



LEEDS
BEREAVEMENT
FORUM

ANNUAL REPORT

2019/2020

Our vision

Established in 1996, our vision is to be the driving force behind improving bereavement services across Leeds.

- We signpost individuals to the most appropriate bereavement service either locally or nationally. You do not need to be referred to us, our service is free and open to all
- We provide training, information, events and conferences to people who work in the area of bereavement to support their professional development. We work in partnership with organisations across the city to improve the provision of bereavement services



- We campaign to help people talk more openly about dying, death and bereavement and to make plans for the end of life. We work in partnership with Dying Matters nationally and locally

For more information please contact us to find out more about bereavement support available. The Forum is funded by Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group.

“As a bereavement counsellor I have already had significant training. I have still learned so much, which will help me further.”

Membership

Membership of Leeds Bereavement Forum is free. To download an application form please visit our website or contact the office. A full list of members is available on our website.



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Training development

“I now feel more confident going forward.”

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in March this year, we have moved all our face-to-face training online. These sessions, led by our experienced trainers, are generally a little shorter than our traditional courses and include use of break-out rooms and regular rest breaks.

We are very aware that many people have been bereaved during recent months, often unexpectedly and in very different and difficult circumstances. Limited or no funerals at all, as well as difficulties in being with dying family or friends has led to very complicated bereavement experiences for many. People have had to support their families, friends and colleagues during this time, in the main remotely, with often little experience of knowing the best ways to help.

Online Training

We are able to offer the following in-house training courses **online** to help support people feel more confident talking about dying, death and bereavement.

- **Half-day Basic Bereavement Skills Training package** | Suitable for anyone working with bereaved

people in a general setting, this includes an overview of Bereavement Theory, and a listening exercise.

Half-day Intermediate Bereavement Skills Training package | A more in-depth look at bereavement for those with experience of working with bereaved people.

Supporting people with Learning Disabilities through a Bereavement | A half-day session delivered online for organisations supporting people with learning disabilities

Shorter Bereavement Skills Training sessions | We are able to deliver shorter sessions including; Providing Bereavement Support over the Telephone, Self Care and the impact of Bereavement during Covid-19.

Get in touch

All our online training sessions can be delivered for up to twenty people and adapted to meet your needs.

We try to keep our training low cost where possible, particularly for Leeds based voluntary organisations, please get in touch with your training requirements.

Co-Chairs' Report



Training and development

As we look back over the last year it is hard not to be overwhelmed with a great sense of pride at the achievements of Leeds Bereavement Forum, a result of the hard work and dedication of our staff and the work they undertake with others on behalf of all of our membership and Trustees.

2020 has also been an exceptionally difficult year for all of us, and particularly for anyone who has been bereaved. Staff have worked hard to support, develop and adapt as appropriate their work during this time.

Funding

We are delighted that NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group continue to fund our work. We thank the Commissioners for their recognition and, along with some smaller funding grants that we have secured, we are delighted that our work championing death, dying and loss in Leeds can continue.

Building on the successes of last year, our already busy training and development programme has blossomed. Our training programme becomes more popular year-on-year and we have been delighted to work closely with many organisations this year, delivering new and bespoke packages. This vital work has only been possible through the hard work and creativity of our Development Worker Barbara, supported by our excellent trainers to ensure that the content and delivery of our training packages is of the highest standards.

Looking ahead

Finally, we want to pay a huge tribute to Jane, Barbara and Kathy who work so hard to make all of this possible. Their dedication, compassion and creativity knows no bounds and we are so incredibly lucky to have such brilliant people working for LBF, with them our next year is sure to be as worthwhile and fruitful as the last.

Mark Hibbert and Xina Gooding-Broderick | Co-Chairs

“Using listening being com this is OK e you can’t a every

Treasurer's Report



Leeds Bereavement Forum's financial position remains healthy during the financial year ended in March 2020.

Our opening fund balance was £30,476, with total income £54,042 and expenditure £56,385, which gives us an end balance of £28,133. Our free reserve stands at £25,106 which is in line with our policy of maintaining above £25,000.



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At the time of writing this report, the country is still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. We are pleased to report that the charity's financial situation is less affected as the majority of our income stream is from NHS funding. Although the staff has been working remotely, we have not been able to reduce our fixed expenditure due to existing contracts.



Thanks to the staff

We thank our staff team's dedication to the mission of the charity, deepening and strengthening the network of bereavement charities in Leeds, as well as our training development work. A full copy of our annual accounts is available upon request from the office.

Joanne Dyson | Treasurer

“I thought the training was fabulous and so useful within my line of work. I have already been putting some of it into practice I can't believe how much I got out of one days training.”

Our activities April 2019 - March



It has been another busy year for Leeds Bereavement Forum (LBF).

This year we received over 200 advice and information queries, an increase of over 20 per cent on the last financial year. Our e-bulletin continues to go out monthly alongside information on Twitter and Facebook and visits to our website continue to increase.

Training

Our training goes from strength to strength, running 19 training courses over the year, an increase from 12 courses last year. We continue to provide our well respected Basic Bereavement Skills course and in addition we have produced specific bereavement training for clinical hospice staff in addition to the training we already offer to non-clinical hospice staff. We have developed a new course funded by the Wesleyan Community Fund, co-produced with Leeds Learning Disability Forum, Tenfold, for *Supporting People with a Learning Disability through their Bereavement*. Our experienced

trainers have run our bereavement training with third sector, statutory and commercial organisations with excellent feedback reaching 218 people across Leeds this year.

We were delighted that the work of LBF has been showcased in a new report, published in June, *Care After Caring* from the National Bereavement Alliance and Hospice UK. The report shares good practice and ideas of how to improve support for carers facing bereavement. We also launched in partnership with Leeds Libraries, a well received LBF Reading List available on our website.

Reaching Out

Death Cafés are an international movement dedicated to encouraging discussion about death and dying in a relaxed environment. We held eleven Death Cafés during the year working in partnership with Leeds Libraries meeting over 70 people across Leeds.

We also reach people through information stands and talks across the city during the year. This year we spoke at events organised by groups including CASYL and Coping with Bereavement Project,

“Loving Life, Dealing with Loss” a BAME health and well-being hub event and three Healthy Minds Peer Support Group talks for Leeds City Council staff talking about bereavement. Over the year we held information stands at Leeds City Council Adult Health and Social Care event; Dying Matters Leeds Partnership Kirkgate Market event during Dying Matters Week; a Learning Disabilities Pop Up Event at Technorth for Leeds City Council Staff and a Baby Week Leeds event.

Diversity & Inclusion

For the second year running, our annual conference was sponsored by Blacks Solicitors. This year we looked at Diversity and Inclusion in Bereavement Support. This conference was aimed at promoting and raising awareness, understanding and equality when providing bereavement support.

Our AGM in October this year was kindly sponsored, for the first time, by Co-op Funeralcare, and we were very pleased to welcome Ted Bowman back to Leeds from the USA, for the third time, speaking about Thresholds, Grief and Bereavement Care. We would like to thank Full Circle Funerals for

their generous donation from the sales of their book *Funerals Your Way: A Person Centred Approach to Planning a Funeral*.

Dying Matters Leeds

We remain a key partner in the Dying Matters Leeds Partnership facilitated by Leeds City Council. For the third year, LBF managed a small grants programme on behalf of the Partnership for events happening for Dying Matters Week in May 2020. Unfortunately, the majority of the events due to take place in May 2020 were postponed to the following year, as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

Changing World

The end of this financial year was a very strange one indeed. LBF Staff are now all working from home and we have had to cancel all of our planned face-to-face events for the foreseeable future. We have developed our work to continue to run as many of our training courses and meetings online to reach as many people who need us as possible and hope that life will return to a new normal shortly.

Jane Robinson | Manager

Trustees

Xina Gooding Broderick | Co-Chair • Mark Hibbert | Co-Chair
• Joanne Dyson | Treasurer • Satwant Rait | Secretary • Simon Moran • Nadine Owens • Emma Pickering

Get in touch

Leeds Bereavement Forum is staffed part time. If there is no one to answer your call, please leave a message on the answer phone or email us – we will get back to you as quickly as possible. To sign up to our monthly email bulletin please visit our website.

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Membership

Membership of Leeds Bereavement Forum is free. To download an application form please visit our website or contact the office. A full list of members is available on our website.



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