

SAMARITANS

Lewisham, Greenwich
& Southwark



Annual Report 2022–23

Our vision, mission and values

Samaritans' vision is that fewer people die by suicide

We do this by:

Making sure there's someone there for anyone who needs someone

24 hours a day to anyone who calls for help via our unique 24-hour listening service, email, letter, face-to-face, online-chat and our Welsh language service.

Giving people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others

We encourage, promote and celebrate those moments of connection between people, that can protect and even save lives.

To do this we work in schools, prisons, workplaces and communities, and in partnership with organisations like Network Rail.

We campaign to make suicide prevention a national and local priority

We campaign locally and in partnership with other Samaritan branches to raise awareness and influence decision-makers.

Our Values:

We are committed to the following values:

- 1) **Listening**, because exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them.
- 2) **Confidentiality**, because if people feel safe they are more likely to be open about their feelings.
- 3) **People making their own decisions**, wherever possible, because we believe that people have the right to find their own solution; and telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them.
- 4) **Being non-judgemental**, because we want people to feel able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection.
- 5) **Human contact**, because giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair.

Cover photo – Sandra, from Phillip Job's exhibition of photos: First Duty

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What we do

Our volunteers support people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to thoughts of suicide, by offering emotional support via telephone, email or face to face contact.

Our branch has over 80 dedicated listening volunteers from diverse and varied backgrounds who all share the same common values: they are non-judgemental, caring and genuinely want to support whoever calls, emails or visits the branch. We also have a team of 12 support volunteers who share these values but prefer to give time to support the smooth-running of the branch.

Director's Report



Hello Everyone, Volunteers, Supporters and friends of our Branch.

Welcome to our 2022-23 Annual Report.

I can't believe it is now 15 months since I took on the role of Director. It has been an exciting year, but I would never have been able to have achieved anything without the support of the whole Leadership Team and all the volunteers who have filled shifts or taken on extra roles during this time. Thank you all.

Our Quality Review (formerly Visit) over a weekend in May this year, went well and was very positive. We looked at our progress over the last year and our plans to strengthen the branch over the next year. All Core and Embedding training is now held in branch, after several years on Zoom due to Covid, and we have re-introduced our annual Co-Partnering shifts for all volunteers to support and learn from each other. We are also looking to improve the number and diversity of our volunteers to better fit the local demography. Slowly we are covering more Outreach shifts and hope to re-introduce Face to Face visits for our callers in the near future. And we continue with our work in HMP Belmarsh, with a dedicated team of volunteers, training and supporting Listeners to be there for their fellow prisoners.

This year we are redecorating the branch to ensure we remain a warm and comfortable branch for our volunteers and others who use our downstairs space. We still need to improve our fundraising, including using opportunities to rent our space to local organisations, when not in use for training or social activities, which had to stop completely during Covid. And thank you to Peter and John for keeping our wonderful garden a peaceful and delightful place for our volunteers to relax and unwind after a difficult shift.

And a very special thank you to all our supporters who generously donate to our branch, especially in these difficult times. Without you we would not be able to keep the branch running.

Jean 996

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In 2019, our volunteer Phillip Job created First Duty - a photo, audio and video exhibition of our work, which was highly acclaimed. We are delighted that he has allowed us to display some of this in our Training room. The image on the cover of Sandra, and that above of Nina are just two of these.

Summary Statistics

We started the financial year with 64 active listening volunteers in the branch and ended it with 81 which is brilliant news.

Over the year from April 2022 to March 2023, our volunteers answered **12,301** calls and **1,674** emails.

Between April and June 2023 we spoke to a further **3419** callers and answered **412** emails.

We trained 33 new volunteers during four eight-week training sessions and were delighted to welcome back two returning volunteers.

Outreach report

For more than ten years we have employed a part-time Outreach Manager to develop links with local organisations and ensure our work is known in relevant health, education and community sectors in Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark. Since 2020 Nathan Lewis has held this position, and last year Angelina has taken on the role of Deputy Director for Outreach.

Their priorities are:

- To improve communication within the branch about Outreach opportunities and increase the involvement and engagement of volunteers from the branch in Outreach activities
- To introduce volunteers to Outreach initially through one-off activities
- To strengthen relationships with key community groups and organisations and institutions to generate outreach opportunities
- To develop connections with neighbouring branches engaged in/interested in outreach to provide additional capacity
- To link with and support the work of those in the branch responsible for EDI and fundraising
- To continue to have an active presence in Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark' voluntary and community sector.

Since the relaxation of lockdown, Nathan has spent time researching guiding principles that underpin the direction of outreach. One of them has been the concept of '[Systems Change](#)'. Under this framework, Outreach has focused on developing relationships and connections, practices and mental models. The mental models section has been important both internally and externally due to external stakeholders understanding and belief of what the Samaritans do and internal perceptions on the relevance, importance and role of outreach for the branch.

Highlights

- *Collaboration with Samaritans and London Bridge City* - We collaborated with the organisation that owns/monitors the area around London Bridge/ Tower Hill to strategically place SAMS posters around the area to help reduce suicide attempts.
- *Women of the World* -We provided volunteers to this yearly event that promotes gender equality and celebrates the achievements of women globally.
- *Black Men's Mental Health* -A collaboration with NAZ Project London to provide a space for Black Queer men to discuss mental health and provide information about LGS SAMS.



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- *Bella - Greenwich's Black Community, mental health and the Samaritans* A collaboration between SAMS branches in South London, Bella Rose (A Black mental health activist) and Greenwich Council
- *Kings College Freshers Day* – working with Central London Samaritans, we attended this Freshers' day to provide awareness raising of the Samaritans to local students. Nearly 200 students were connected with/supported during the event.
- *Involvement in local Suicide Prevention Strategy Groups* – we have had increased involvement in the tri-borough groups, alongside Samaritans Head Office. Samaritans has been recognised as an important partner, particularly on media reporting.

Partnerships:

999 Club - The main focus has been having an established regular outreach session with *the 999 Club/Bridge Cafe*. Sessions started promisingly and we have been fortunate to have a small number of committed volunteers. Ideally, the Bridge Cafe would like 2-3 consecutive weekly sessions at a time to support the short-term service users they support. After a break, this will now restart in September 2023, with the aim of doing the middle two Thursdays in a month for consistency. We are aware we need to create a larger team of volunteers to focus on this and other regular outreach activity.

St Mungo's - In February/March 2023, LGS re-engaged with the Pagnell Street branch of *St Mungo's* with an offer to revisit the partnership. The branch is open to the idea and welcomes any potential support. Once again, they revisited the area of consistency and reliable visits, so that service users are fully supported. LGS has drafted a memorandum of understanding with *St Mungo's* to start the partnership process and is awaiting confirmation from them on next steps.

Education outreach - Traditionally, Samaritans schools outreach has focused on primary and secondary schools. There is an emerging focus on working with colleges. LGS has been in dialogue with Lewisham College about how best we can support the students. Previously, LGS has supported them at health and wellbeing fairs and freshers fair events. Since March/April, LGS has been liaising with them, to explore support we can offer them and the students. We are currently waiting for confirmation from Lewisham College on next steps. NL to follow up before term ends.

The Sept-Nov period is usually busy with student freshers' fairs. The outreach goal is to provide outreach awareness in at least four different universities across the boroughs. This represents an opportunity to make 1,000s of contacts and develop closer links with the sector education. At present, we are confirmed for Kings College London, Ravensbourne College and hope to confirm University of Greenwich in the coming weeks. We have had to rebuild relationships with these colleges since lock-down, but it is clear that there is now a strong interest in connecting with us which should be a good opportunity for the branch.

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Of course every Samaritan Branch firmly believes that they are the friendliest and the best. This year Lewisham Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans feel they have proof positive of this, as we celebrate two amazing volunteers who have been with the Branch for 50 and 45 years respectively.



Chris 192 reflects on being a volunteer with Lewisham Samaritans since 1973

I have been a volunteer at the branch for over 50 years, which is more than 2/3rds of my life. In that time, as you would expect, there have been many changes in the branch as well as nationally with the Samaritan organisation. Here are a few that stand out for me:

We are now based in our 3rd centre, probably the most spacious, with the relaxing environment of Fordham Park on our doorstep. From the opening of Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark branch and during the 50 years I have been a volunteer, the branch has been generously supported by Lewisham council which has enabled us to rent a building at a peppercorn rent. The various premises

we have been based in have all been in and around New Cross.

There have been 21 different people acting as Director over the time I have been at the branch, with two “brave” individuals taking on being our Director twice. The role of director is not an easy one and takes a lot of time to be effective in the role.

For many years, one volunteer on many shifts was the norm, but the branch stayed open 24 hours a day every day of the year, even when there were only 50 active volunteers available. If the rota secretaries’ job is a challenge these days, imagine how it was then! Only occasionally, when there was no volunteer available, would either the shift-leader have to come in to the centre to be on duty, or on rare occasions calls were diverted to the leader’s home phone for a duty. This would never happen nowadays. We now must have at least two volunteers on every duty.

Duty patterns have basically remained the same over 50 years, although when I started, night duties were from 10.30 pm to 7.30 am – yes 9 hours! After the night duty when there was little opportunity to sleep, I would go straight on to my job, teaching a class of 39 reception-age children in a school in the Old Kent Road, crashing out that evening exhausted!

When I started callers were called clients. Several initiatives to support callers were tried. One of them, the Brenda line, to support callers who wanted to be sexually explicit came and went. As did

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the flying Squad, where we would go out to callers across our area who were in distress and either spend time with them at the location where they were or bring them back to the centre to provide emotional support. There was also 1-2-1 befriending of callers for up to 6 months, seeing the caller in their homes, or local bars and cafes ... Think of the safeguarding implications that could raise!! This support was monitored by a leader who checked all was going well.

We now support callers via E- mails as well as over the phone, and are soon to have instant messaging but, in my view thank goodness, texts came and went.

There was no IT support until the last 15 years or so. What a difference '3rings' management system has made to our organisation within the branch, particularly communication and the volunteer rota. Now there is a national phone system, which has its moments, but does mean we are busy all the time. This has been made possible by significant donations to the Samaritans, which has also meant that callers can call the Samaritans on a national free phone number 116 123. However, our branch has to raise its own income to meet its costs of about £60k a year. Volunteers engage in a wide range of fund-raising activities, and we rely on donations and bequests and support from other organisations and firms to pay our bills!

The selection of new volunteers and their training has changed significantly over the 50 years. Now there is a national programme which all potential volunteers must work through. Once a volunteer starts as a listening volunteer, for several weeks, they are supported by an experienced Samaritan as their mentor. When I started, we had either a "mother or father" to support us, which was not particularly well organised. On my first duty, my "father" didn't turn up as they had a family emergency to deal with, so for a couple of hours I was on my own until another Samaritan came to provide me support, a "baptism by fire"!

In recent years there has been a significant focus on safeguarding callers, particularly vulnerable people, and children. We also now use a softer approach to asking the suicide question. This is still a key part of our conversations with callers and as far as possible, we should always check out how s/he is feeling about their life going forward.

When I started as a volunteer, I believed that the Samaritans was a national organisation organised locally. We had a local telephone number which we promoted in the 3 London boroughs our branch covered. This meant we were able to support our local community. Now I think it is a national organisation organised regionally and nationally. The branch no longer directly serves the needs of callers locally, but all callers nationally and in some cases internationally. However, the outreach work offered by branch volunteers, still supports vulnerable people in our local area.

Overall, there have been many changes over my 50 years, BUT despite these, both locally and nationally, I strongly believe in the simplicity of what the Samaritans still offers. This is one person giving time to another, who needs to talk about how they are feeling and what is happening in their life. We are non-judgemental, allowing the caller to be in control of what happens, we don't give advice and usually have a confidential discussion (if safeguarding is an issue, we will need to

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share the information with the safeguarding team), we offer people support by really listening to what they have to say. This can make a real difference to the life of another person.

And finally, I have met some amazing people who are Samaritans, people who genuinely care about others, who go the extra mile to make a difference to people's lives and who I have, and still, enjoy knowing. **This is why I have stayed.**

Marita 306 a volunteer for 45 years, says:

I've been volunteering with LGS Samaritans since 1978. I'm nearly 76 now. After living at seven different addresses I moved to Ladywell with my then 4-year old daughter in 1977. This was Silver Jubilee year, which presented new opportunities to meet people at community events. I joined Lewisham's branch of the National Housewives Register. Meetings were hosted by members and when in 1978 it was my turn to host an evening meeting, the speakers were two women volunteers from LGS Samaritans.

I liked what I heard and applied to train as a volunteer. The training was called Prep then and on 5 November 1978 I did my first volunteer shift, alone in the Centre and including a face-to-face contact with a couple and their very young child.

As a kid my favourite way to spend times when I was not required to be in school or doing household chores was looking at books. At an early age I learned to try not to be seen doing it, repeatedly hearing exasperated adults saying: *"not again – she's always got her nose stuck in a book!"* Reading material I enjoyed included the children's and young people's periodicals **Eagle** and **Girl**. The latter included weekly serials of illustrated scripted life stories of memorable historical women including Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Fry and Marie Curie – which were authored by Chad Varah. I didn't know then that he was an Anglican priest who founded the Samaritans. At home we had a small basic black and white television where we could watch just BBC, never ITV. The presenter Eamon Andrews hosted the weekly **This is your life** programme, where he surprised a well-known person, led them into the studio and presented a show consisting of various people in that person's life talking about incidents and occasions in that life. In 1961, 13-year old me knew Chad Varah as the author of interesting stories for children. His appearance on **This is your life** was when I first learned about Samaritans.

I believe that joining Lewisham Samaritans when I had quite a few life experiences under my belt was the right thing to do. When I make mistakes there is nearly always a wise someone to talk with about it here, and the learning goes on. I wish I could change one thing – we aren't always able to fill all the rota shifts and that is a difference from my first 30 years with the branch when we somehow managed to cover all shifts. I hope we get back to that state while I'm still a volunteer.

Finance report and Accounts

Income

	notes	Restricted funds		Unrestricted funds		Total	
		2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22
Donations		-	-	16,151	8,594	16,151	8,594
Funds raised		-	-	8,332	2,394	8,332	2,394
Grants		-	-	7,825	22,165	7,825	22,165
Bank deposit interest		-	-	372	10	372	10
Prison Grants	1	-	-	2,121	470	2,121	470
Total		0	0	£34,801	£33,634	£34,801	£33,634

Expenditure

	notes	Restricted funds		Unrestricted funds		Total	
		2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22
Premises overheads	2	0	-	11,476	11,778	11,476	11,778
Direct charitable expenditure	3	0	-	6,750	5,866	6,750	5,866
Fundraising & publicity		0	-	216	216	216	216
Management & administration	4	0	-	7,700	6,812	7,700	6,812
Community Outreach Activity	5	0	-	15,760	9,542	15,760	9,542
Total				£41,902	£39,968	£41,902	£39,968
Surplus/Deficit				-£7,101	-£6,334	-£7,101	-£6,334

Note 1 - Prison Grant / Expenditure

Prison Expenses (recorded within 'Note 3 - Direct Charitable Expenditure') have been reimbursed through a grant from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

Note 2 Premises overheads		Note 3 Direct Charitable Expenditure	
Insurance and Bank charges	£1,976	Telephone and internet	£3,275
Utilities	£3,785	Volunteer travel	£1,089
Repairs and maintenance	£1,607	Prison expenses (see note 1 above)	£1,281
Housekeeping	£4,108	Branch contribution to Central Charity	£1,105
Total	£11,476	Total	£6,750

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Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the period

	2022/23	2021/22
Cash balance brought forward from prior year	59,500	65,834
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	-7,101	-6,334
Carried forward to next year 6, 7	<u>£52,399</u>	<u>£59,500</u>

Fixed Assets

Leasehold improvements brought forward 8	90,723
Depreciation charge for the year 9	5,670
Carried forward	<u>£85,053</u>

Note 4 Management & administration		Note 5 Community outreach activity	
Administrative support	3,336	Community outreach - salary	13,538
IT software and stationery	2,774	Community outreach - pension	1,250
Petty cash	1,105	Community outreach – PAYE	972
Total	£6,750	Total	£15,750

Note 6 - Payment to Trustees

No payments have been made to Trustees except to reimburse purchases made for the Charity or expenses in the usual course of volunteering.

Note 7 - Reserves

The Charity seeks to maintain its reserves at the equivalent of 9 months normal running costs. Building Leasehold Improvements

Note 8 – Building Leasehold Improvements

The Branch acquired a 30-year lease for 1, Angus Street London SE1 6LU from the London Borough of Lewisham for a peppercorn rent. Refurbishment work started in November 2008 and the Branch moved in and started operating there in April 2009. Funds spent on the refurbishment of the building have been shown as a capitalised asset. The depreciation for the refurbishment is deducted annually on a straight-line basis.

Note 9 – Depreciation Charge	
B/f Leasehold value	£90,723
Depreciation	£5,670
Total	£83,053

Approved:
Jean Gilardi, Director 15 May 2023

Approved:
Rachel Aistrop, Treasurer 15 May 2023

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Report to the Trustees/Members of Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans on accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 set out on pages 9 and 10.

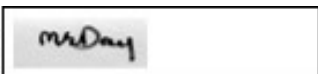
I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity (The Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2023. As the charity trustees of The Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act of 2011 (The Act).

I report in respect of my examination carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed the applicable Directions given by The Charity Commission under section 145 (5)(b) of The Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- The accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  Date: 09/09/2023
Name: Mrs Maureen Day

18 Ferney Road East Barnet Herts EN4 8LF

Our Donors

We very much want to thank the London Borough of Lewisham, for our building in New Cross.

We also want to thank our supporters including:

Blackheath Choral Society

Catapella Choir

Family of Anne Walker RIP

Lilian Hughes RIP

Ricky Wen and A[VIP]

The Hospitality Degree students at the University of Greenwich and #TBH

And those generous individuals who support our branch, but who prefer to remain anonymous.

We could not do what we do without you.

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Our Trustees

2022-23

Caroline Adie

Rachel Aistrop (*until Apr 2023*)

Deb Dowdall

Ruth Driscoll

Co-opted in 2023

Sandra Snelgrove – Treasurer

Jean Gilardi

John Sabine

Will Skinner - Secretary

Jean and Deb were delighted to welcome Julie (*left*) - Chief Executive of Samaritans Central Charity, and show off our garden, so beautifully maintained by Pete, John and other volunteers. Several volunteers met and talked with Julie and were intrigued to learn that when she was commuting past our old branch in New Cross Road and she always noticed our Centre, and thought "one day I'll join Samaritans."



Fundraising

We are hugely grateful to those supporters who regularly give to Lewisham Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans. We are particularly grateful to those who organise events to raise funds for us – the Catapella Choir collected donations for us at two of their events in Lewisham at Christmas. Blackheath Choral Society who again sang a beautiful repertoire of carols at Canary Wharf station in December and the many members of the public whom they inspired to give. This is an incredibly valuable opportunity for us and we are grateful for their support and four-part harmony over many years. Their singing, and the willingness of so many

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volunteers, friends and family to collect on the day makes this our most successful fundraising event.



This year we were also very grateful to the students doing their degree in Tourism and Hospitality at the University of Greenwich. They chose to run #TBH - a fundraising and awareness event in aid of Lewisham Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans as one of their assignments. We were very impressed by their thorough professionalism and thank them for their support.

Once again our huge thanks to everyone who has run marathons and half marathons and everyone who does donate when they can, or donates regularly, and everyone who has selected us for match-funding via their employer's scheme.

For the coming year we are looking forward to a partnership from September with Dulwich and Sydenham Golf Club. We are very grateful to incoming Captain Maggie Tetlow who has chosen our branch as the Lady Captain's charity.

How you can support Lewisham Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans

LGS Samaritans is a registered charity, affiliated to, but not funded by the Samaritans National Charity. This means we have to raise all our funds, every year.

There are many ways you can support our Branch.

- **Donate** directly via our website www.samaritans.org/branches/lewisham and click on the donate button on our web-page.
- **Text** Lewisham to 70085 to donate £5
- **Visit our JustGiving page** – www.justgiving.com/samaritanslgs
- **Set up a regular donation** via the donate button on our webpage, or via your Bank – our bank details are CAF Bank - Account Name: Lewisham Greenwich & Southwark Samaritans, Sort Code 40-52-40, Account Number: 00013640
- **Select us as your charity** if you are undertaking a sponsored challenge or fundraising event.
- **Support us through Give as You Live** – a free and easy way to raise money when you shop online, with more than 6000 stores and services signed up. www.giveasyoulive.org
- **Hire our meeting rooms** for a meeting, small conference or course – all proceeds go back into supporting our work. You can find a link and full details of the rooms available and the costs on our website.
- **You can also scan the QR code below to connect to our donation account:**



We're here to listen

Call free day
or night on

116 123

Email

jo@samaritans.org

Web

samaritans.org/lgs

Visit us

1-5 Angus Street

New Cross

SE14 6LU

SAMARITANS

Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans is a Charitable
Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales (1167963).
Our registered office is located at 1-5 Angus Street, New Cross, London
SE14 6LU.