

Our Impact 2024-2025



Vision, Mission and Purpose

Vision

We're fighting for a future where no mind is left behind.



Mission

We want to create a mentally healthy society.

Through our information, services and campaigns, we tackle stigma, barriers and isolation so that everyone can access mental health support when they need it.



Our purpose

We deliver mental health services in Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire, are affiliated to national Mind and are proud to play our part in the local Mind network. Together we are Mind.

We are at the heart of our local communities - promoting wellbeing and recovery; preventing mental ill-health; offering talking therapies and providing support in times of crisis.

“You’ve made me be able to control my anxiety and situations in life a lot better and I can’t thank you enough. Thank you for listening to me and understanding me. Thank you for being the person I could talk to when I didn’t have anyone else, it means a lot.”

Young person supported by our Counselling for Young People service

A warm welcome from our CEO, Joel Rose, and Chair of Trustees, Lesley Michaelis



We're proud to share our 2024–2025 Impact Report with you — a reflection of the incredible work taking place every day across the communities we support in Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire.

Over the past year, we've reached 6,869 individuals through a wide range of mental health interventions; delivering meaningful, positive outcomes that make a real difference.

Our services exist to support better mental health and help people stay well. As this report shows, for many, our support has been life-changing — and for some, even life-saving. We're especially proud that: 92% of people we supported felt less isolated and more connected; 84% reported an improvement in their overall wellbeing and 87% felt better equipped to manage their own mental health.

None of this would be possible without the vital support of our funders, donors and partners — and the tireless commitment of our staff, volunteers and Trustees. Their resilience, passion and dedication have carried us through another year of significant challenges.

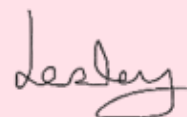
The cost-of-living crisis, rising poverty and growing complexity of need continue to place strain on our communities. At the same time, the wider mental health system is under immense pressure. Yet our team has remained agile, responsive and innovative — adapting to meet demand and ensure no mind is left behind.

As your local Mind, our aim remains constant: To be there when it matters for people living with mental health problems in Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire. We are deeply committed to involving those with lived experience, so our work remains grounded in the realities of everyday life.

This report not only celebrates our impact and achievements, but also sets out our priorities for the year ahead. We hope you find it informative and inspiring — and that you'll continue to stand with us in ensuring everyone in our communities can access the mental health support they need.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joel".

Joel Rose
Chief Executive

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesley".

Lesley Michaelis
Chair of Trustees

Our Year in Numbers

84%

of people we support
feel that their wellbeing
is improving



92%

of people we support
feel less isolated and
more connected

87%

of people we support
are better able
to manage their
mental health

6869

people supported



5650

people attended
Champion the
Change events

407

people supported
by our Community
Connectors

264

times Safe Haven
was chosen as
an alternative to
A&E

960

children, parents and school
staff supported by Mental
Health Education in Schools service



3705

attendances at our
Wellbeing Groups

136

new Befriending
partnerships

572

students engaged
by our Peer Support
in Schools service

51

people supported by
our hospital based
Mental Health Safety
Planning teams



6287

hours given by
our volunteers

434

people supported
by Peer Support
groups

1087

people trained
in Workplace
Wellbeing

206

people accessed
two or more
services

64

people supported
by our Outreach
services

146,851

people reached
through our
website and
social media



1213

counselling sessions
delivered by our Adult
and Young People
Counselling services



1277

times our Gateway
Navigators signposted
an individual for support

Our Achievements

Transforming Lives

Our Community Connectors empower people to take control of their mental health and wellbeing. They have expert knowledge of the area local to where the people they support live and they work with individuals to access the support they need. This service is for people in East Berkshire and is part of the Mental Health Integrated Community Service (MHICS).

‘Riley’ was referred to a Community Connector during a time of considerable emotional strain; juggling co-parenting challenges, supporting two neurodiverse children and recovering from a physical injury. Strained family dynamics, financial pressures and difficulty advocating for personal needs contributed to a sense of overwhelm. There were also struggles with confidence and anxiety around being heard in important decisions, particularly regarding the children’s care.

Our support began with informal, relaxed meetings — coffee, chats and walks — that created a safe space for open, reflective conversations. These sessions offered time to decompress and process emotions, gradually becoming an anchor during stressful periods. Emotional encouragement was paired with practical guidance.

Together, we explored resources to support both personal wellbeing and family stability. Over time, small shifts grew into tangible changes; healthier decisions, greater self-respect and the ability to speak up with conviction.

The most profound transformation became evident in the final meeting, where reflections revealed a newfound sense of presence, self-worth and peace. Feedback from family members confirmed this growth, recognising the individual as more grounded and confident. With plans to join a trauma therapy group, this next chapter marks not an end, but a continuation of a journey shaped by resilience, clarity and reclaimed joy.



Image by DetWeg from Pixabay

“A valuable service for those who are going through postpartum stress, anxiety and sadness.”

Person supported by our Perinatal Support Worker

“It has boosted my ability to communicate, my confidence and my knowledge.”

Peer Mentor trained by our Children and Young People’s Team

Providing a Lifeline

Our Peer Support Bucks groups provide people recovering from or living with mental health challenges to access a range of activities and social opportunities with people who have shared or similar experiences. The groups provide a unique and safe environment of understanding and empathy.



“Aaron is very shy and found it hard mixing with people and making friends. Aaron did try some groups but felt he didn’t fit in and wasn’t happy.

Then someone mentioned Peer Support Bucks. Aaron went along but was too nervous to go in and meet people. The following week he went and was met by a member of staff, and he has never looked back.

Aaron lacked so much confidence with many things, but this group made him feel very welcome. Since then, Aaron has made many friends and has become more confident and gets on really well with everyone. He now attends three groups a week.

Peer Support Bucks has been amazing and it is truly his lifeline; Aaron would not be the person he is today without it. The change in him has been fantastic, so many people have noticed it. My response is that it is all down to the people who run the group and the people who turn up each week and make my boy happy.”

Mother of Aaron, Peer Support Bucks attendee

Tackling Isolation

Our Friends in Need peer support groups in East Berkshire help people to manage their mental health through uplifting and fun activities. There are two groups available; FiN, supporting anyone 18 years and above, and Peers2Pals, supporting 17-25 year olds.

“I have struggled with severe depression and anxiety all my life and have frequently searched for local support groups.

In 2019 I had a breakdown, which was exacerbated by the Covid crisis in 2020. My employer exhibited little understanding of my mental health issues and I had no choice but to give up employment to care for my elderly, disabled parents. The experience with my employer knocked my confidence and I had feelings of inadequacy. I wanted to retreat from the world but, at the same time, spending 24 hours a day with my nonagenarian parents was challenging and I felt terribly isolated.



Friends in Need was my saviour. At first, due to lockdown, it was just online quizzes and chats, but it was so good to see some friendly, younger faces. Later I joined walks; I always feel better outside, but being with others stopped me dwelling on my own negative thoughts. It was and still is good to know that if I am struggling, feeling overwhelmed and need time out, I can find a group to join most days where I know I will not be judged and will receive support. I have also made some good friends and have a larger network than at any time in my life of people I can reach out to for a chat, a walk, or a coffee. All thanks to Friends in Need.

Now, I also volunteer with Friends in Need. It is particularly rewarding when someone says they would not have been brave enough to do something before and you can see them growing in confidence. Volunteering helps my own mental health; I always get such a 'buzz' from helping people and it increases my feeling of self-worth.🐦

Jane, FiN member and volunteer

“It’s been the most support I’ve ever been offered and has really helped me through this time. I’ve learnt things that I will use throughout the rest of my life.”

Person supported by Gateway Community Navigators

Providing Hope

Our Befriending service offers short-term support to adults in Buckinghamshire who are lonely or isolated as a result of mental illness. We recruit and train people from the community to become volunteer Befrienders, who then form a partnership with someone to help them feel less isolated and lonely and better able to manage their mental health.

🐦 I am 62 this year and have experienced very bad mental health for most of my life. I received all sorts of therapy along with medication, the side effects of which could be devastating. The unconditional love from my mum literally kept me alive. I have so much to thank her for.

But eventually, in 2005, I jumped off a motorway bridge attempting to wipe myself out. I survived, though I had life changing, catastrophic physical disabilities. No longer able to walk and with no roof over my head, I was placed in a 24 hour nursing home, where I still reside.



After what seemed like decades of hell, I was properly diagnosed with chronic psychiatric illnesses and with the consistent love and support I received, light was at the end of the tunnel. I gradually learned to feel safe enough to trust others and, most importantly, myself.

I'm delighted to say that, about three years ago, I finally found 'me.' To be myself, my whole true self, was exciting and enlightening. I like and love the person I am.

I decided at some point that I wanted to give of myself by becoming a Befriender. I truly believed that by drawing on my past I could be there for someone who was struggling to cope with daily life. Fortunately, I was accepted and, after great training, I was matched up with an amazing lady. Due to my disability, it was arranged that I would support her on the phone, which required even more trust, on her part particularly.

I look back on my Befriending experience with great fondness. It was so enlightening and I learned a lot about myself. I am truly proud and blessed how our relationship flourished. It took a lot of courage and trust to open up and share with me uncomfortable and personal experiences, but how we giggled and laughed about the stupid things in life. I wish her well and send my best wishes for the future.

To play a small part in someone's journey is incredible. Thank you Bucks Mind's Befriending service for giving me this fantastic opportunity.🍀

Tori, Befriending volunteer

“The support I have been offered is so much more than I ever expected. In the last year the support has meant everything to my confidence and self worth.”

Person supported by our
Outreach services

“Safe haven staff are supportive and offer a safe space to talk about how I am feeling. I feel that I matter and that staff care about my wellbeing.”

Person supported
by Safe Haven

Driven by Experience

At Buckinghamshire Mind, it is our privilege to work to improve people's mental health. A deep understanding of the needs and experiences of people with mental ill-health drives everything that we do.

We work with a team of Experts by Experience (EBEs), whose experience, knowledge and skills are invaluable to us, whether they have been directly supported by us or not. Involving people with lived experience means that we are more connected to the everyday issues of living with mental health challenges, that our work is informed by a broad range of experiences and helps us to effectively meet diverse needs.

“Being a part of a charity where what they strive to achieve is truly reflected in what they do every day, is not only fulfilling, but gives me hope for change. I feel like I am a part of powerful and important change, where my voice and ideas are valued, so that together we can create a world where No Mind is Left Behind.”

In 2024-2025 our EBEs were involved with the creation of our Influence & Participation (I&P) Policy; the foundation of our I&P work. They were also involved with a number of other projects, including the recruitment of our new Chief Executive, Joel Rose, by designing a specific I&P question for his interview.

“Participation is so important to me because it allows me to shape a future I needed at my lowest. One full of hope, compassion and promise, so every person has the opportunity to live and flourish as individuals.”

In the year ahead, we will be recruiting and training Lived Experience Interviewers, who will be involved in the future recruitment of Bucks Mind staff. This is an exciting project that will embed working with people with lived experience within the current staff team and send a strong message of our commitment to meaningful involvement to prospective new staff.

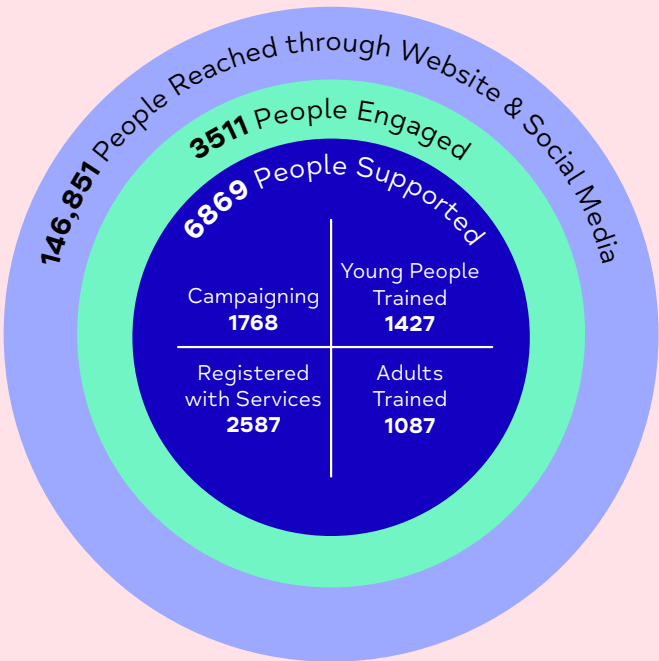
Find out more here: www.bucksmind.org.uk/influence-and-participation

“The support that I have received was truly invaluable at a time when everything falls apart in your life - this was the only stable and positive thing.”

Reaching our Community

People Supported

During the year we supported 6869 people. This includes 2587 people who accessed one of our services, 1087 adults who received training, 1427 young people trained as peer mentors or through our Mental Health Education in Schools service and 1768 people who were impacted directly through our campaigning work.



People Engaged

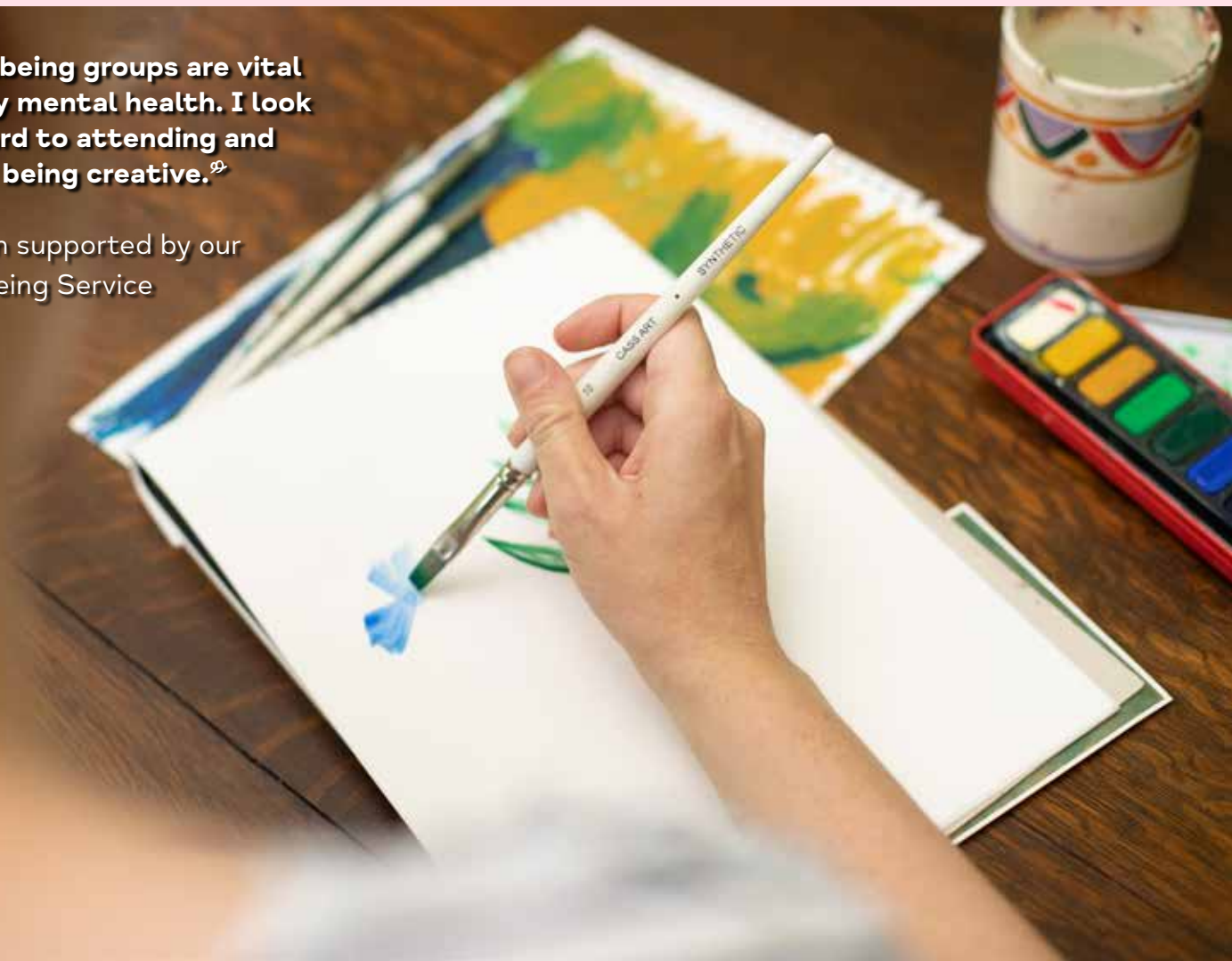
We also engaged with a further 3511 people through community events, volunteer training and through signposting to other services.

People Reached

In addition, we reached 146,851 people through our website and social media platforms.

“Wellbeing groups are vital for my mental health. I look forward to attending and enjoy being creative.”

Person supported by our Wellbeing Service



Our Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to Buckinghamshire Mind's work, enabling us to provide more vital, life-changing services to people experiencing mental health problems in Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire. We could not achieve all that we do to support people's mental health without the involvement and huge contribution of our volunteers.

Our volunteers give their time, expertise, skills and consistent commitment to many of our services, including Counselling, Befriending, peer support groups in Bucks and East Berkshire and our Wellbeing Service.

Our adult volunteers gave an incredible 6287 hours in 2024-25. Many of our volunteer Befrienders and peer support group volunteers bring something truly powerful: lived experience. They don't come with answers or quick fixes, but with deep empathy and understanding. It's the kind of support that says, 'You're not alone, I've been there too'.

"Volunteering for Peer Support Bucks has been hugely transformational for me. I came to volunteering at the groups after a period of physical and mental ill-health, and volunteering provided me with the structure and purpose I'd been lacking. I love working alongside the group attendees; getting to know their stories and encouraging them. And in so doing, I've also felt encouraged and supported."

Claire, Peer Support Bucks volunteer

We don't just work with adult volunteers, however. Our Peer Support in Schools service worked with 572 young volunteers who were either in Sixth Form or Years 5 and 6 to enable them to become Peer Mentors to the younger students.

We are so grateful to all our volunteers, who have made such a difference to the lives of the people we support. Thank you.





Volunteer Counsellors

Our volunteer Counsellors are invaluable to the delivery of our Counselling services. Without their huge contribution, we would not have been able to support all of the 1213 adults and young people who accessed this service in 2024-25.

“During my time as a volunteer Counsellor at Bucks Mind, I have had the privilege of supporting individuals navigating a wide range of mental health and life challenges. This experience has been both deeply rewarding and profoundly educational, allowing me to develop my psychotherapeutic skills.

Working with people from diverse backgrounds, I have gained valuable experience of creating a safe, non-judgmental, anti-oppressive space where people feel heard and understood. Each session has reinforced my commitment to mental health advocacy and my belief in the power of compassionate support.

Being part of the Bucks Mind team has given me valuable insight into the collaborative nature of mental health services. I have worked closely with experienced counsellors, supervisors and support staff - all dedicated to making a positive difference in our community.

Volunteering at Bucks Mind has been a lovely experience and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to such meaningful work.”

Nisha, Volunteer Counsellor

“My Counsellor has provided me with the tools I need to be able to better manage my mental health. He has always listened, empathised and make me feel worthy of my feelings.”

Person supported by our Counselling for Adults service

Thank You to Our Funders and Supporters

Buckinghamshire Mind is incredibly grateful to all our funders, commissioners, statutory partners, donors and fundraisers for their outstanding efforts and support. Without their support we wouldn't be able to provide the services we do across Bucks and East Berks. Thank you!

Community Fundraisers

Our Trustees Emma Bester and Shannon De Alwis, along with Helen Mee, took part in our 110 Challenge, to celebrate Bucks Mind's 110th anniversary. Collectively they raised an amazing £850.



A team from our long-term corporate supporter Fair Pay completed the Jurassic Coast Ultra Challenge on 18th May 2024, raising a wonderful £940.

Hellfire Motor Vehicle Club donated £400 from The Big Meet event on 20th July 2024.



Bucks Mind was one of the chosen charities for the Marlow Riders Ride Kite Bike Ride on 1st September 2024. The event raised a staggering £5,000 and we were very grateful to also receive a £500 donation from Burnham Joggers, the running club of one of the event organisers. We're delighted to have been chosen again for this year's event, on 31st August 2025.



A team took part in the Thames Bridges Trek on 14th September 2024 in memory of their colleague and Bucks Mind Trustee Carl Charlesworth, and raised an outstanding £3,519.



The incredible Neil Hurford raised an amazing £1,950 in memory of his daughter, Alana Howells, by completing a wing walking challenge on 28th September 2024. We are all in awe of Neil.



Grants and Donations



Silverson Machines continued to provide annual support for our Befriending service in and around Chesham.



Monodraught supported our core work via an annual donation and regular fundraising events, including a staff bake sale.



JP Hildreth continued its long-standing support of our mental health services.



Chesham United Football Club, a long-term supporter, held a comedy football tournament hosted by Alex Horne, with some of the proceeds donated to Bucks Mind.



Rothschild Foundation awarded a grant to support our Counselling for Young People service.



The Clare Foundation supported our Counselling for Young People service by awarding a grant.



The Shanly Foundation provided funding towards our peer support groups in Bucks.



Fairhive Thriving Communities Fund also supported our peer support groups in Bucks.



Rotary Club of Aylesbury Hundreds donated to support our mental health services.

The above are just some of our supporters across the year. Many, many other individuals, schools, community organisations, funders and businesses donated or raised funds for Buckinghamshire Mind in 2024-25. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to each and every one of them.

“Mental health matters because it affects every part of our lives. At work, at home and beyond. Supporting each other creates stronger, healthier communities for everyone. Together we stand with Bucks Mind.”

Monodraught, long-term supporter

Our Plans for Next Year



All of the team at Bucks Mind are proud of what we have achieved together over the last year and the positive impact that we have made in peoples' lives. Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, supporters and staff team, we have helped people to cope at a time of crisis, we have given people the support they need to keep on top of their mental health and we have made schools and workplaces more mentally healthy environments.

We know that in these challenging times, more and more people are looking to us for support. This means that next year we need to build on our work, reach more people and keep delivering for our community.

In the year ahead we plan to provide help to people who are facing both mental health and financial challenges by working alongside Citizens Advice Bucks, as well as working with a range of other local charities to support their service users who are also living with poor mental health.

We also want to grow our team of experts by experience and use the insights that they bring to shape research projects, statutory services and our own work.

We are now in the final year of our current organisational strategy, so next year we will be speaking to the people we support, volunteers, experts by experience, colleagues and other stakeholders to get their views on our future direction. We want to make sure our new strategy really reflects the needs of the people we are here to help and that we can continue to make a lasting difference.

At a time of shrinking budgets and increased demand for our services, we are going to need to grow our team of volunteers, fundraisers and donors. So, if you would like to know more about how to get involved, please visit www.bucksmind.org.uk/support-us

Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joel".

Joel Rose
Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Mind

"I have to say it was one of the best sessions I have done! I took so much away from it which I can use for myself and pass onto the team in store. It felt very open and I wasn't afraid to join in."

Person attending a Workplace Wellbeing session delivered by our Training Service



 **mind**
Buckinghamshire



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