



Bereavement Support for the Borough of Ealing

Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts

for the year ended
31st March 2020

Registered Charity Number 1077140

Hawkco House
35 Horn Lane
Acton
London W3 6NS

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Bereft's governing document is the Model Constitution for an Unincorporated Charitable Association which was adopted on the 4th June 1999

OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY

Bereft's object is to provide a service of support and counselling to bereaved people in the London Borough of Ealing. Thereby alleviating distress and suffering and helping in the avoidance of future mental health problems.

SPECIFIC INVESTMENT POWERS

Bereft's investment powers are conferred by the Trustees' Act 2000

BANKERS

Charities Aid Foundation Bank Limited 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Mr Brynmor R Edwards, Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (Independent Examiner), 79 Lightwater Meadow, Lightwater, Surrey GU18 5XJ

TRUSTEES AND GOVERNANCE

TRUSTEES

Trustees who served throughout the period of this report unless otherwise indicated, were as follows:

Catherine Fowler (Chairman)
Christopher Wickenden (Treasurer)
Deirdre McLellan (Secretary)
Nina Kallis
Rosaleen Gallen
Jacek Opienski
Kevin Scott
Katherine Elks (appointed 20th October 2020)

Trustees are elected or re-elected annually by the members in General Meeting.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY – DEIRDRE McLELLAN

“Bereft was the only space of sanity during my darkest hour. I will be forever grateful.”

Feedback from bereaved client who had 32 counselling sessions.

We generally get a return of over sixty percent on the post-counselling feedback forms we send out to clients as part of evaluating our service. A number, as above, are moved to add appreciative and heartfelt comments.

As a small independent charity offering a service to local people in Ealing Borough, we have made it to our 20th Birthday this year. Over time we have developed, moving from all volunteer to volunteer and part-time paid staff, securing funding as we went and upping the level of training required from our counsellors before starting with us. The amount of paperwork has increased too! Mainly due to the requirements of our Health and Social Care Grant part-funder, which comes to us via a Consortium of counselling providers in Ealing Borough. For the remainder of the funding, we look to donations from clients and elsewhere which make up over half of our costs. We could not keep going without them.

Counsellors and this Year’s unprecedented challenges

At the end of the year and as the country moved into lockdown due to the Corona Virus, our counsellors had to embrace the considerable change from working face to face to remote counselling by phone or online video. They responded magnificently, undertaking training and workshops organised by Bereft, their training organisations or the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy to prepare themselves. At any one time, our 24 counsellors are made up of some loyal fully qualified people, but mainly those on placement from a training organisation.

I am grateful to our long-serving counsellor Kevin Scott, who joined me to interview people applying to work with us as counsellors on placement, when my usual partner, Jacek Opienski, was unavailable. As we run a rolling programme of recruitment, we were joined by some new counsellors who immediately had to meet the demands of counselling their clients remotely. Thanks to the foresight of Jennifer Pitt, the Manager and her colleagues, and with much preparation, the transition went smoothly and counsellors were supported every step of the way. Bereft Supervisors also had to understand the changes to support their group members.

Following are some comments from volunteer counsellors about working with Bereft:

Bereft is a very supportive placement. I have been able to speak about the issues that concern me ... and to discuss clinical dilemmas thoroughly and formulate next step actions to solve these dilemmas. I felt well held and I would strongly recommend Bereft as a placement.

I am very impressed with how professional and organised this agency is. I find the support training I have received so far extremely valuable.

I joined Bereft as a volunteer counsellor this year and interacting with clients has been the most profound and rewarding experience. You quickly realise what an enormous privilege it is to bear witness to the suffering of loss, to see the impact it has on a person's whole life, and to be someone who helps through counselling. Work like this requires an organisation that matches up to this responsibility and Bereft certainly does that.

"Thank you so much for listening to me. I felt held ... and made to feel safe in a way that allowed me to open up."

Feedback from client who had 8 sessions

This Year saw 170 clients benefitting from our service, and between them they received 1,869 sessions. The number of clients seen is down 10% on the previous year. However, this is explained by the considerable variation of the number of weekly sessions needed by an individual – anything from 1 to 30 or 40. Long term support is often particularly necessary for those suffering complex or traumatic bereavement(s), together with a limited effect from the Coronavirus Pandemic. Thus the figures vary from year to year and cannot be finely predicted.

Person-Centred

The counselling we offer is 'open-ended,' i.e. counsellor and client can take the time they need to come to as satisfactory an ending as possible, but of course there are periodic reviews of progress. (Currently, many clients have had a truly distressing ending, and/or not been able to say Goodbye to their loved one because of the restrictions imposed during the pandemic.) This fits with our ethos of being Person-Centred, though we welcome counsellors from other Humanistic modalities such as Gestalt, Existential, Transactional Analysis or Integrative.

The statistics

The split of male to female clients was 26% to 74%, mirrored by that of our counsellors, which was 25% male to 75% female. As the year went on, the numbers of older people approaching us for counselling dropped slightly, perhaps because of the move away from face to face counselling, thus the majority (85%) were aged 18-64. We also noted that 49 clients had a role as a carer. The ethnicity of our bereaved clients was as diverse as usual, coming from 15 different stated backgrounds, similar to that of our counsellors, who had the additional potential to offer support to Polish, Punjabi, Russian and French speakers.

Apart from the initial assessment when they first call, clients are supported if they wish by phone calls whilst they are on the waiting list. While for most of the year clients were seen face to face in venues we hire around the Borough, a complication arising from lockdown is that it is not always easy for a client, or counsellor for that matter, to find a safe and quiet place for therapy, where confidentiality is a given. One client even resorted to their car as the only option.

The Bereft Office

Staffed by our three capable and committed part-time staff – Jennifer Pitt, Annette D’Alton and Jo Houghton – we shifted at the end of the year to remote working. Jo researched and oversaw the installation of a sophisticated phone system which has repaid its significant initial cost by greatly facilitating remote working and has run without a glitch.

Apart from Assessment and Support of clients, a vital part of the office work is the Finance of course, which Jo undertakes in partnership with our Treasurer, Chris Wickenden.

Supervisors and Trustees

During the year, Supervisor Priscah Kago-Guede left for personal reasons, and Jadzia Kruklinski stepped into the breach so that she now takes two of our six supervision groups. Helen Hayes, Rosaleen Gallen, Catherine Fowler and I head up the other four, and we all meet with each other and the office staff at six-weekly intervals for Practice Group to discuss problems, keep everyone in the team up to speed, and ensure good practice.

Kevin Scott joined the Bereft Trustees at the AGM, making a total of six including our Chair, Catherine Fowler, who has been with Bereft from the start.

Training

Sadly, we noted that there seems to be an increase in the numbers of clients bereaved by suicide, requiring perhaps extra understanding and sensitivity to their situation. Although we are not a training organisation, we usually offer two free training days per year as CPD (Continuing Professional Development) where many counsellors, staff and supervisors meet at a workshop and to share a potluck lunch. We met in November when the topic was Suicide.

As we could not meet in person since the March lockdown, a well-attended session was organised on Zoom at which the topic was Trauma, including that produced by Covid 19. Jadzia (Supervisor and therapist), Jennifer and Annette presented, and the feedback was very positive.

The Future

Thanks to frugal and careful management, our finances were in a healthy state at the end of the financial year. The necessary part-funding from the Health and Social Care grant continues until March 2023, but after that we have been advised it may cease to exist and we will be looking for other sources. Client donations continue to fill the remaining 60% of our funding need, and we have been fortunate that there have been other donations from people wishing to support us. With such a team, I think we have reason to be optimistic that Bereft will reach its 21st birthday and beyond!

QUOTE FROM A DONOR

“Thank you, and please continue with your super, inspiring and nourishing work. It is SO important.”

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2020

	Unrestricted		Restricted		Total	
	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year
RECEIPTS						
Grants	7,500	10,000			7,500	10,000
Client Donations	38,329	38,636			38,329	38,636
Other Donations	695	460			695	460
Investment Income	102	60			102	60
Gift Aid (note 3)	1,227	5,129			1,227	5,129
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£47,853	£54,285	£0	£0	£47,853	£54,285

PAYMENTS

ADVERTISING inc. website & leaflets	711	0			711	0
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES						
Insurance & professional fees	559	1,294			559	1,294
Counsellors' Supervision	3,337	3,160			3,337	3,160
Manager & Assessor	8,794	9,793			8,794	9,793
Assistant Manager	6,671	6,353			6,671	6,353
Administrator	8,230	9,795			8,230	9,795
Volunteers' Expenses						
Room Hire	7,059	5,072			7,059	5,072
Training	515	380			515	380
SUPPORT COSTS						
Office Rent	4,500	3,900			4,500	3,900
Phone & Broadband	4,290	2,821			4,290	2,821
Postage & Stationery	307	560			307	560
IT Costs including support & hosting	510	387			510	387
MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION						
Admin Costs	284	239			284	239
Replacement Laptop PC		1,029				1,029
Bank Charges	60	60			60	60
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£45,827	£44,843	£0	£0	£45,827	£44,843

NET CASH INFLOW (OUTFLOW)	£2,026	£9,442	£0	£0	£2,026	£9,442
OPENING BALANCE 1 st APRIL 2019	£66,670	£57,228	£0	£0	£66,670	£57,228
CLOSING BALANCE 31 st MARCH 2020	£68,696	£66,670	£0	£0	£68,696	£66,670

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AT 31st MARCH 2020

	Unrestricted This Year	Last Year	Restricted This Year	Last Year	Total This Year	Last Year
CASH FUNDS						
Current Accounts	1,504	830			1,504	830
Deposit Account	67,173	65,821			67,173	65,821
Cash in hand	19	19			19	19
TOTAL CASH FUNDS	£68,696	£66,670	£0	£0	£68,696	£66,670
CURRENT ASSETS						
Gift Aid Claims Due for 2018/19	0	1,223			0	1,223
Gift Aid Claims Due for 2019/20	3,430				3,430	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	£3,430	£1,223	£0	£0	£3,430	£1,223
FIXED ASSETS						
Computer equipment – Laptop & Printer purchased in 2016/17 for £1,189 – estimated value at year end	0	0			0	0
Office Furniture purchased in 2016/17 for £306 estimated value at year end	0	0			0	0
Laptop & Printer purchased in 2018/19 for £1,029 estimated value at year end	343	686			343	686
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	£343	£686	£0	£0	£343	£686
LIABILITIES	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0

Notes:

1. The accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.
2. The trustees consider that no capital commitments have been entered into other than shown in the financial statements (2018/2019 Nil).
3. Receipts from HMRC in respect of Gift Aid claimed on donations received are included in the Receipts and Payments account in the year in which they are received. Gift Aid due to the charity but not received by the year end is shown above

POLICIES

RESERVES POLICY

Bereft ensures that it maintains cash reserves sufficient to cover an appropriate level of operating expenditure together with any anticipated downturn in grant income. This level of reserves is reviewed annually by the trustees.

RISK REGISTER

Bereft maintains a risk register that is reviewed and amended as necessary annually.

SIGNATURES AND DECLARATION

DECLARATION

Signed on behalf of the trustees by:

MRS CATHERINE FOWLER – CHAIR

MRS DEIRDRE McLELLAN – SECRETARY

MR CHRISTOPHER WICKENDEN - TREASURER

20th October 2020

REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES & MEMBERS OF BEREFT IN RESPECT OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31st MARCH 2020 SET OUT ON PAGES 6, 7 AND 8

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

Bereft's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. Bereft's trustees consider that an audit is not required this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is the examiner's responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Charities Act)
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act and to state whether particular matters have come to the examiner's attention.

BASIS OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission.. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by Bereft and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met;
2. Or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

B R EDWARDS FCA, JDipMA, FIMC

27th November 2020

Mr Brynmor R Edwards
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GU18 5XJ