



Impact Report 2025-26



“It has improved my life in every way”



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.

“My Navigator has supported me through some extremely difficult times, without her support I would have been in a much worse place mentally.”

Person supported by Gateway Community Navigators

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



We're proud to share our 2025–2026 Impact Report with you; a celebration of the difference that we have made in people's lives through the work that we do every day across Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire.

Over the past year, we've reached **6347** individuals through a wide range of mental health interventions. 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 **82%** of people we supported felt less isolated and more connected, **91%** reported an improvement in their overall wellbeing and **83%** felt better equipped to manage their own mental health.

We have been able to maintain the high quality of our work and still make a significant difference in people's lives despite the fact that, over the last year, an increasing number of the people that we support are facing more complicated challenges.

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

We know that there are going to be further challenges in the year ahead, but we also see opportunities to do more for our community. We are well placed to grasp these opportunities because of our great team, our values, our collaborative culture, our flexible approach and the insights that we bring. These strengths are what make us distinctive, resilient and effective. They are the foundation of our success today and will continue to guide and sustain us as we grow, evolve and make an even greater impact in the years to come.

We hope you find our Impact Report 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



Our Achievements

Supporting Recovery and Growth

Our free Counselling for Young People service offers compassionate and confidential support to young people (aged 13-21) facing emotional and mental health challenges. Our professional counsellors provide a safe space to explore feelings, build coping strategies and foster personal growth.

Katy (not her real name) is a 16-year-old female who came to the Counselling for Young People service experiencing high levels of anxiety and had stopped going to school since the end of Year 10.

Katy's mum is a single parent of three children and works in a low-paid job, so was therefore unable to afford paid therapy for her daughter. Katy attended every weekly session and engaged in the sessions. As trust and psychological contact grew between her and her Counsellor, they were able to work on her low self-worth, low self-esteem and situational anxiety as well as beginning to consider what her future may look like.

We were able to offer Katy three more sessions after her allocated ten, so that certain aspects of the work could be explored more. This resulted in Katy applying to college with the hope she could sit Foundation Maths and English whilst doing a childcare qualification.

Katy said that she felt safe at Bucks Mind from the moment she walked into the building and was greeted warmly by our Counselling Coordinator. She said she, "Liked it here," and didn't want the sessions to end.

"I've found the sessions helpful. Thank you for all your help; listening to me, giving me the space to talk without judgement."

"I would like to thank you for all the help you have provided, it has benefited me massively and I cannot express my gratitude enough."

Young People Supported by our
Counselling for Young People service



Reducing Isolation

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 is a service for people in East Berkshire and is part of the local NHS mental health service.

An elderly asylum seeker residing in temporary accommodation was referred to the Community Connector service due to significant social isolation, loneliness and reduced wellbeing. She had limited mobility and had rarely left her accommodation for an extended period. She expressed profound homesickness, particularly missing her language, culture and faith community, which were contributing to low mood and emotional distress.



To address her isolation in a culturally sensitive way, the Community Connector identified a Sri Lankan wellbeing helpline that the individual could access in her first language. Support was provided to facilitate the initial contact and she has since reported using the service independently when feeling low.

In addition, recognising the importance of faith, the Community Connector arranged for a Sri Lankan Catholic priest to visit the individual locally, providing spiritual support and connection ahead of Easter. Following the visit, the person supported reported feeling, “Very happy,” and emotionally uplifted, describing the blessing and shared prayers as deeply meaningful.

Plans are now in place to accompany her to a local church and support her to connect with other members of the Sri Lankan community, helping reduce isolation and build sustainable social and cultural connections.

“Thank you for everything. I will continue to take positive steps and thanks to you I now have the resources to do just that. You have made a positive impact on my life.”

Person support by our Community Connectors service



“The service has had a significant positive impact. It has been a major source of support. I’m not sure where I would be without it. I have valued having someone to talk to regularly and found this emotionally helpful.”

Person supported by our Closing the Gap service

Renewing Confidence and Hope

Our Closing the Gap service is a partnership between Buckinghamshire Mind and Citizens Advice Bucks to provide wrap-around support and advice for people experiencing both mental ill-health and financial challenges.

“I want to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the incredible support the Closing the Gap service has given my Dad. The kindness, patience and genuine care have made a meaningful difference in his mental health journey. The positive courses and projects that have been introduced to him have not only given him structure and purpose, but also renewed his sense of confidence and hope. It’s clear that the Supported Self-Help Practitioner goes above and beyond in what she does, and her impact reaches far beyond what words can fully capture. Knowing that my Dad has had someone as supportive and encouraging as her has meant a great deal to our family. Thank you again for everything. Your work truly changes lives.”

Daughter of a person supported by our Closing the Gap service

Powered by Voices of Lived Experience

We work with a team of Experts by Experience (EBEs) whose experience, knowledge and skills are invaluable to us. 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 that we can more effectively meet diverse needs.

Through the active involvement of our Experts by Experience, Bucks Mind benefits from real insight that informs decisions and drives meaningful change.

“Being an Expert by Experience isn’t just about sharing your story with people who understand,” explains Caterina, one of our team of EBEs. “It’s more about recognising that your voice counts. What you went through carries lessons, things that need to be seen and acknowledged, so that harm can be reduced and, where possible, prevented for others.”

In 2025-2026, our EBEs were involved with a number of vital projects, including co-producing Buckinghamshire Mind’s new Strategy for 2026 to 2029.

“Bucks Mind is one of the few organisations that genuinely embraces co-production in the very real sense of the word,” says Amy, one of our EBEs. “It is not an afterthought. It is not a small, tokenistic gesture. They strive to involve people with lived experience from the beginning of projects – taking us through the progress and stages to the end. They listen, take things on board and act. They also share any impact we have had with us. This is what co-production is all about and this is what it has been with the development of the strategy. A combined and co-produced effort across the board, with all people concerned playing their part.”



Namrata, another of our EBEs, explains, “Being part of shaping the strategy has been a deeply meaningful experience for me. It felt like a space where lived experiences were truly valued, including those that are often less visible - such as the impact of life transitions, cultural adjustment and isolation. For me, it’s about creating something rooted in compassion, inclusion and real understanding.”

Our EBEs also gave their time and invaluable insight with:

- Helping to design a survey as part of the review of our Wellbeing service.
- Producing two videos for Time to Talk Day, to challenge stigma and encourage others to start a conversation about mental health.
- Reviewing our Influence and Participation Policy to ensure that it is current and relevant.

We’re also delighted to announce that two of our EBEs were successful in applications to the Board of Trustees and will serve as Lived Experience Trustees.

In the year ahead we will be working closely with our newly formed team of Young Experts by Experience to understand how we can enhance our work with schools to provide mental health and wellbeing support, education and interventions.

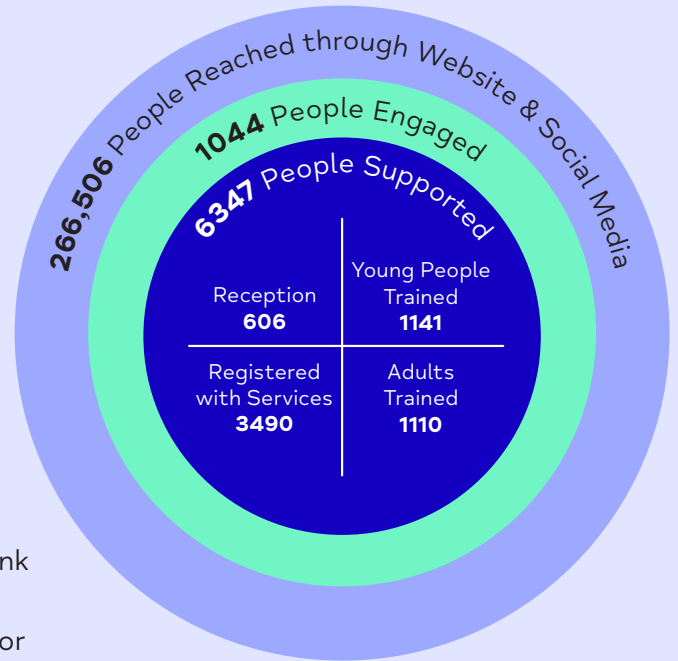
Find out more here: www.bucksmind.org.uk/influence-and-participation

Reaching our Community

People Supported

During the year we supported 6347 people. This includes 3490 people who accessed one of our services, 1110 adults who received mental health training, 1141 young people trained as peer mentors or through our Mental Health Education in Schools service and 606 people who were supported and signposted by reception via phone or email.

During the year we saw an increase in the overall number of people using our services. This increase is especially noticeable in our crisis services. We think that this reflects a growing need for mental health support in our community and, especially, support for people with more complex needs. Despite this trend, we are really pleased that we have maintained the quality of our work and that 91% of people who use our services say we have helped them to improve their wellbeing.



People Engaged

We also engaged with a further 1044 people through our work with our Experts by Experience and volunteers and our attendance at a wide range of fundraising events.

People Reached

In addition, we reached 266,506 people through our website and social media platforms.



Our Volunteers

We could not achieve all that we do to support people’s mental health without our absolutely incredible volunteers. They are essential to our work and we would like to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to each and every one. Your support really does make an incredible difference to the lives of people experiencing mental ill-health in Bucks and East Berkshire.

In 2025-26 an amazing 247 people gave 4857 hours of their valuable time to help deliver a wide range of services; including Peer Support Bucks groups, Counselling, Wellbeing Service and Befriending*. Not to mention our Trustees, who bring a diverse mix of skills and experience to our charity.

In addition, a staggering 460 children and young people gave their time to support the mental health wellbeing of others in their schools as Peer Mentors.

At Bucks Mind, we ensure that we provide training, encouragement, motivation and development opportunities for people who are kind enough to volunteer with us. Our volunteers tell us that they find the experience rewarding and inspiring.

Thank you to our invaluable volunteers; you are truly inspirational and we are enormously grateful for everything you do.

*The Befriending service closed at the end of December 2025.

“Volunteering three times a week has given me a sense of purpose and I feel the groups are an excellent way for the people we support to meet-up in a safe space. I enjoy the responsibility for their wellbeing at the groups and have a sense of pride watching how they have progressed in confidence and interact with each other and myself.”

Dave, Peer Support Bucks volunteer



“Volunteering with Bucks Mind has been such a positive and rewarding experience. I’ve learned so much already and it’s a real privilege to listen to young people’s stories and be trusted with their experiences.”

Holly, Volunteer Trainee Counsellor, Young People’s Counselling



“Volunteering was a really good opportunity for me to develop my skills and increase my confidence. Volunteering has been a lifesaver for me as, before starting, I lacked confidence and was very reserved and nervous. I haven’t looked back since starting my volunteering role and it has been so good for my wellbeing. I feel that the people we support can relate to me and I enjoy helping them to achieve new skills, such as cooking and knitting, in the sessions that I facilitate. I feel that my volunteering role makes a huge difference to the people we support and also gives the paid staff more time to perform their roles.”

Sally, Wellbeing Service volunteer

“Volunteering for Bucks Mind has been a huge part of my own mental health journey. It has given me so much more confidence, self-belief and self-esteem, while allowing me to use my own struggles and experiences in a positive way to help others.

I love working with the people we support and other staff and volunteers. Being able to listen to others and help them feel heard and valued is incredibly rewarding, and it also helps me feel valued too. From my own experience, I know how much peer support workers helped me when I was struggling, so I was delighted when the opportunity to volunteer with Bucks Mind came along.

I also love being part of Bucks Mind as an organisation. They genuinely care about their staff and volunteers, are approachable, supportive and always there if you need help. I’ve always felt welcomed, respected and encouraged.

The confidence and sense of purpose I have gained through volunteering has been life-changing. It has helped me realise that this is where I want my future to be, and I am now looking to build a career in peer support or a similar role so I can continue making a difference in people’s lives.”



Kirsty, Peer Support Bucks volunteer

“I’m grateful for the help and guidance that my Information and Options Worker has provided. It’s given me a really positive outlook on my future.”

Person supported by our Community Based Support services

“It allowed us to recognise that mental health and mental struggles are very broad topics and we can support our friends in certain ways to show they aren’t alone.”

Secondary school student who attended a Mental Health Education in Schools workshop

“I feel liked, cared for and safe at Peer Support Bucks. It has made such a difference to my life.”

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 them we wouldn't be able to provide the services we do across Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire. Thank you!

Community Fundraisers

Schmindie & Dancing Tiger Events held two events across the year in aid of Bucks Mind, bringing together people in Marlow and demonstrating the positive impact music and dance can have on mental wellbeing. Across both events they raised an incredible £6,185.



Sing Out for Mental Health was a musical extravaganza held at Aylesbury Waterside Theatre, showcasing the positive benefits that singing has on a person's mental health. The event raised vital funds for a number of local mental health charities, including £3,374.50 for Bucks Mind.

Balfour Beatty Living Places held a charity football tournament to raise awareness of mental health amongst the construction industry and highlight the services available. The event raised £1,373 from donations, a raffle and a 'highest score' darts contest.



Buckingham Garden Centre chose Bucks Mind as their Charity of the Year, holding numerous community activities at the centre, including a wonderful festive event involving the Launton Village Choir. The generosity of their staff and customers throughout the year raised £870.54.

Hellfire Motor Vehicle Club again invited Bucks Mind to the amazing Big Meet event in July, providing an opportunity to talk to people about our services and raise awareness. The Club generously donated £400 from the proceeds of the event to support mental health in Bucks.



Priti Patel ran the London Marathon 2025 in aid of Bucks Mind; no easy feat. Her hard work, dedication and amazing supporters raised an incredible £6,501.

Marlow Riders chose Bucks Mind as one of the beneficiary charities for the Marlow Red Kite Ride for the second year in a row. The event raised a fantastic £4,000 for Bucks Mind and we're so grateful for their support.



Grants and Donations



The National Lottery Community Fund awarded a grant to provide support for people in Buckinghamshire experiencing both financial struggles and mental ill-health.



Monodraught

Monodraught once again supported our core work in Bucks via an annual donation and regular fundraising events.

In addition, Monodraught team member Stuart Novell completed one of the world's toughest IronMan competitions, IronMan Lanzarote, in aid of Bucks Mind.



Silverson Machines kindly agreed to move their long-term support to our Peer Support Bucks service in Chesham.



JP Hildreth continued their long-standing support of our mental health services in Buckinghamshire.



ROTHSCHILD FOUNDATION

A third year of funding from the **Rothschild Foundation** supported our Counselling for Young People service.



The Clare Foundation also supported our Counselling for Young People service by awarding a grant for the third year in a row.



Heart of Bucks, The Shanly Foundation and **Fairhive Thriving Communities Fund** provided funding towards our Peer Support Bucks groups across the county.



Great Missenden Parish Council and **Little Missenden Parish Council** supported the creation of a new Peer Support Bucks group, which opened in May 2026, in Great Missenden.



Wooburn & Bourne End Parish Council supported a new Peer Support Bucks group in Marlow, which will launch towards the end of the year.

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 2025-26. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to each and every one of them.

Our Plans for Next Year



2026 sees the first year of our new three-year strategy. We spoke to the people we support, our team of Experts by Experience, volunteers, staff and a wide range of other important stakeholders to develop our plans and to ensure that our work continues to meet the needs of our community. You can read about our new strategy [here](#).

We know that growing levels of poverty have put a great strain on many people across our community, and that NHS mental health services are overwhelmed; unable to cope with the number and complexity of people in need. In this challenging environment, we are needed now more than ever.

Over the next year, we will all be focusing our efforts on increasing the impact we make in people's lives. We will do this by ensuring that our services remain of the highest quality, adapting quickly, reaching more people through our partnership work and by using insights and experience to shape statutory services and play a leading role in developing best practice.

All 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 people's lives. This is thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, supporters and staff team. We also know that if we want to continue to keep making a difference in people's lives, then 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". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Joel Rose
Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Mind

“Safe Haven makes me feel safe, protected and listened to. I’m able to express how I’m feeling. People are always so knowledgeable, understanding and reassuring and this helps with my insight around my diagnosis. A lifeline.”

Person supported by Safe Haven



“Counselling has met my needs and I would recommend the service to friends.”

“Before I spoke to Peer Mentors I was more sad. Since I feel better, I can deal with a bad day better now because of them.”

Child supported by our Peer Support in Schools service

“I have learned so much. This training has been interactive and engaging.”

Person who attended Workplace Wellbeing Training

mind
Buckinghamshire



@bucksmind
www.bucksmind.org.uk
01494 463364
info@bucksmind.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1103063
Registered Company No: 05000185