not to be the case.

The outbreak of the corona virus disease was stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis are people with existing mental health conditions.

We were hugely successful in relocating a large majority of our service delivery into a virtual capacity and experienced a large demand for these services. These included virtual youth support, counselling services, social activities and training (MHFA - Adult

& Youth, MH Awareness, Suicide Prevention & Awareness). In addition we had an increased demand for Mindfulness support and virtual Crisis Cafe provisions.

Our staff's ability to redraft services and courses in a virtual capacity was amazing. Both CBC and social support were delivered via the Zoom platform and those unable to access these virtual services received daily telephone calls. Cooking groups, arts and crafts, quizzes and singing groups were all well received by our clients, many of which attended a daily social event to help address the isolation they were feeling.

Supported by our volunteer Counsellors we were able to continue to provide our Low Cost Counselling service for clients via telephone or Zoom and my thanks goes to these amazing volunteers who kept this service available for people to access.

Mid Kent Mind's low cost counselling service has expanded over many years

– we provide a service that is accessed by an ever increasing number of clients.

The building in College Road, despite being extended, is once again bursting at its seams... hence the need for more space.

Funded through some external grant bodies and investing some reserves we are delighted to announce that over the last year we have been able to convert our unused garage into two new counselling rooms. The two new rooms, together with a further three rooms in the main building now allow us to have 5 rooms dedicated to the counselling service.

The garage transformation looks amazing and we can't wait for our clients and counsellors to use them.

In my report last year, I set key areas to develop for 2020/21 but the pandemic caused a change of focus on just keeping services open and developing new ideas and ways to support people through a very difficult year. MKM provided around 95% of our services throughout 2020/21, with all staff remaining in full employment so there were no redundancies or furlough of staff. The number of clients supported increased from

“We were hugely successful in relocating a large majority of our service delivery into a virtual capacity ...”

2019/20 and we were hugely successful in securing grants, new tender opportunities and the community continued to support us through fundraising activities.

The effort that staff put into providing services has been immense, filled with enthusiasm and compassion to ensure we have been able to support anyone that needed mental health support. Additionally they have supported each other through difficult circumstances and without them Mid Kent Mind would not have been able to continue to provide such a quality provision of support to residents in Maidstone, Ashford and Swale.

Saying thank you to staff and volunteers does not seem enough. I am so proud of our Team and together we are all looking forward to seeing what 2021/22 brings – and hoping to see many of our clients face to face again.

Mind services across Kent have been meeting on a regular basis, which has provided us with the opportunity to explore a better way of working together that includes sharing resources, knowledge, and the concept of forming a Kent wide Mind brand. This is something we

wish to develop over the next year and are optimistic that this will allow us all to provide an improved, collaborative, quality Mind service open to all residents in Kent.

Looking ahead in 2021 /22, key areas for development are:

- Increased partnership working with local organisations
- Kent wide programmes in partnership with other Kent Minds
- Increasing services in Swale and Ashford, including location of another MK Mind premises
- Business training support
- Staff and Trustee development and training

Our Services

Counselling

Despite the complications COVID-19 caused our counselling service, at the end of April 2020 we were successful in fully transitioning to video and telephone therapy thanks to the support, hard work, and patience of our volunteer counsellors.

Training was needed for all our counsellors to be able to practice online or by telephone and they did an amazing job in sourcing certified training and qualifying to be able to continue supporting their clients whilst lock-down was in place.

On the easing of restrictions in August, a few staff members were able to return to the building each day and so we were able to offer limited face to face counselling again. However, understandably so, most of our counsellors and clients felt it safer to continue with their new found way of counselling from the safety of their own homes, and we were very happy to support their individual decisions.

The onset of Covid did not halt our popularity with trainee counsellors looking for a placement, and in October we inducted 14 new counsellors. They had all trained for online and telephone counselling and were able to quickly jump on board and support new clients. Our counsellors working in local schools also trained during lock-down to be able to support their student clients via zoom and when the schools reopened were keen to once again

support the students with face to face counselling.

In 2019 we partnered in a Hoarding Project with Maidstone Borough Council to offer counselling as part of a service to help hoarders in the Maidstone area. Again, despite the restrictions and lock-downs 2020 brought with it, this service did not stop. Our counsellor working on the project continued support for clients online and by telephone to ensure they were supported during this uncertain time and that they were prepared for the 'clearance' of their homes as soon as services could resume.

Our Youth counselling service also continued last year, and counsellors were able to source safe premises in order to support their young clients as key workers.

Due to the success of, and continued need for our virtual counselling services, Mid Kent Mind will be continuing to offer these forms of counselling alongside traditional 'face to face' counselling, to be able to reach more people needing an 'at home' approach.



Our Services

This year has been an extremely challenging one as the Covid-19 pandemic meant a number of lock-downs and social distancing practices were brought into place by the government that limited contacts between people that intrinsically affected the support that we provide at Mid Kent Mind.

Ironically, all of these restrictions came at a time when the uncertainty and isolation caused by the pandemic meant the need for mental health and wellbeing services grew at a huge rate. Fortunately thanks to excellent leadership by the CEO, Mid Kent Mind mobilised very quickly to deliver alternative online and virtual versions of the majority of our support services and we are proud to say that nearly all activities and services were still provided in a new style during this year. We did not furlough any staff as they worked even harder to support those in need.

I would personally like to thank all the staff team and our CEO, Julie, for the efforts they have made during an incredibly unsettling year, which has not only seen us maintain but also expand the support we offer local people, making this another very successful year for the charity, whilst so many other organisations have struggled.

Following are some of the highlights from the projects and delivery we have completed during 2020-21.

James Walker – Deputy CEO



Live Well Kent

Our contract with Live Well Kent has always focused around group activities and courses to help people maintain their wellbeing and improve their mental health management skills. During this year we continued to deliver 3 of our usual 5 weekly social courses using ZOOM. These virtual sessions proved extremely popular, especially the Baking group, which we actually want to stay virtual as it allows more people to get involved as we are not restricted by physical space. To ensure nobody from our regular attendees was left unsupported, we also held a series of wellbeing phone call appointments every day for anyone that felt they needed to connect with a friendly voice. This allowed staff to signpost people to other vital services, including food parcels for those who were forced to shield indoors. As well as our online social groups and wellbeing calls, we also adapted our Coping with Life courses to be delivered virtually with staff working from home to deliver the course content across ZOOM sessions. This year we have had 634 individuals making almost 4500 attendances to our services under the Live Well Kent project.

Mindfulness

During this year we saw an increase in the number of people wanting to learn skills and techniques associated with mindfulness to promote better mental health. We received a number of grants to deliver these courses for both adults and young people. Again staff adapted our usual course content to make it effective to deliver over 5 weekly sessions online, and over the year we delivered 15 courses which were completed by 85 people.

Early Help Support

In 2020-21 we were once again awarded Early Help grants to support young and vulnerable people with their mental health and wellbeing. This year we successfully gained grants from Maidstone, Swale, Ashford and Canterbury to deliver slightly different services in each area, predominantly focused on Cognitive Behavioural Coaching courses and Recovery Action Plans. Unfortunately these projects were all paused by the commissioners during the first lock-down as they wanted face to face delivery rather than online sessions. These were finally started in late

summer; however, when the second lock-down came into place we had several courses left incomplete and it was not until November 2020 that the Early Help commissioners for each area approved virtual and online support. I am especially proud of our staff team, who worked tirelessly to deliver a full year of sessions in just four months to ensure that we not only met the growing local need, but also the original one year deadline for the funding.

Over 60 courses for 343 young people and 50 Recovery Action Plans were delivered across the year with some of the following results and comments:

- 18.9% reduction in feelings of depression and low mood
- 24.8% reduction in levels of anxiety and fear
- 17% increase in overall wellbeing
- 87% of young people rated the course as 8 out of 10 or higher
- 90% of young people rated the instructors as very good or excellent

- Had no idea so many other people felt the same way I did
- I am so grateful to be able to do this course especially as I have been feeling really concerned and scared about the pandemic.
- I am using Square breathing all the time to manage my anxieties, it is great
- I learnt about stress levels and splitting large goals into many smaller goals and am now doing this
- I found the cognition cycle so interesting and it make perfect sense with how I become angry over little things and then get so emotional afterwards. I am going to work really hard on managing my negative thoughts so I feel better. Thanks
- Thank you so much the relaxation techniques are brilliant and I can do them anywhere to help.

Partner delivery

This year saw us delivering several projects within partnership with other organisations including Youth Resilience, Fusion HLC and Autism Apprentice to expand the number of people accessing our mental health support and helping to build these smaller organisations to become more sustainable whilst learning new skills from them.

Together we delivered:

- 25 RAPs for parents of children diagnosed as being autistic helping them to better manage the whole families wellbeing.
- Weekly online social group sessions for people who would normally have accessed support at Fusion HLC were they not restricted by lock-down.
- Sessions across all of Kent increasing the awareness of young people around knife crime and violence so they learn to make better decisions.

Reaching Communities Project

We have now completed the second year of our 'Reaching Communities' project at Mid-Kent Mind during what has been a particularly challenging and difficult time for our young people. Due to the nature of our ever changing situation we have needed to adapt on a frequent basis to meet the needs of the young people we support, as well as continuing to provide a service in a time where our referrals continue to increase.

Over the last year we have provided our 'Mental Health Awareness' training to 241 individuals (a 66% increase from the previous year). Following the evaluations received in year one, we worked to respond to the training

needs of our local community. Across the sessions 95% of delegates rated our instructors 'very good' or 'excellent' with the remainder rated as 'good'. In year 2 we scheduled 29 CBC courses, 27 for young people and 2 'parental resilience' courses which are designed to help parents support their children's understanding of our course material and support their own wellbeing. Across our delivery we noted that there was an average reported decrease in feelings of anxiety by 25%, a reported decrease in feelings of low mood by 27%, as well as an increase in overall wellbeing by 19%.

Our youth wellbeing café has been delivered entirely on a virtual platform this year to encourage young people to engage with others despite the restrictions in place. Our youth café has seen 79 attendances. We received the following parental feedback for this service:

- "She loved the cafe afterwards. It made her feel really buoyant"
- "The café is a wonderful decompression for her and very very helpful for her, thank you for running"

Part way through year 2 we received additional Covid related funding from the National Lottery Fund to

facilitate an additional service in the form of our 'Youth Recovery Action Plans' following an identification for the need for a one to one provision to be available to young people in the local community. When looking at the percentage changes as a group average for 45 completed outcomes with comparable 3in1 assessment results with a 40% decrease in feelings of low mood, 34% decrease in feelings of anxiety and 20% increase in overall wellbeing. When looking at the comparable results for the recovery action plan we found there to be an 87% increase in the management of overall mental health/anger difficulties.

In the social support element of this project we have been able to provide the following activities:

- Calligraphy
- Writing for wellbeing
- Wellbeing workshop
- Boxing
- Self-defence
- Yopalates
- Wellbeing boxes

Participating in these activities has enabled young people to engage with others in their local community and meet other like-minded individuals, whilst learning a new skill.

Wellbeing Café's

Ashford

Over the last year, we have had to adapt the café services

largely to a wellbeing calls service over the weekends. In this time we have facilitated 794 wellbeing calls in total.

We also introduced a virtual group session as an additional element so that those who would usually interact over the weekend via our services could do so. We began running this session once a week in May 2020 and have now run 49 sessions with 202 attendances in total.

Maidstone

The Maidstone services were adapted similarly to the Ashford service; however the crisis support was removed and became a wellbeing service with those in crisis being signposted to the relevant clinical interventions. Through this service we provided an incoming call system allowing our service users and other members of the public to contact us when support was needed during the hours we would have usually been open. In the last year we have facilitated a total of 104 calls.

Shaw Trust Health & Work Programme

In November 2020 we were awarded a virtual Shaw Trust contract under the Health and Work Programme, which aims to help and support those who are currently out of work on their journey as they return to and maintain employment. Within

this contract, our aim is to improve people's mental health and wellbeing and give them the skills to self-manage their mental health when applying for and sustaining work. After a mobilisation period, this project began running in January 2021.

Under this contract, we offer a range of services including Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) courses which aim to improve mental health and wellbeing by providing service users with an understanding of their mental health condition and the tools and mechanisms to better manage these. Another part of the contract is the delivery of weekly social support groups which allows us to deliver a session every afternoon of the week where people can drop in and get support from a wellbeing worker and their peers whilst undertaking different activities including cooking, art, quizzes and peer support.

These supports are delivered virtually via Zoom and participants are referred to us from all over the country. These supports include:

- Coping with Life – A 5-week course of 2-hour sessions to help people develop coping strategies for dealing with mental health problems that are affecting their day-to-day life.
- Coping with Anxiety – A 5-week course of 2-hour sessions to help people understand the causes and effects of the stress and anxiety they experience and how to

better manage the symptoms daily.

- Coping with Depression – A 5-week course of 2-hour sessions to help people understand the causes and effects of the low mood/ depression they experience and how to challenge negative or unhelpful thinking to increase mood and improve wellbeing.
- Mindfulness & Me – A 5-week course of 1-hour sessions to provide an insight into mindfulness-based techniques and how to utilise these to improve wellbeing.
- Stress Awareness – A 2 ½ hour training session aimed at increasing peoples understanding of stress, its effects and causes and how to manage it better.
- Work & Wellbeing Lite – A 6-week course teaching team building skills, cognitive coaching and work skills for people that find their mental wellbeing is preventing them from engaging with employment.
- Cooking Group
- Art Groups
- Quiz Social Groups
- Telephone wellbeing calls – Weekly 15-minute calls with our wellbeing workers to reduce isolation.

Between 1st January 2021 and

March 31st 2021 we had 56 referrals for this programme.

Training

This past year has really changed the way that our training has run. We have had to branch out and find new ways to run our sessions, as well as updating our courses so that they have been more relevant to the participants we have had attending the courses. By changing our courses to be delivered in a virtual setting, we have seen a huge influx of participants from areas we wouldn't have normally reached; without having the geographic barriers to specific areas of Kent, we've had a variety of different localities meaning our training has become broader, and our own knowledge of available services has increased too! In just our Suicide Prevention and Awareness course, we trained 959 people; a vast achievement considering we did not run sessions for a few months during 2020 whilst we waited to see what the pandemic would mean.

We also introduced a revamp to our Mental Health Awareness Training, providing a range of courses from a basic level of information up to more specific information for a variety of topics from Eating Disorders

to Psychosis and Personality Disorders. In the last financial year we trained just under 600 people but we've seen an ever increasing demand for these courses.

The Mental Health Awareness sessions we have created have complemented our Mental Health First Aid Courses that we have also been continuing in a virtual setting. We've trained 217 people across the Adult and Youth versions of the course – creating new partnerships with organisations like the Rochester Diocese, 2Gether Support and Folkestone & Hythe Borough Council. It's great that in a year which has proved how important Mental Health is, we've had large organisations stepping up to help support the communities around them; spreading awareness of mental illnesses and reducing the stigma.

Going forward, we're excited to keep the option of virtual training to increase our accessibility to Kent residents but we're looking forward to getting back to meeting new groups face to face as well!



Working in Partnership

Mid Kent Minds partnership working continued throughout 2020/21, working alongside other voluntary organisations in a remote delivery concept.

Working alongside The Autism Apprentice CIC, we provided support for young people to access an individual recovery action plan (RAPS) and supported the Autism Family Programme. The joint service provided much needed support to many young people and their families. The evaluation evidenced the huge impact this had on the wellbeing of the families who accessed the service.

Feedback included;

“Thank you so much I always felt at ease, everything was explained clearly with good examples. It was so lovely to have the support and encouragement.”

“Thank you so much for your support and kindness. It really has made a difference to the lives of me and my children.”

2020/21 has seen increased partnership delivery with Youth Resilience UK CIC. Staff from both organisations delivered “Mind the Knife”. This was a programme aiming to look at the impacts of young people carrying knives / crime and the impact on their mental wellbeing. Evaluations have shown a positive increase in mental wellbeing and the understanding of how knife crime impacts negatively on themselves and others.

Mid Kent Mind have continued to be part of the Live Well Kent Delivery network and have been able to continue the delivery of both CBC structure courses, as well as social activities and peer support. We are looking forward to continue to grow this partnership delivery into 2021/22.

Partnership working has continued with statutory organisations and this has included the continued delivery of the Suicide Awareness Training, Wellbeing Café in Ashford, Crisis Café in Maidstone, Safe Haven, KCC Early Help to name but a few.

Over the last year MKM have continued to grow a partnership with the other local Minds in Kent and working together the five local Minds now geographically provide mental health support services across the whole of Kent. The newly formed “Kent and Medway Mind” partnership has opened up new opportunities to work together to the benefit of a wider Kent community and we are looking forward to developing and sharing ideas and resources to enhance our Kent wide offer.

Volunteer Project

The Wellbeing Box

We wanted to highlight a wonderful volunteer-led project, that touched many of our service users, driven by young volunteer Madison, supported by her parents.

Madison approached us at the beginning of the pandemic to share her personal experience with mental health. Knowing how she had felt, she decided that she wanted to support others by giving them a small positivity box to let them know that they weren’t alone, and that other people were thinking of them during this difficult period of time.

Since the project’s inception, Madison and her parents have created well over a couple of hundred boxes, and have attracted significant donations and funding to continue their creation. We are incredibly grateful for their passion and enthusiasm. Their idea has made a huge difference to the people we work with, so we felt it was important to acknowledge it in this year’s Annual Report.



Madison Hinton
“Wellbeing box” creator & volunteer

Fundraising and Donations

Throughout the past year, our efforts to connect with our Community and form streamlined, reliable communications have been more important than ever before.

Our various marketing streams have provided us with the tools we've needed to keep our service users and potential clients alerted to how our services have adapted and changed to a post-pandemic world – enabling us to continue to reach new people and take on board new service users, even whilst operating in an entirely remote capacity.

As a broad part of this, our Fundraising has continued to bring in record amounts of income for our organisation – contributing to continued financial sustainability during a period which has rocked the third sector. We've been lucky enough to have a wide range of Fundraisers taking on their own challenges – from home-brewed marathons, to Birthday Fundraisers

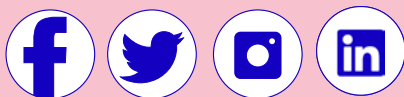
and everything in between. These fundraising efforts have been accompanied by an incredible up-take in donations from commercial entities – with businesses seeking to support the longevity of our work so we can support people in the wake of this challenging period of time.

We are eternally thankful to our supporters. Whether you share our content, donate or choose to fundraise for us, every engagement makes a difference. You have been a crucial component in allowing us to continue to make a positive impact on the lives of so many, and we could not be more appreciative of the community we have been able to build around Mid Kent Mind.





With thanks to all our funders.



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