



IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 2024 - MARCH 2025



INFO@SUNFLOWERSSUICIDESUPPORT.ORG.UK

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CHARITY NUMBER: 1177266

THIS IS SUNFLOWERS

In 2016 Pete Morris took his own life and his family were thrust into a new world of police investigations, coroners reports, inquests and many other formalities that they had to navigate whilst in the midst of their grief. It was through this experience that Abbie and Rebecca (Pete's sisters), with the support of some childhood friends, made the decision to ensure that no other family should be left in the dark to manage alone after being bereaved through suicide.



Pete Morris with Sisters Abbie and Rebecca (2015).



SUNFLOWERS VISION
For there to be the best possible environment in Gloucestershire where people live, prosper, and are kept safe from suicide, its harms and wider impact.

"STAY IN THE SUN WHEN THE SUNSHINE IS GONE AND YOU WILL SEE THE SUNSHINE LIVES WITHIN YOU"

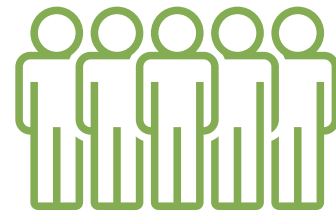
ARETHA FRANKLIN.



SUICIDE STATISTICS

7,055
suicide
deaths
recorded in
UK in 2023

The rate in 2023 was the highest since 1999



Suicide is three times more common among men than among women.

People living in the most deprived areas of England have a higher risk of suicide than those living in the least deprived areas.

One in eight LGBT people aged 18-24 (13 per cent) said they've attempted to take their own life in the last year.

Almost half of trans people (46 per cent) have thought about taking their own life in the last year, 31 per cent of LGB people who aren't trans said the same.



48 disabled men per 100,000 people and 19 disabled women ended their lives, compared to 16 non-disabled men and 5 women.

Autistic people make up approximately 1% of the population but 11% of suicides



“ SUNFLOWERS HAS GIVEN ME HOPE DURING THE DARK DAYS. ”

ONE WORD OR SENTENCE TO DESCRIBE SUNFLOWERS

Compassionate

Understanding

Stronger

The support is
beyond description

Helpful

Kindness,
compassion and
knowing you are
there.

invaluable

Kind

I feel you are there
for me

Supportive

Amazing!

Excellent

Priceless

Safe place to talk openly
without being judged

Life-saving

It is so helpful to be
able to talk to people
who understand

Empowering



SERVICE USER DEMOGRAPHICS

23.5%

75.5%

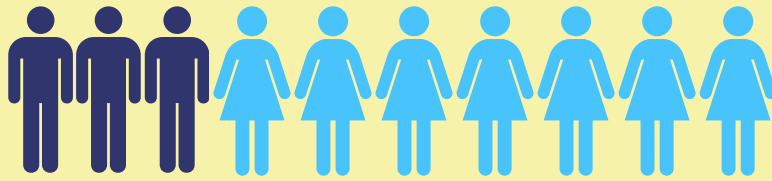


Image 1: Gender

+19.5%



Image 2: Enquiries

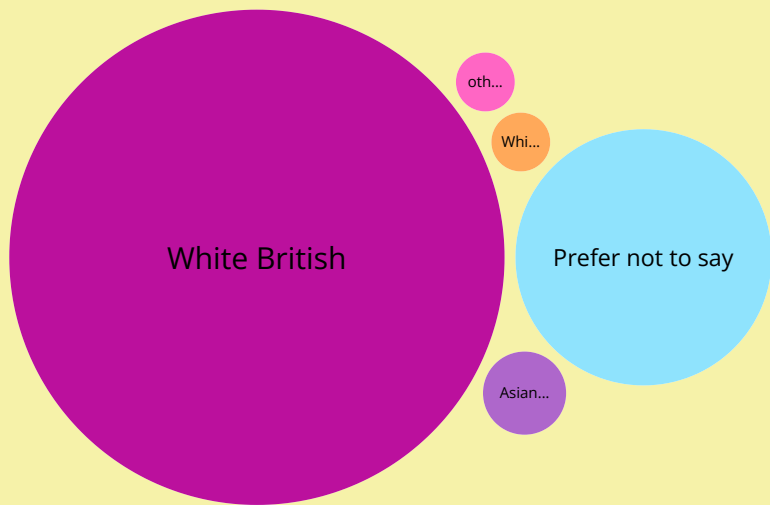


Image 3: Ethnicity

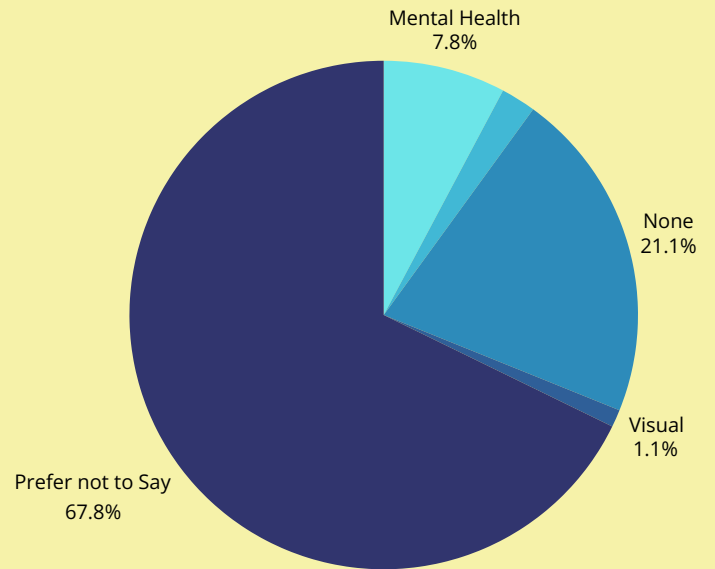
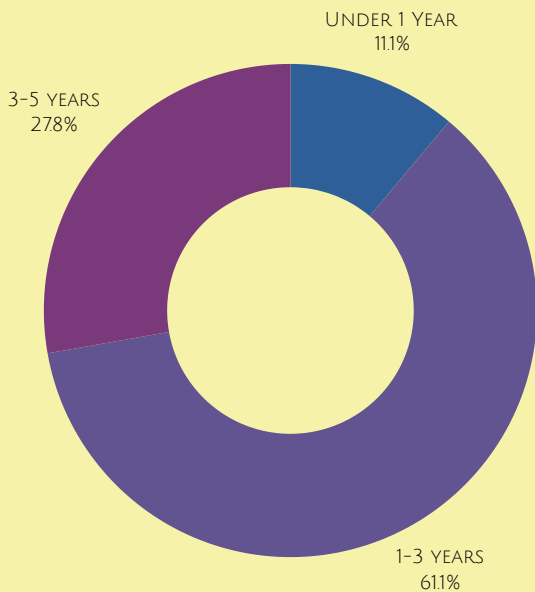
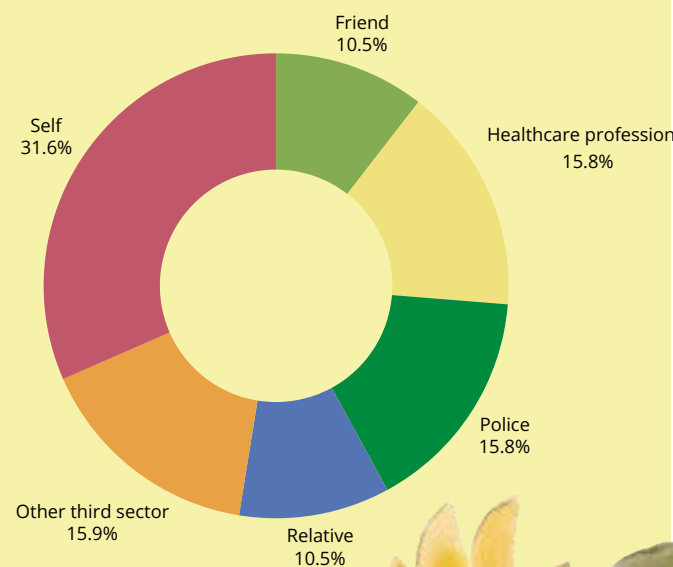


Image 4: Disabilities



How long ago loved one died



Referrals from

“ I NOW KNOW I AM NOT ALONE IN THIS JOURNEY:
I HAVE GAINED SOME GREAT FRIENDS ”



DEMOGRAPHICS EXPLANATION

Our service user data provides valuable insights into the diverse individuals we support, highlighting key trends in gender, ethnicity, disability status, referral sources, and bereavement timelines. These insights also help us identify areas for further development to ensure our services remain inclusive and accessible to all.

Gender Representation

The majority of our service users identify as female (75.5%), with 23.5% identifying as male. However, the data does not reflect engagement from transgender or non-binary individuals, suggesting a potential gap in outreach and accessibility.

Areas for Development:

- Strengthen connections with LGBTQ+ organisations and support groups to better understand the needs of transgender and non-binary people affected by suicide bereavement.
- Ensure our promotional materials and service information use inclusive language and imagery.
- Provide staff and volunteers with further training on gender identity, pronouns, and inclusive support practices.

Enquiries and Support Needs

Over the past year, we have seen a 19.5% increase in enquiries, demonstrating a growing demand for our bereavement support. While 21.1% of service users report no disability, 7.8% identify mental health-related challenges, and 1.1% report visual impairments. A significant proportion (67.8%) preferred not to disclose this information.

Areas for Development:

- Encourage open conversations about disability and mental health in the referral process to ensure support is tailored to individual needs.
- Strengthen partnerships with disability and mental health organisations to improve accessibility.

WE ARE VERY LUCKY TO HAVE THE SUPPORT IN OUR AREA, KNOWING THAT THE SUPPORT IS THERE WHETHER IT'S NOW OR IN YEARS TO COME HELPS WITH THE GRIEF. ALL THE STAFF ARE EMPATHETIC, CARING AND GIVE YOU THE TIME NEEDED TO TALK



DEMOGRAPHICS EXPLANATION

Ethnicity Breakdown & Cultural Inclusion

A large proportion of our service users identify as White British, with smaller representation from Asian and other ethnic backgrounds. A notable percentage preferred not to disclose their ethnicity. This data highlights the importance of ensuring our services remain inclusive and accessible to all communities.

Areas for Development:

- Increase outreach to underrepresented ethnic groups through partnerships with culturally specific organisations.
- Review our service provision to ensure cultural competence and sensitivity in bereavement support.
- Ensure promotional materials reflect the diversity of our community.

Bereavement Timeline & Long-Term Support

Service users approach us at varying stages of their grief:

- 61% experienced their loss 1-3 years ago, indicating a sustained need for longer-term support.
- 27.8% lost a loved one 3-5 years ago, highlighting the ongoing impact of suicide loss.
- 11.1% were bereaved within the past year, showing the immediate need for crisis and early intervention support.

Areas for Development:

- Develop tailored support for those who have been bereaved for longer periods but continue to experience significant grief.
- Explore peer support and mentorship programs to connect those at different stages of their grief journey.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMPASSIONATE APPROACH, KINDNESS AND WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT BEREAVED BY SUICIDE.



DEMOGRAPHICS EXPLANATION

Referral Sources & Awareness

Our referrals come from a range of sources, demonstrating strong connections with both individuals and professionals:

- **31.6% self-refer**, indicating that many actively seek support.
- 15.8% are referred by healthcare professionals and 15.8% by police, showing the importance of multi-agency collaboration.
- Other referrals come from third-sector organisations (15.9%), friends (10.5%), and relatives (10.5%).

Areas for Development:

- Increase awareness of our services among GPs, mental health professionals, and community groups to ensure timely referrals.
- Strengthen relationships with schools and universities to support young people affected by suicide bereavement.

Impact & Future Plans

Our service continues to provide a vital lifeline for those affected by suicide loss. As one service user shared:

*"I now know I am not alone in this journey;
I have gained some great friends."*

To ensure that everyone impacted by suicide has access to the support they need, we are committed to:

Expanding outreach to underrepresented communities, including the LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority groups.

Improving accessibility through training, partnerships, and inclusive service development.

Strengthening peer support opportunities for those in long-term bereavement.

Enhancing multi-agency collaboration to increase awareness and referrals.

By making these improvements, we aim to reach more people in need and continue to provide compassionate, effective bereavement support.

“

THANK YOU. MAKE THE CHARITY NATIONWIDE...

”



The Suicide Liaison Service is a project within Sunflowers Suicide Support charity which provides support and assistance to individuals and families affected by suicide. Our liaison service prides itself on offering bespoke support from day one which aims to meet the needs of our service users. This report summarises the activities and outcomes of our suicide liaison service since April 2024 up until March 2025.

Enquiries and Support Provided:



New Enquiries 24/25



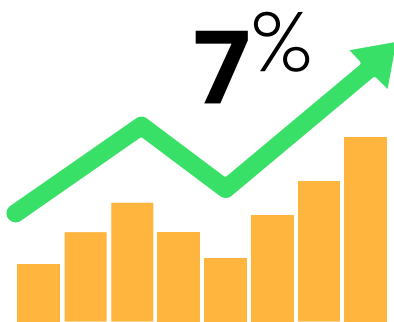
Total amount of people supported in 24/25.

Between 01 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 we have received 150 enquiries for liaison support; this is an increase of 7% on the previous year (23/24). In total we have supported **474 Service users** in 24/25 this is an 89.6% increase from 23/24.





New Enquiries
24/25



Increase from 23/24



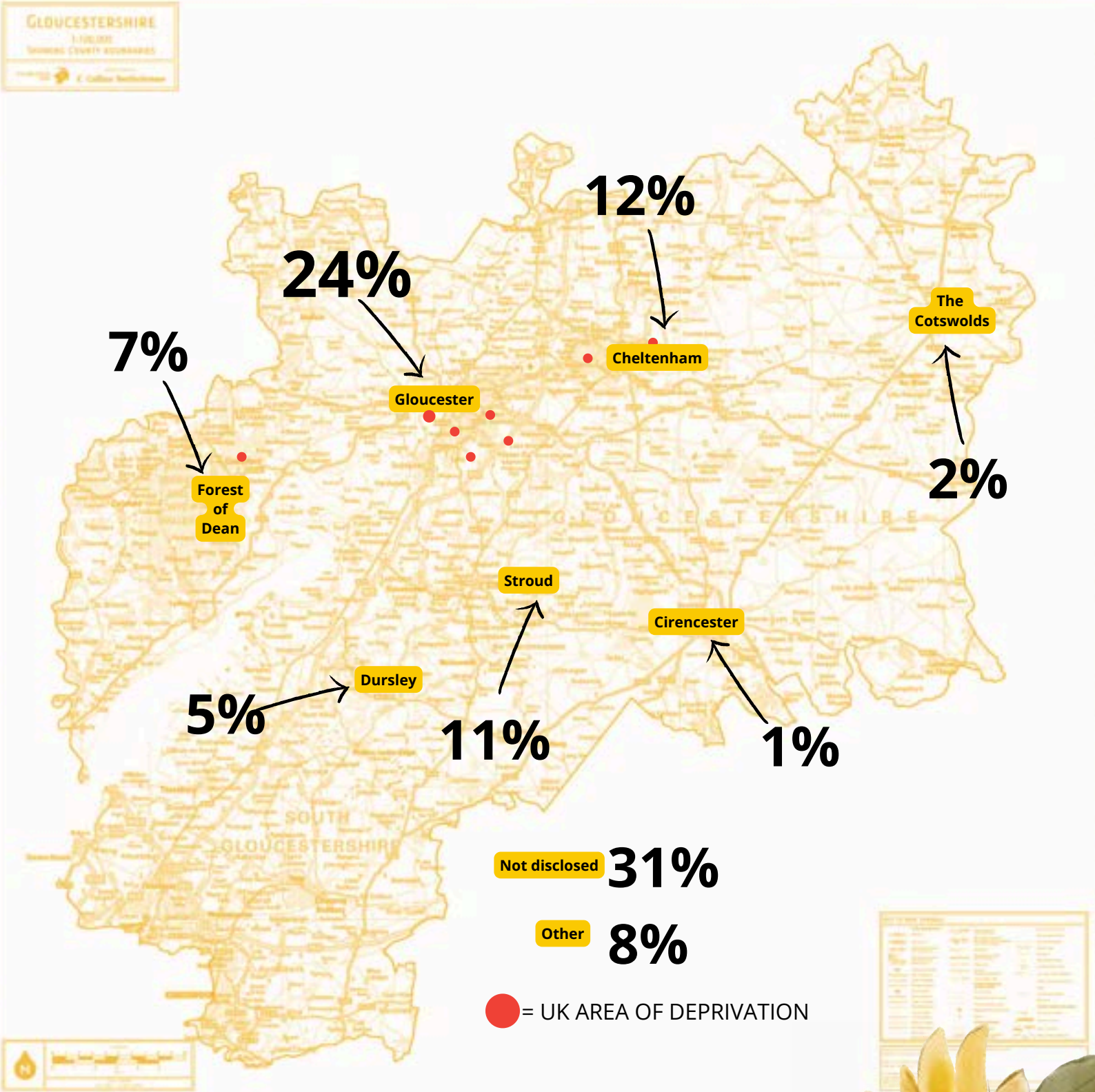
Increase of new referrals
over 5 year period since 2020

"The growth of Sunflowers reflects both the challenges of our time and the incredible strength of our community. Supporting 474 families this year—nearly double from the last—is a testament to the unwavering dedication of our team and the belief of those who stand with us. This journey has exceeded my wildest dreams, and it is only possible because of the generosity of local communities, businesses, and funders who see the value in what we do. Together, we bring hope where it's needed most."

— Abbie Warren, CEO



WHERE ARE NEW REFERRALS FROM



“ IT HELPS KNOWING I'M NOT ALONE. ”





Newly bereaved adults

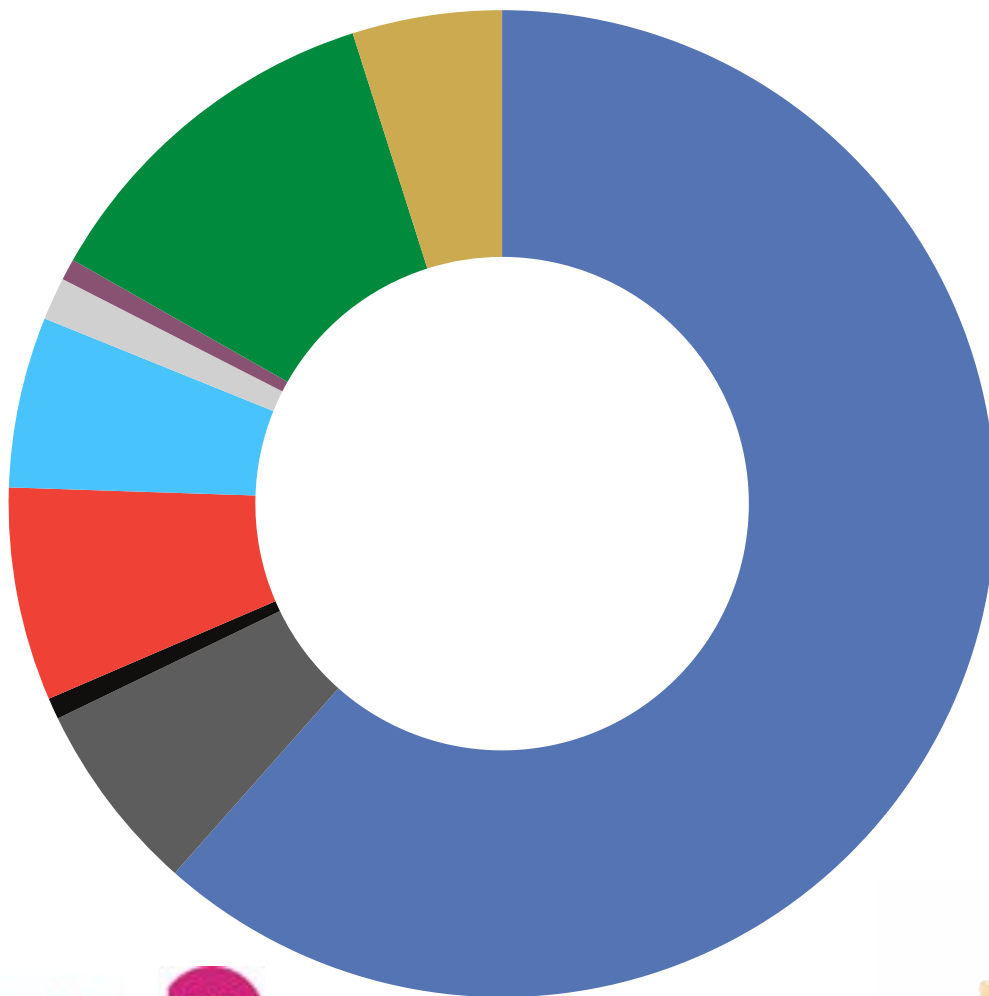
were able to access 1-2-1 bespoke Liaison Support between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025

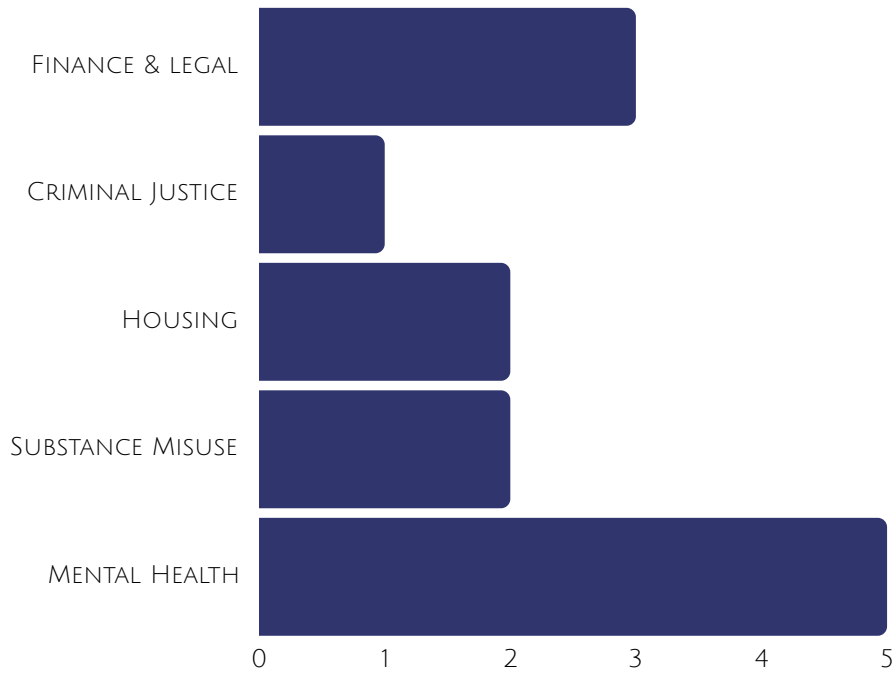
Example of positive wellbeing progress through service



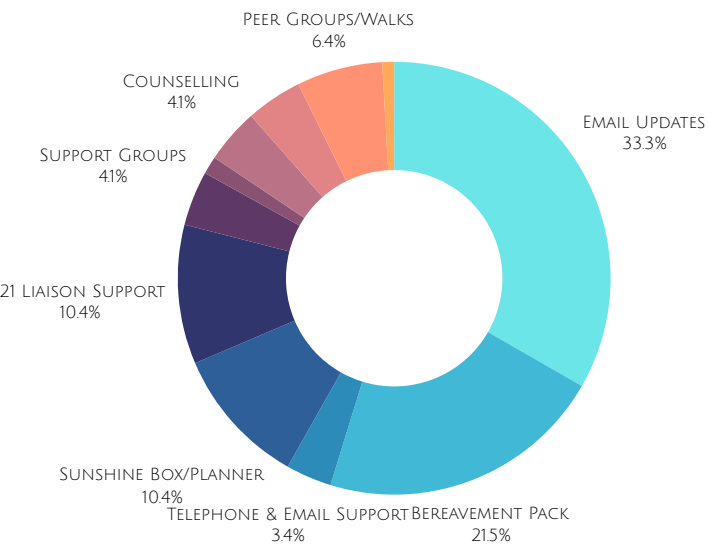
IT IS GREAT TO BE ABLE TO TALK SO OPENLY ABOUT SUICIDE WITHOUT HAVING TO THINK ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS OR PERCEPTIONS. YOU ARE ALL SO PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO, WE ARE SO LUCKY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE TO HAVE SUNFLOWERS

- LIAISON SUPPORT
- OUT OF AREA
- SUPPORTED BY GSASS
- EXTERNAL SIGNPOSTING
- NO LONGER WANTING SUPPORT
- SCHOOL SUPPORT OFFERED
- MORE HOPEFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE
- NO RESPONSE
- OTHER

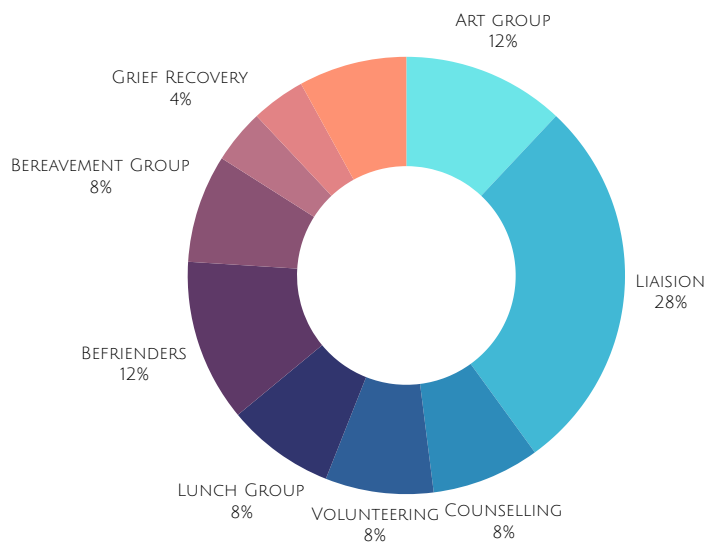




Frequent areas of external support



Additional support offered through Sunflowers this year



Most beneficial support



“ I’VE HAD SOME MASSIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO MY LIFE AND THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE. THE SESSIONS HELPED ME SO MUCH. ”

Additional Support – Year-on-Year Comparison

Sunflowers has expanded its support services over the past year, with significant increases in key areas.

Key Increases in External Support Needs:

- Mental Health support remains the most frequently accessed external service and has increased from last year.
- Criminal Justice, Housing, and Substance Misuse support have all risen, reflecting a greater need for practical assistance beyond bereavement.
- Finance & Legal support has also seen an increase, showing more individuals require help navigating financial matters after loss.

Additional Support Offered Through Sunflowers:

- Bereavement events participation has more than doubled **from 18% last year to 44%**, demonstrating increased engagement in collective remembrance and healing.
- Liaison support engagement has **increased from 11.8% to 28%**, highlighting the growing need for one-to-one emotional and practical support.
- Art group participation has **grown from 3.4% to 12%**, showing the increasing popularity of creative therapeutic outlets.
- Counselling support has **risen from 7.1% to 34%**, making it one of the most valued services this year.
- Peer walks have seen a **significant increase**, with 58 participants this year, reinforcing the importance of outdoor activities in grief support.
- Befrienders support remains steady at 12% this year (compared to 17.2% last year).



“ I FEEL ABLE TO GET ON WITH MY LIFE NOW BUT
HAVE ENCOURAGED OTHERS TO CONTACT YOU. ”



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SUMMARY

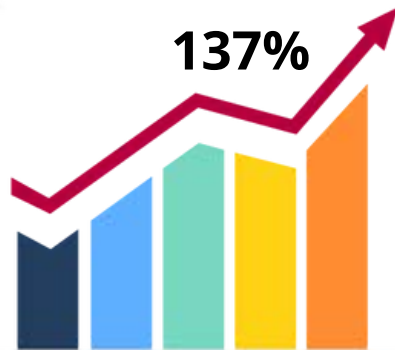
Most Beneficial Support (Based on Feedback):

- Liaison support, counselling, and bereavement groups continue to be essential, with counselling seeing one of the biggest jumps in engagement.
- "All of it" (general appreciation for all services) has emerged as a new response, reflecting the growing impact of Sunflowers' holistic approach.
- Lunch groups and volunteering remain valuable sources of connection and healing.

This year's data highlights the growing impact of Sunflowers' services, particularly in bereavement events, counselling, and one-to-one support. The increasing demand, alongside the rise in participation in peer walks and art groups, underscores the importance of continued funding and service expansion to meet the needs of those bereaved by suicide.



BEREAVEMENT EVENTS PARTICIPATION HAS INCREASED BY 144%



LIAISON SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT HAS RISEN BY 137%



STORMS WALK ATTENDANCE HAS INCREASED TO 58 PEOPLE



“ I THINK YOU CONTINUE TO SHOW UP ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND THAT'S WHEN PEOPLE WILL BECOME READY . THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DO. YOU REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE ”



The liaison service has identified a wide range of support needs. These include practical assistance, such as coordinating with statutory services to recover a loved one's belongings, liaising with the coroner's office, and supporting individuals through coroner's reports and serious case reviews. Additionally, we provide crucial support for individuals experiencing ongoing crises, using our expertise to ensure their safety and facilitate timely access to appropriate services. This work requires extensive cross-sector collaboration with multiple external agencies, including Social Prescribers, Crisis Teams, GPs, Schools, and Colleges, among others.

To note, 22.2% of service users have declared they are still in contact and receiving support from either their GP or the local mental health teams. We often work closely with social prescribers to ensure communication is effective between the services and this is a positive way for Sunflowers to compliment and supports their offer and in the best interest of the person we are supporting.



“

“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.” – HELEN KELLER

”



This year, we have significantly increased the number of funded counselling sessions, **rising from 394 to 550**. This growth reflects both the increased demand for therapeutic support and our commitment to ensuring accessible, high-quality mental health support for those bereaved by suicide.

By funding additional sessions, we have been able to reduce waiting times and provide more consistent support to individuals facing complex grief and emotional challenges. Looking ahead, we aim to further strengthen this provision by securing additional funding and expanding partnerships with specialist bereavement counsellors.



39.6 %



100%

felt listened to

100%

could express their
thoughts and feelings

100%

felt it was a safe and
trusting environment

100%

found the counselling
beneficial

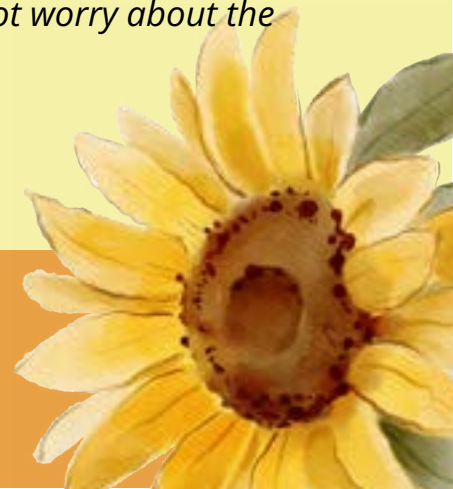
My counselling sessions have saved my life, thank you to Sunflowers for helping me access this support

I now do not feel as though it was my fault.

It is so nice to be able to talk to someone and them not expect anything back from me.

EMDR has literally changed my life, I can now go to bed and not worry about the awful nightmares.

“ THE COUNSELLING HAS BEEN REALLY GOOD, I DON'T THINK I COULD HAVE GOT THIS FAR WITHOUT IT ”



BEFRIENDING SERVICE: IMPACT AND DEVELOPMENT

Over the past year, our befriending service has seen both growth and development, ensuring we provide high-quality peer support to those bereaved by suicide.

Service Growth and Improvements

- We have successfully **recruited 5 new befrienders**, increasing our capacity to support service users.
- A new matching process has been introduced to ensure befrienders are paired with the most suitable befriendees, leading to **more effective support relationships**.
- We have **enhanced training** and support, equipping befrienders with the skills needed to respond to the increasingly complex needs of our service users.
- Our recruitment strategies have been improved, with more targeted outreach to attract the right volunteers for this vital role.

Challenges Faced in 2024/25

- Lower than expected uptake for the befriender role, despite targeted recruitment efforts.
- Matching success varied, highlighting the need for a refined approach to ensure compatibility.
- More complex service user needs than anticipated, requiring a higher level of training and support for befrienders.

Areas for Continued Improvement

- Further refinement of the matching process to improve long-term success in befriender-befriendeo relationships.
- Ongoing training and mentorship to ensure befrienders feel confident in supporting service users with complex needs.
- Exploring new recruitment strategies to attract and retain more volunteer befrienders.
- Regular feedback mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the service and make necessary adjustments.

Despite these challenges, the continued development of the befriending service remains a priority, ensuring those we support receive meaningful and compassionate companionship during their bereavement journey.



“BY COMING ALONGSIDE PEOPLE BEREAVED LIKE MYSELF I REALLY FEEL I HELP TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THEM,

”



BEFRIENDER CASE STUDY- DAWNS JOURNEY

“

Sadly our daughter Yasmin died in 2021 at the age of 21. She took her own life. This started us as a family on a new way of living without her. At that very sad time many friends messaged me information about Sunflowers support. In 2024 my daughter (Yasmin's twin) and I attended a storm walk where I felt stronger and in my mind, it would be a safe way of introducing me to the charity without being overwhelmed by my emotions. I met Chloe, Roxanne and Abbie and a few others who had sadly lost a loved one through suicide. It was such an **uplifting experience** being outside in the country air with some beautiful dogs and a compassion that I felt understood for the first time since losing Yasmin. I wanted to get involved with these wonderful people and beautiful charity.

I **volunteered to become a befriender and attended the ASIST course** run by Abbie and an **introduction to befriending evening** with Roxanne. These events have **helped me with my own grieving** and I felt I could help. I want to be there and listen to others who have gone through this terrible sadness because for me **talking helps**. It allows me and my befriender time to be open and say exactly what is on their mind without judgment. We can totally empathise with each other.

As a befriender we are all individuals. Our emotions along with our grief will be happening at different times but already **I know that I can make a difference** by being there and reassuring someone who needs to talk. I can be a phone call away or a meet up for a coffee. I am **so glad that I took the step forward** to help myself and then to help others.

Sunflowers Suicide Support **has given me courage, strength and reassurance** because they are there for me and you. This charity is so important to our community.

I miss my daughter everyday but now I can celebrate her life.

Thank you Sunflowers for helping us and being such a wonderful organisation. ”



“

NOW I CAN CELEBRATE HER LIFE

”



BEREAVEMENT GROUPS



We now run two support groups each month. One takes place from our offices in Stonehouse and the other in Gloucester.

Stonehouse group has been facilitated by Jeannette Ward who is an experienced counsellor, based in Stroud, Gloucestershire.

Each month provides a different topic for discussion and Lucy has offered psychoeducation and open-discussions. Topics covered this year include:

- Understanding grief
- Understanding trauma
- How does grief and trauma show up in the body
- Emotional first aid - coping strategies
- Lets Talk Guilt
- Lets Talk Anger
- The Social Impact of Suicide
- Special Events - anniversaries, Christmas, birthday's
- Continuing bonds - remembering our loved ones
- Beyond surviving

**100% of people
said they felt
listened to.**



**20
Regular Members**

“

ONCE A MONTH ISN'T ENOUGH

”



BEREAVEMENT GROUPS



Gloucester was facilitated by Serena Fisher, but is now run by our Operations Manager, Chloe. Since moving venues the group continues to grow each month.

Topics in the Gloucester group have included:

- Grief, Loss and Shock
- Trauma and self-care
- Guilt and shame
- Anger and questioning
- Anniversaries, Birthdays and Holidays
- Connections with others and remembering loved ones.
- The Future
- Endings

100% of people felt they were listened to



17
Regular Members

“ I LOOK FORWARD TO SUPPORT GROUP EVERY MONTH ”



CREATIVITY HUB



We have facilitated creative and therapeutic activities, including our art group and memory quilt project, which allowed bereaved individuals to express their grief in a personal and meaningful way. These initiatives have proven to be a powerful tool for healing, with many participants highlighting the sense of connection and comfort they have found through creative expression. Our creativity hub is facilitated at our main offices in Stonehouse this past year, which has made it much easier to store equipment, and less time setting up. As the group has grown, space has become tight once again.

We have had Pet's in Therapy attend once per month with a therapy dog to give participants an opportunity to spend time away from being creative to immerse themselves in the therapeutic impact of animals.

This year the group created a Memory Quilt in memory of their loved ones. This quilt is now 'on tour' around Gloucestershire. It has been displayed at Stroud College, Stroud Brewery and Gloucestershire Constabulary HQ. It will be going to Gloucestershire University and Gloucester Cathedral later this year.

**57 hours of
Creative Activities**

This year we have also hosted some Creative Workshops which encompass a host of different activities to ensure our Creativity Sessions are as Inclusive and accessible as possible. These workshops have included:

- Pottery
- Willow Weaving
- Journaling

We will be looking to continue these workshops into 25/26.



“ART GROUP HAS GIVEN ME A HELPFUL INTRODUCTION TO A WAY OF COPING WITH SUICIDE GRIEF IN A WAY THAT I WOULD HAVE NEVER OTHERWISE THOUGHT TO TRY/EXPERIENCE.”



PEER SUPPORT ACTIVITIES – LUNCH CLUB AND COMMUNITY-LED GROWTH

This year, our Sunflowers Lunch Club has continued to grow and evolve, providing a vital space for connection and support among those bereaved by suicide.

Lunch Club Growth and Development

- Membership has now **increased to 28 regular participants**, reflecting the value of this peer-led support.
- We have expanded the model to include **community-hosted lunch groups**, allowing service users to take an active role in facilitating sessions within their own local areas.
- Locations continue to vary between cafés, community rooms, garden centres, and our support space, ensuring accessibility and a comfortable environment for all.

Community-Led Approach

- The running of the group is now **largely led by participants**, giving them ownership over how the sessions are structured and where they are held.
- This **peer-driven approach has strengthened bonds** and supportive relationships, creating a safe and informal space to connect with others who have shared experiences.
- Having service users host lunch groups within the community has **empowered them to take an active role in the Sunflowers network**, fostering a greater sense of belonging and resilience.

As the Lunch Club continues to thrive, we aim to further expand participation, encourage more service user-led initiatives, and ensure that anyone bereaved by suicide has access to a welcoming and understanding peer community.



PEER SUPPORT ACTIVITIES- STORMS WALKS AND COMMUNITY-LED GROWTH

This year, our STORMS Walks have continued to develop in response to service user feedback, offering a supportive and reflective space for those bereaved by suicide.

Growth and Increased Participation

- Attendance has grown to 58 participants across the year, demonstrating the increasing demand for this form of peer support.
- In response to feedback, we have increased the frequency of walks to bi-monthly, ensuring more regular opportunities for connection and shared reflection.

Volunteer-Led Approach

- Walks are now led by trained volunteers, creating a more informal and community-driven atmosphere while still maintaining a Sunflowers presence.
- A Liaison Officer is present on all walks, ensuring that additional support is available for those who may experience emotional distress during sessions.

By empowering volunteers to take a more active role and increasing accessibility through more frequent walks, STORMS Walks have become a well-established and valued part of our peer support offering. Moving forward, we aim to continue expanding participation, encourage more volunteer leadership, and explore new locations to further enhance the experience.



“A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO MEET PEOPLE GOING THROUGH WHAT WE HAVE AS A FAMILY IN A VERY INFORMAL ENVIRONMENT.”



BEREAVEMENT EVENTS



Over the past year, Sunflowers Suicide Support has hosted a range of bereavement events, providing families and individuals with opportunities to remember their loved ones, connect with others, and find comfort in a supportive community.

One of our most significant events was the **Memory Planting Event at Stratford Park**, where families came together to plant flowers in memory of those they have lost. This meaningful gathering not only offered a peaceful space for reflection but also created a lasting tribute within the community.

Our **annual Remembrance Event** provided a safe and compassionate environment for individuals to honour their loved ones through shared stories, music, and moments of reflection. This event continues to be an essential part of our support, bringing together those affected by suicide to find solace in shared experiences.

We also hosted **Glimmer of Light at Bristol Memorial Woodlands**, a deeply moving event that provided a tranquil setting for reflection and remembrance. Set in the serene surroundings of the woodlands, attendees had the opportunity to come together, light candles, and take comfort in nature while honouring their loved ones. This event was especially valued for its peaceful atmosphere, offering space for contemplation and shared support.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to offering inclusive and meaningful bereavement events that provide comfort, connection, and a space for remembrance, ensuring that no one has to navigate grief alone.



"NO ONE SHOULD WALK THE PATH OF GRIEF ALONE."

ADULT WELLBEING OVERVIEW

This year, among all reportable adults for whom we have **comparable WEMWBS scores**, we observed an **average increase of 6.6 points following the implementation of Liaison Support**.

Recognising that grief is not a linear process but rather a turbulent journey with significant fluctuations in well-being—especially around anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, or other meaningful dates—we have adjusted the frequency of our well-being assessments for the 2024/25 period. This adjustment aims to provide a more accurate understanding of an individual's well-being in response to our support. It also enables us to identify complex issues more effectively, ensuring timely referrals to specialised services when necessary.

In our pursuit of more efficient and effective impact measurement tools, **we have integrated the Recovery Star into our monitoring processes**. The Recovery Star is an evidence-based tool designed to support and measure change across ten key areas central to mental health recovery:

1. Managing mental health
2. Physical health
3. Living skills
4. Friends and community
5. Use of time
6. Relationships
7. Addictive behaviour
8. Home
9. Identity and self-esteem
10. Trust and hope

Underpinned by a five-stage Journey of Change model—Stuck, Accepting help, Believing and trying, Learning, and Self-reliance—the Recovery Star facilitates collaborative assessments between service users and Liaison Officers. This collaboration not only aids in creating a visual representation of progress but also enhances the quality of support provided. By adopting the Recovery Star, we aim to capture a holistic view of each individual's journey, thereby tailoring our services to better meet their unique needs



**Overall WEMWBS SCORING
after Liaison Support**





CHILDREN'S WELLBEING OVERVIEW

Between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, our Seeds of Hope service has provided **dedicated support to 35 bereaved families**, significantly developing our approach to ensure best practice when working with children and young people bereaved by suicide.

Collaborating with Liz Koole, we have embedded evidence-based recommendations into our work, strengthening the quality and impact of our service.

A key part of this development has been three focus groups, where children and young people have shared their experiences. **Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of participants reporting improved well-being** and expressing that being among other families who have experienced a similar loss has been a vital source of support.

In addition to direct support, we have extended our impact within the wider community, **engaging with 18 schools over the past year**. This has included bespoke support and training on suicide awareness and prevention, equipping schools with the knowledge and confidence to provide a supportive environment for bereaved children and young people.

As we continue to evolve Seeds of Hope, our focus remains on ensuring that every child and family accessing our support receives compassionate, specialist care that meets their needs, while also working proactively with schools and professionals to create a more understanding and informed community.



A proportion of our children and young people's development work is being funded through the 'ONE YEAR' Suicide Prevention Fund.



SERVICE USER WELLBEING OUTCOMES

72.2%

feel more optimistic about the future since being supported by Sunflowers

58%

improved confidence and more able to manage daily challenges since being supported by Sunflowers

67%

improved outlook on self-care since being supported by Sunflowers

74%

feel their emotional wellbeing has improved since being supported by Sunflowers

79%

have you built positive relationships within the Sunflowers community

95%

are part of a community that is caring and supportive

HAS ANYTHING CHANGED FOR YOU PERSONALLY AS A RESULT OF BEING SUPPORTED BY SUNFLOWERS

It helps knowing i am not alone

Being able to open up. More at peace

I felt understood and not judged

Being there for others

It has given me hope during the dark days

I'm feeling more confident.

I feel much stronger and positive

A little stronger in some ways

Art group has given me a helpful introduction to a way of coping with suicide grief in a way that I would have never otherwise thought to try/experience

100%

would recommend Sunflowers

“

I FEEL I CAN ASK SUNFLOWERS FOR HELP IN CASE OF MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY...

”





We have continued to expand our outreach programme to ensure that bereaved individuals across Gloucestershire's rural areas can access our support. Through feedback, we identified that limited public transport and lack of local services in areas such as the Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean create significant barriers to accessing bereavement support. In response, **we now facilitate a monthly drop-in session across four locations: Chipping Camden, Bourton-on-the-Water, Cam, and the Forest of Dean.**

Recognising the therapeutic value of creative expression, we have also **introduced a creative element to our drop-in sessions**, offering an alternative for those unable to attend support groups at Sunflowers HQ. This initiative has been well received, providing individuals with a welcoming and informal space to process their grief through art and creativity.

As part of our outreach efforts, **we have attended 22 external awareness events** between 1st April – 31st March, ensuring that more people within the community are aware of the support available to them. These community-based events allow us to increase visibility, provide on-the-spot guidance, and offer immediate support to those impacted by suicide.

Our Storms Walks continue to be a valuable initiative, providing a safe and supportive space for individuals to connect, reflect, and navigate grief while benefiting from the wellbeing effects of being in nature. We have now hosted five Storms Walks across the county this year, with a Suicide Liaison Officer present at each to provide support and signposting where needed. Feedback continues to indicate that these walks are highly beneficial, with requests for them to be held more frequently; however, due to current capacity, we are unable to expand them at this time.

Moving forward, we remain committed to targeting areas of deprivation across Gloucestershire, ensuring that those who are most in need of bereavement support have access to our services. Over the next 12 months, we aim to further develop our outreach programme, reaching more individuals in isolated communities and expanding our capacity to deliver accessible and inclusive support.



“ EVERYWHERE SHOULD HAVE A SUNFLOWERS ”



SUPPORT PACKS AND SIGNPOSTING

Based on ongoing service user feedback, we have continued to improve our Liaison Packs to enhance accessibility and reduce administration time.

Rather than including multiple leaflets from various organisations, **the packs now feature a single signposting sheet that consolidates all essential information in one place.** This sheet includes QR codes for easy access to external services' websites, ensuring that individuals can quickly find the support they need.

This streamlined approach has significantly improved efficiency in producing the packs while making the information more user-friendly and accessible. **The Help is at Hand booklet remains a core part of the pack,** alongside key information about the support available through Sunflowers.

Additionally, these Liaison Packs are now fully branded in line with the Liaison Service, reinforcing our identity and making them easily recognisable for those who need them.

We also provide Sunshine Bags to service users as grief packs. These bags are branded with our mascot and include things that are designed to help people with their grief.

We have distributed;

- 94** Adult Sunshine bags (£3290)
- 11** Children's Sunshine boxes (£269.50)
- 10** Doodle diaries (£120)
- 15** Positive Planners. (£195)

- 167** Resource packages to community organisations
- 94** Liaison packs to service users
- 150** Seeds of Hope Resource packs to local schools



“ YOU ARE A SAFE SPACE TO TALK
OPENLY WITHOUT BEING JUDGED ”



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT

Sunflowers remains deeply committed to ensuring that our services are accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all. We continue to invest in learning, development, and structural improvements to expand our reach and better support the diverse communities of Gloucestershire.

This year, we have begun a comprehensive HR audit to ensure that our recruitment processes are fair, accessible, and inclusive for all applicants. This will help us to identify and remove any barriers to entry and ensure that our workforce reflects the diversity of the people we support.

We have also continued to strengthen our team's knowledge and understanding by providing:

- Faith and Culture training, to deepen our awareness of how different beliefs and traditions shape experiences of grief.
- Further Deaf Awareness training, building on our previous work with GDA (Gloucestershire Deaf Association) to ensure we can offer more accessible support.
- Neurodiversity training, enhancing our ability to understand and respond to the needs of individuals with autism, ADHD, and other neurodivergent experiences.
- LGBTQ+ inclusion training, ensuring that our services remain a safe and welcoming space for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

To further embed EDI into our governance and decision-making, we have recruited an EDI trustee who will play a key role in guiding and supporting our efforts to create a truly inclusive service.

At Sunflowers, we recognise that every individual's journey through grief is unique, and we remain committed to continually learning, evolving, and fostering a culture of empathy, respect, and accessibility for all those affected by suicide.

STUDIES INDICATE THAT BETWEEN 11% AND 66% OF AUTISTIC ADULTS HAVE CONTEMPLATED SUICIDE DURING THEIR LIFETIME, AND UP TO 35% HAVE PLANNED OR ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.

NATIONALAUTISTIC SOCIETY+1UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE+1



EDUCATION & TRAINING

Sunflowers have delivered six Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshops. This is a two-day suicide intervention skills training session with powerful audio-visuals

104 local caregivers were trained in ASIST between 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025.



Sunflowers delivered:

- 5 ASIST workshops for Public Health Gloucestershire
- 1 Community Workshop funded by Sunflowers



Sunflowers have trained up an additional person to deliver a new UK program called Suicide First Aid. At present this offer is only available for delivery online, however over the coming year we hope to make this available to commission in person.

Sunflowers have also invested in another Grief Recover Method Specialist, who will be delivering Grief Recovery and Helping Children with loss.



Suicide First Aid

Sunflowers delivered:

- 5 online Suicide First Aid Lite sessions
- 3 safeTALK community sessions funded by Sunflowers.
- 6 Bespoke trainings to other charities such as Julian's House, Home Start and Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Service.
- 2 workshops for Gloucestershire College
- 1 workshop for ABL Health
- 5 workshops for other third sector organisations



This year Sunflowers invested in the upskilling of 1 additional Grief Recovery Method Specialist. This training will allow this staff member to deliver the 'Grief Recovery Method' and 'Helping Children with Loss' courses; the Helping Children with Loss course will sit within the 'Seeds of Hope' project where we will target adults who are supporting children who have been bereaved through suicide; this will include school staff, social workers, youth workers, parents and carers (not an exhaustive list).

This year we have delivered 2 Grief Recovery Method courses, this has meant that 12 people have completed the Grief Recovery Method.

Feedback received following the course was 100% positive.



100%

rated the delivery and content as 'Excellent'

100%

would recommend the course to others

ITS BEEN MIND BLOWING AND I CAN SEE HOW I HAVE BEEN SOCIALISED! I HAVE REALISED HOW I HAVE SUPPRESSED MY EMOTIONS AND OTHERS AROUND ME HAVE TOO.



The Grief Recovery Method[®]
by The Grief Recovery Institute[®]

THANK YOU SUNFLOWERS. I DREAD TO THINK WHERE I WOULD BE IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU AND THE TEAM.



CREATING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

NICE Guidelines – Preventing Suicide in the Community:

- People affected by a suspected suicide may, as a result, be at risk of harming themselves.
- Bereavement support can reduce this risk, especially when tailored to the person's needs. People who had bereavement support were also likely to experience lower levels of depression and anxiety”.

Lifecraft Suicide Bereavement Support Service, Fiona Breaker-Rolfe – Jan 2020:

- Friends and relatives of people who die by suicide have a 1 in 10 risk of making a suicide attempt after their loss.
 - Research is now showing that suicide bereavement is associated with a number of adverse mental health outcomes, including depression, psychiatric admission and suicide attempts".
- (<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/3/e014707>).

Sunflowers is committed to developing and strengthening our workforce to ensure our team is skilled, confident, and equipped to assess risk and support service users effectively. Our Liaison Officers undergo a comprehensive training journey, blending in-house learning, external accredited training, and ongoing professional development to ensure they can provide safe, appropriate, and compassionate support.

Liaison Officer Training Journey

We have reviewed and enhanced our induction process, ensuring that new team members receive structured and comprehensive training from the outset. This now includes:

- In-house training, such as 1:1 sessions with Liaison manuals, hands-on guidance from staff members to learn reporting processes and procedures, and mandatory introduction videos.
- Opportunities to meet with service users, gaining valuable insights into their needs and expectations from Liaison Officers, ensuring our service remains user-led.
- The introduction of an online ‘Fundamentals of Support Work’ training module, designed to provide core knowledge and best practices for effective suicide bereavement support.



“MY TIME WITH SUNFLOWERS HAS BEEN DEEPLY MEANINGFUL TO ME, AND I FEEL INCREDIBLY FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO OFFER SUPPORT AND COMFORT TO THOSE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE.”

CREATING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

Specialist & Accredited Training

Sunflowers outsources relevant, accredited training to ensure our team is continuously developing their skills. This includes:

- PABBS (Postvention Assisting those Bereaved by Suicide) training, a nationally recognized qualification for suicide bereavement professionals.
- Suicide prevention and intervention training, including Suicide First Aid Lite, SafeTalk, and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), either externally accredited or facilitated by Sunflowers.
- Specialist training in supporting children and young people bereaved by suicide, delivered in collaboration with Liz Koole, a leading expert in this field. This ensures our team feels confident and well-equipped to support grieving families effectively.

Ongoing Professional Support

To maintain high-quality practice and emotional resilience, staff receive:

- Monthly 1:1 clinical supervision, offering personal support and guidance.
- Quarterly group supervision, providing a space to reflect, learn from each other, and strengthen best practices.

Through these enhancements to our training and support framework, we are ensuring that our Liaison Team is well-prepared, knowledgeable, and confident in delivering high-quality suicide bereavement support to both adults and children.



“COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT ONBOARDING WAS EXCELLENT AND ONCE I'D STARTED I RECEIVED APPROPRIATE AND USEFUL TRAINING AND SUPPORT FROM THE TEAM, WHICH ALLOWED FOR ME TO THRIVE AND SUCCEED FROM DAY ONE.”
BRANDON



We currently have **47 registered volunteers, marking an 88% increase** from the previous year when we had 25. This growth demonstrates the strength and expansion of our volunteer community, reinforcing the crucial role volunteers play in supporting Sunflowers. Our volunteers assist in bereavement support, fundraising, awareness events, and administrative tasks, contributing significantly to our work.

Over the past year, we have completely overhauled our volunteer recruitment and training process to enhance the volunteer experience. This has included:

- A structured induction process to ensure volunteers are well-prepared for their roles.
- Enhanced training opportunities to build confidence and skills.
- Additional support mechanisms to promote wellbeing and development.

Feedback from our volunteers—**many of whom have lived experience of suicide or mental ill-health**—highlighted a need for better communication regarding volunteering opportunities. In response, we have:

- Recruited a Volunteer Coordinator to strengthen engagement and provide support.
- Launched monthly volunteer newsletters to keep volunteers informed about opportunities, training, and events.
- Introduced regular check-ins to ensure all volunteers feel supported and valued.

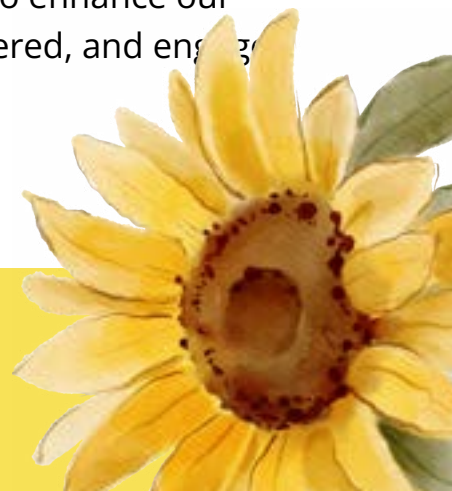
This year our **volunteers have given 9776 hours** in total and based on the UK's living wage of £11.44 per hour (2024 rate), the **financial equivalent of these volunteer contributions is £111,850 per year**—demonstrating the remarkable dedication of our team.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to further improving the volunteer experience, expanding training opportunities, and continuing to enhance our support systems to ensure our volunteers feel valued, empowered, and engaged in our mission.

“

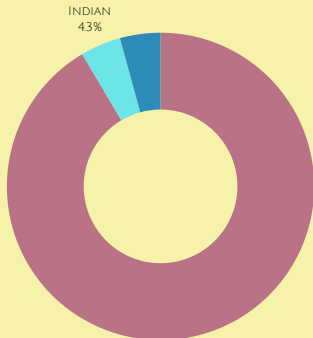
VOLUNTEERS DON'T GET PAID, NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE WORTHLESS BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE PRICELESS—
SHERRY ANDERSON

”

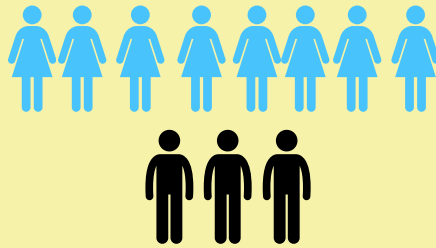


VOLUNTEERING IMPACT

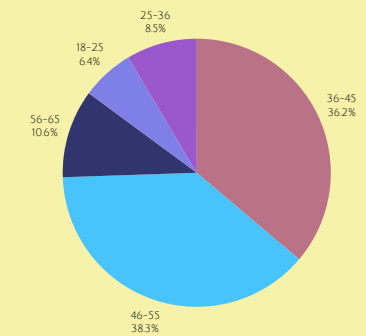
9776 Recorded Volunteer Hours  Value added **£111,850**



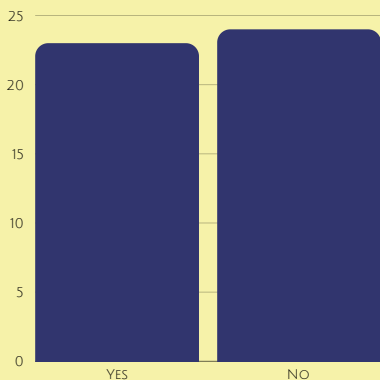
Volunteer Ethnicity



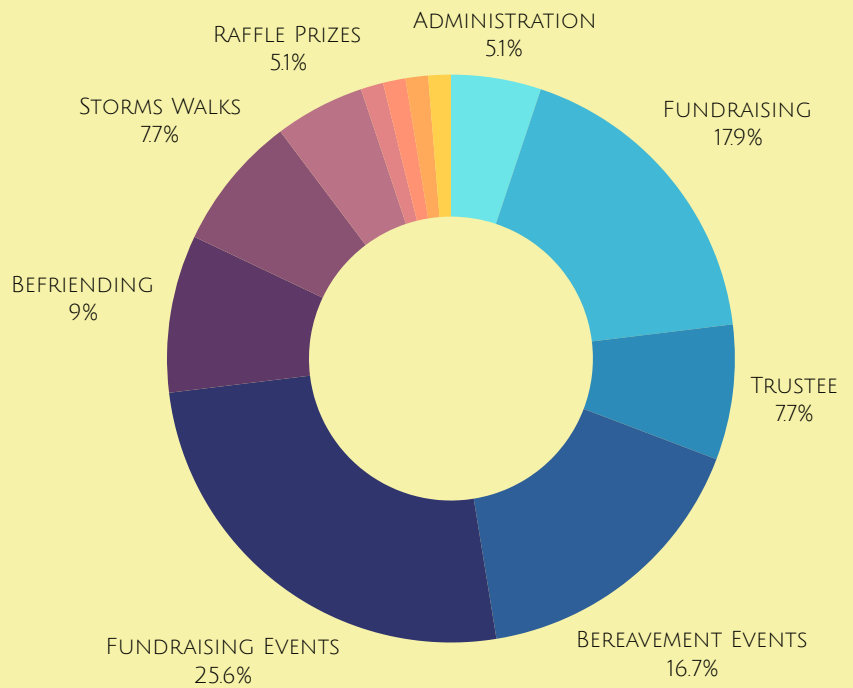
Volunteer Gender



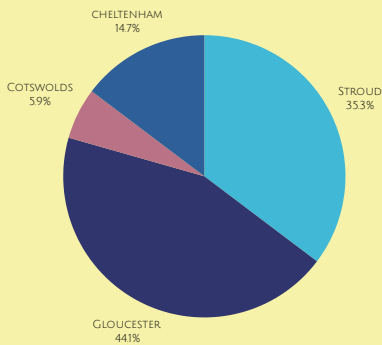
Volunteer Age



Personally bereaved or affected by suicide



Activities involved in



Locality of Volunteers



We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support from local businesses and organizations that have helped us enhance our services, refresh our spaces, and strengthen our events through donations, sponsorships, and volunteer efforts.

- ULTRA PCS has continued to be a valued supporter, helping us refresh our Memory Garden and generously donating their time to assist with preparations for our Ball in May. Their contributions have helped us create meaningful spaces for reflection and remembrance.
- BituChem has provided sponsorship for our Ball while also donating IT equipment, helping to improve our technological capabilities and ensuring our team has the resources needed to support our community effectively.
- Gloucester Brewery has supported Sunflowers by donating space for training sessions, enabling us to deliver essential learning opportunities for our team and volunteers.
- Elmrep, Takefive Healthcare, Gas and Liquid Controls and Hooray Recruitment also played a crucial role in sponsoring our Ball, helping us raise vital funds to continue our work supporting those affected by suicide.
- Pure offices have hosted several fundraising activities in aid of Sunflowers
-

The generosity and dedication of these businesses have made a huge impact on our ability to provide meaningful support, create welcoming spaces, and continue our vital work within the community. We look forward to growing these partnerships and fostering even more collaborations in the future.



CORPORATE DONORS 2024/25



SIMONE HOPKINS & SONS



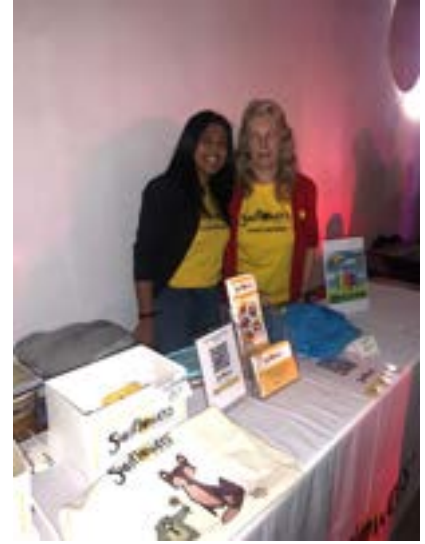
INFO@SUNFLOWERSSUICIDESUPPORT.ORG.UK

WWW.SUNFLOWERSSUICIDESUPPORT.ORG.UK

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177266



A SELECTION OF FUNDRAISERS 2024/25



INFO@SUNFLOWERSSUICIDESUPPORT.ORG.UK

WWW.SUNFLOWERSSUICIDESUPPORT.ORG.UK

CHARITY NUMBER: 117266



TESTIMONIALS

“Sunflowers have been a guiding light following the loss of our beautiful son last summer. Our liaison officer continues to help us navigate a really complicated journey, communicating with key agencies and helping us seek the answers that we so desperately need at this time. From the moment I walked into the Sunflowers head office, I knew that we were not alone. The level of warmth, compassion and understanding from the team has been immense. Although it is still early days for our family, I take comfort in the knowledge that the Sunflowers family will be there to walk alongside us to help us shape whatever our 'new normal' looks like. We are so grateful for all of your love and support.”

“Thank you so much for the support you have given me, and continue to give. I am eternally grateful that sunflowers funded counselling- it has been so helpful and I am going to continue seeing my counsellor privately. When times were really hard, the double support of my Liaison Officer and my counsellor made me feel held and that there was someone there for me when it all seemed hopeless and too painful. I also feel secure knowing that I can continue to reach out to Roxanne in the future, as I am certainly not in a place yet where I have the emotional resilience I would like to have”.

“Being able to talk to someone, the same person, without judgement. I could say whatever I was feeling and my feelings were validated. I liked the warm, informal setting, having a cup of tea and just getting it all off of my chest. I found it beneficial to have regular and quite frequent sessions, especially on those really hard weeks.”

“We are very lucky to have the support in our area, knowing that the support is there whether it's now or in years to come helps with the grief. All the staff are empathetic, caring and give you the time needed to talk”



HOW TO DONATE

Give a one-off donation or become a regular donor through our CAF Donate button on our website:
www.sunflowerssuicidesupport.org.uk/Donate/Fundraise

Send a cheque payable to: Sunflowers Suicide Support to:
Waterside House, Bonds Mill, Stonehouse, Gloucester, GL10 3RF

Donate BACs with the reference 'Donation':
Account Name: Sunflowers Suicide Support
Account Number: 00033172
Sort Code: 40-52-40

If you donate via cheque or BACS please be sure to send us an email with your address so we are able to claim Gift Aid on your donation.

Alternatively, you can set up your own fundraising page using Just Giving or directly donate via our CAF account at www.cafdonate.cafonline.org/12870

Thank You



HELP IN A CRISIS

If you are worried about your own or someone else's suicidal thoughts or feelings, take the following action.

For an **emergency** or life-threatening situation always **call 999**

Make an **URGENT** appointment with your **GP**

Call the **Samaritans** on **116 123**

Text SHOUT to **85258** (24/7)

If you are in **Gloucestershire** call Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation **Crisis Team** on: **0800 1690398**

Contact Suicide Crisis Charity, Cheltenham on 07975 974455 between 9am-10pm every day.