



LEEDS
BEREAVEMENT
FORUM

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

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

Please contact us to find out more about bereavement support available. The Forum is funded by West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board.

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.

“So much information in @LeedsBForum latest newsletter, thank you.”



“The work you have all done has been amazing. And it definitely makes such a difference to bereaved families. Every. Single. Day!”

Our Training

We have continued to deliver our in-person and online training sessions around bereavement and loss this year.

New networks

Two-year funding from Harnessing the Power of Communities, allowed us to develop new training to support older people's organisations across Leeds to create their own peer bereavement support groups. This funding ended in September 2022.

Feedback from this project encouraged us to create the new **Leeds Peer Bereavement Support Group Co-ordinators' Network**. Meeting regularly to support staff and volunteers who run bereavement groups, attendees have found the network very useful as the following feedback shows:

"Thanks, great to meet you all, lots of amazing work and I've learnt loads. Thanks for including me in your group meetings, I'm finding them helpful both from a learning and establishing connections perspective."

"Thank you for this, interesting to read the minutes and the resource links are extremely useful"



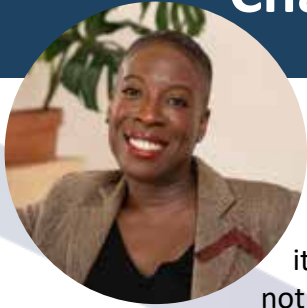
Our training

Our Basic Bereavement Skills training for Leeds City Council also continued throughout the year, with in person sessions now taking at Merrion House rather than the previous venue of Enterprise House. This training is available free to Leeds City Council staff and voluntary and community organisations across the city and can be booked through their training administration team.

Get in touch

In July 2023, we were successful in applying for Awards for All funding, to develop bereavement training for organisations and groups in Leeds who support men's health and wellbeing. If your organisation might be interested in accessing this training please get in touch.

Chair's Report



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.

Our successes

We have had another very positive year: our training goes from strength to strength. We continue to develop key partnerships across the city including the Dying Matters Leeds Partnership where for the fifth year, LBF has administered and facilitated the successful Dying Matters Community Grant programme. Our networks continue to grow, linking together bereavement workers across the city to share best practice and develop ideas. The quality of our database of local bereavement support is probably the best in the UK. Our 2022 conference was very successful and we had our largest audience, 100 attendees, we have ever had.

Our future

LBF has been dedicated to the signposting of bereavement care, education and training in the field of grief and bereavement support in Leeds since 1996. As our Treasurer Joanne explains overleaf, 2023-2024 has been the hardest year ever to secure sufficient funding. Over the last few years, staff and trustees have been very successful in finding one-off pots of unrestricted funds to pay for basic overheads such as salaries and rent but this is not a sustainable way to run an organisation in the long term.

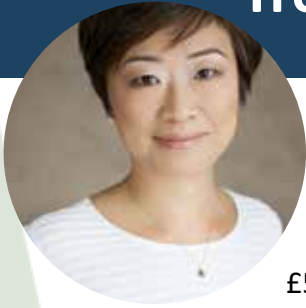
“Thank you, this (information) is amazing.”

Thank you

We want to pay a huge tribute to Jane, Barbara and Kathy who have worked 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 Leeds Bereavement Forum.

Xina Gooding-Broderick | Chair

Treasurer's Report



Leeds Bereavement Forum's financial position remained sound during the financial year ended in March 2023.

Our total receipts £88,572 and expenditure £59,067, which came to a net receipt of £29,505.

This however included a transfer of £31,836 of cash and reserve from the old unincorporated to the new incorporated structure. Therefore, the real impact on the full financial year should be a net payment of £2,331.

We are operating in an increasingly difficult funding situation. Our main funder, the NHS, has reduced our contract length from two years to six months. Furthermore, our income this year was to be invoiced quarterly, instead of the usual yearly pattern. In addition, the amount of funding we received has so far fallen short of the rising running cost due to inflation, and there is little indication from our main funder that this would be adjusted. At the moment of writing, we are just over four months away the end of our last contract and there is no indication either whether any future funding would be awarded.

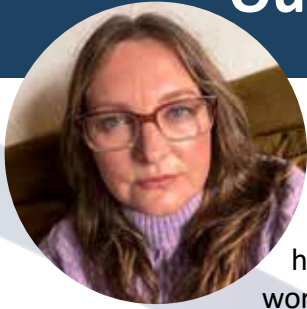
All of the above impairs the visibility and stability of our financial position and planning. This is a situation we have never experienced before since the founding of the charity in 1996.

The charity still maintains a healthy reserve which would cover our estimated running cost of around three months.

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 on our website and by request from the office.

Joanne Dyson | Treasurer

“Thank you so much for all your incredible insight and for talking to us. It was so useful and has led to many other brilliant conversations.”



From 1 April 2022 Leeds Bereavement Forum has been working under

our new charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) charity number, in place of our previous unincorporated charity status. Unfortunately, no additional funding was available this year from the NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (known as NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board from 1 July 2022) so we are now working at 1.2 FTE staff levels, a reduction on the previous two years when we had capacity of 1.4 FTE staff.

Signposting

We continue to signpost individuals and organisations to the most appropriate bereavement service either locally or nationally. We produced new leaflets and signposting cards thanks to funding from 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' fund, which were distributed widely across Leeds. Probably, due to this, we experienced our highest quarterly enquiry figure ever during Q4 of this year – 92 enquiries.

As we found last year, the queries we now receive are distinctly more complicated and time consuming than pre-pandemic; each referral can often involve several phone calls and emails.

Training

Training has been quieter this year than previously, we believe that voluntary organisations probably have less money available in their budgets to pay for additional staff and volunteer training. Our two-year funding from Harnessing the Power of Communities, where we developed new training to support older people's organisations across Leeds to create their own peer bereavement support groups ended in September 2022.

We continue to run our newly created Leeds Peer Bereavement Support Group Co-ordinators' Network meetings across the year to support staff and volunteers who run regular bereavement groups. Our Basic Bereavement Skills training for Leeds City Council has continued throughout the year, which is available free to Leeds City Council staff, voluntary and community organisations across the city.

Encouraging conversations

Death Cafés are an international movement dedicated to encouraging discussion about death and dying in a relaxed environment. We held nine Death Cafes in total this year, both online and in partnership with Leeds City Libraries reaching over 50 people.

We were very pleased to hold our annual conference again this year in May, for the first time since 2019, at Thackray Museum, focussing on the recent report of the Lancet Commission on: *The Value of Death: bringing death back into life*. Our conference partner this year was Full Circle Funerals. The conference was very successful and we had our largest audience, 100 attendees, we have ever had.

Our AGM this year took place online during National Grief Awareness Week, which ran from 2-8 December. Following our AGM business, Ellie Harrison from The Grief Series joined us to watch and discuss her film *These Four Walls : Grief in the pandemic*. Our AGM was well attended and received very positive feedback

Partnerships

We remain a key partner in the Dying Matters Leeds Partnership, facilitated by Leeds City Council. We continue to administrate the Dying Matters Leeds Grant Funding.

Our Citywide Bereavement Services Forum has gone from strength to strength in the last year. This networking group, chaired by LBF was established in 2015 and is made up of third sector and statutory bereavement organisations across Leeds who provide support to adults, children and young people. This year we met three times to share good practice; work in partnership and identify any gaps in bereavement provision across the city.

Supporting bereaved people has become even more important during this year and building on our partnership working with other third sector Leeds-based bereavement organisation; NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board; Leeds City Council; Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust and all our partners across Leeds has become more valuable than ever.

Jane Robinson | Manager

Trustees

Xina Gooding Broderick | Chair • Joanne Dyson | Treasurer •
Emma Pickering | Secretary • Simon Moran • Nadine Owens •
Hillary Wadsworth

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.

Leeds Bereavement Forum
18a New Market Street
Leeds LS1 6DG

Website | www.lbforum.org.uk

Email | info@lbforum.org.uk

Telephone | 0113 225 3975

X | @LeedsBForum

Facebook | www.facebook.com/LeedsBereavementForum

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.



**LEEDS
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