



Conversation Café at New
Wortley Community Association

ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS

Year 2 update report, January 2024

Leeds
Community
Foundation



Leeds Community Foundation is delighted to work with Synergi – Leeds on the Addressing Mental Health Inequalities in Minority Ethnic Groups Grants Programme.

Established in 2021, this Grants Programme funds 12 Community Organisations to support local people from minority ethnic groups with their mental health. The grants enable organisations to build capacity, reduce stigma, increase trust and provide help with accessing early intervention for mental health issues.

The Programme sits within a broader mental health strategy for Leeds. One of the aims of the strategy is to reduce inequalities in accessing mental health support experienced by minority ethnic communities. Through the strategy, the Programme is linked with a range of partners, including Programme funders NHS Leeds ICB and hosts Leeds City Council Public Health.

This report is an update on the second year of the work; it provides a summary and some examples of project activities, alongside outcomes and learning from 11* of the Community Organisations that are undertaking this important work.

All 12 Community Organisations have received top-up funding for a third year – their final outcomes will be reported in 2024.

*The 12th organisation received a one-year grant in the first year and then top-up funding for the third year. Their outcomes after the first year were included in the previous update report.



KEY INVESTMENT FIGURES

£300,251

Grants investment over three years

12

Number of grant holder Community Organisations

£14,670-£30,000

Range of grant size

SUMMARY OF FUNDED ACTIVITY

Organisation	Activity Summary	Activity Area	Amount Awarded
Black Health Initiative	In the first year the project used music and social media as a tool to support good emotional / mental health and wellbeing, collaborating with community influencers to address stigma and cultural barriers. It also provided one-to-one talking therapy. (No delivery in Year 2.)	Leeds Inner North East	£14,670
Calm and Centred CIC	'Coping With Bereavement' addresses issues associated with bereavement in a culturally sensitive way, through counselling and support, healing therapies and a Care Café offering peer support.	Chapel Allerton, Chapeltown	£29,974
Chapelton Youth Development Centre	The project outcomes are to improve mental health and wellbeing, increase organisational capacity, and support young people and their families. The project employs a mental health worker to deliver one-to-one and group sessions.	Chapelton	£30,000
Complete Woman CIC	The project aims to break down barriers, challenge stigma, and improve levels of education and awareness of mental health. It takes a family-centred approach and includes education sessions, individual support and signposting to resources.	Burmantofts	£29,628

SUMMARY OF FUNDED ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

Organisation	Activity Summary	Activity Area	Amount Awarded
Flourished Minds Ltd	The project supports local young people to have healthy, positive minds, to improve their social and emotional wellbeing and live fulfilled lives. It provides one-to-one life coaching to young people and parents / carers.	Meanwood	£23,615
GIPSIL	A weekly 'Eats & Beats' group for young people aged 16–25, predominantly of Caribbean and mixed White / Caribbean heritage. Combines music production and vocal performance with mental health support and signposting.	Harehills & Gipton	£28,185
Give A Gift	The project improves access to existing mental health support services through reducing stigma and increasing trust. It delivers social and wellbeing group sessions, a Muslim women's support group and individual support.	Harehills	£24,060
HOPE Bereavement Support CIC	The project enables HOPE to continue providing and expanding support groups focusing on bereavement, mental health awareness and perinatal health of expecting mothers who have experienced child loss, and men's mental health.	LS7, LS8, LS9	£30,000

SUMMARY OF FUNDED ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

Organisation	Activity Summary	Activity Area	Amount Awarded
IMPACT North	IMPACT North provide specialist therapeutic mental health support, training and consultation to staff at the Hamara Healthy Living Centre. This enables staff to reduce barriers to accessing mental health support for families they work with.	Beeston & Holbeck	£23,615
Leeds Mindfulness Cooperative CIC	The project works with partner organisations embedded in local communities to deliver accessible mindfulness training courses to adults and young people from minority ethnic communities to support their mental health.	LS7	£12,689
New Wortley Community Association	The project has developed a community Cultural Café with a focus on health and wellbeing. It offers people from local minority ethnic communities a safe space, volunteering opportunities, access to peer support and contact with other services.	New Wortley & Armley	£23,937
The Geraldine Connor Foundation	Jam Around the Table creates a space for young people to seek support for their mental health concerns using cultural and creative activity; to break down stigma and to build relationships. It equips staff, facilitators and artists to work in a more "psychologically informed" way.	LS11	£29,878

PROGRESS AND LEARNING



PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN YEAR 2

1,225

People directly supported

783

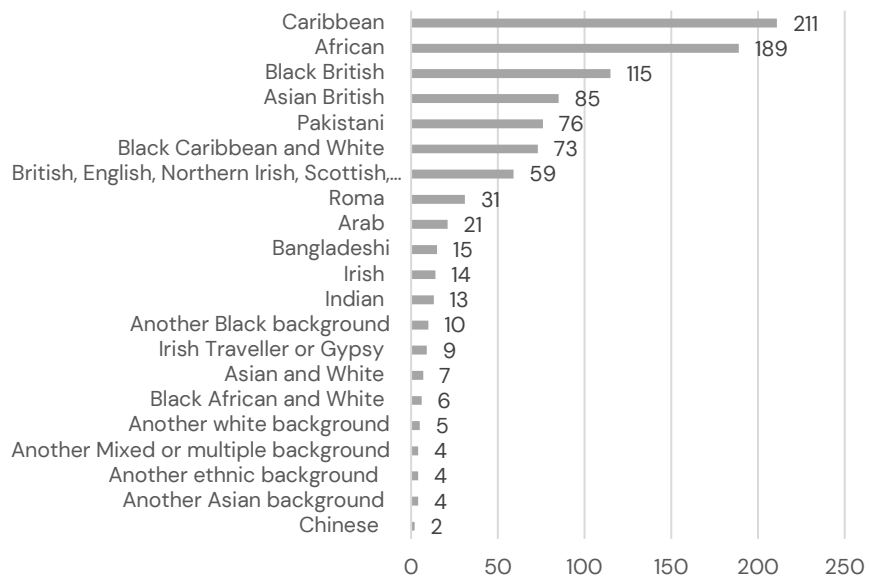
People from Minority Ethnic groups supported with their mental health

2,677

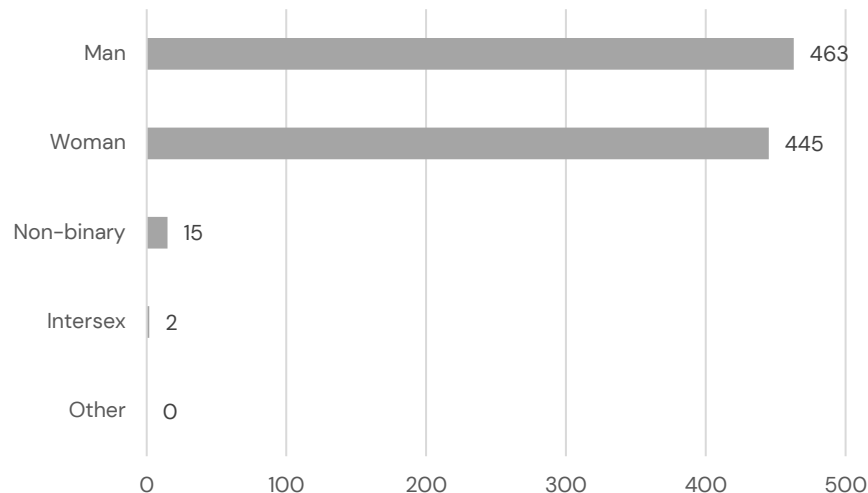
Number of people engaged

PEOPLE DIRECTLY SUPPORTED, BY ETHNICITY AND GENDER

The ethnic breakdown of the number of people directly supported (using Year 1 categories and based on data from 9 projects, 953 people)



The gender breakdown of the number of people directly supported (using Year 1 categories and based on data from 8 projects, 925 people)



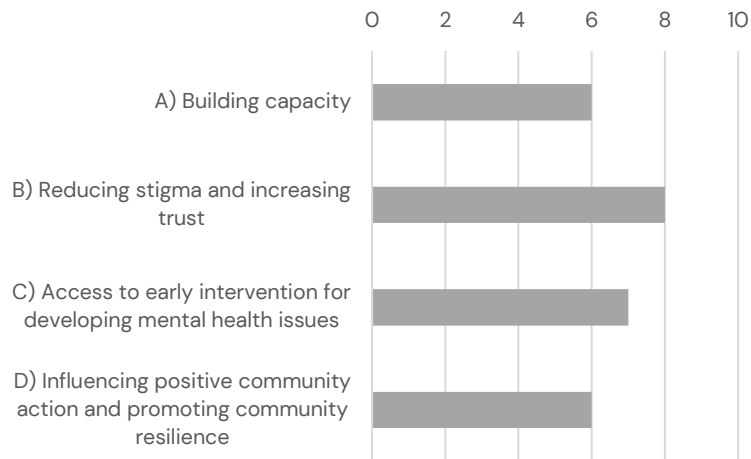
“The project lead and staff have built direct relationships and support with 40 volunteers through the service offering food support, mental and emotional support, communication support, financial support and some families staff have attended school meeting to ensure that communication channels are open and take place within the school setting with families.

The friendships that have taken place are priceless and the laughs staff and community witness every Friday is truly humbling and endearing.”

New Wortley Community Association

ACTIVITIES

The majority of the 11 projects in the sample said they addressed more than one main area of activity – most often reducing stigma and increasing trust.



OVERALL LEARNING IN YEAR 2

Learning for organisations

- › Community Organisations have continued to reflect and adapt their approach according to what worked well and less well in the first year, whilst responding to the evolving needs of the people they worked with.
- › The legacy of the pandemic on mental health is still palpable, most clearly among young people, alongside the influence of the increasing cost of living.
- › It is clear from reports that there is a continued and increasing demand for the services offered. Some organisations reflected that increasing awareness of mental health needs and positive service user experience meant further demand with capacity and resources implications.
- › Sustaining groups and individual support requires a considerable amount of resources which is made harder for organisations by cost of living and recruitment issues.
- › Support for staff working with people in communities is both needed and valued because of the toll that working with people with often complex needs can take and because this enables staff to more effectively support the mental wellbeing of those they work with.
- › The importance of being able to continue working with people after a set number of sessions, particularly on a one-to-one basis, has been voiced directly as an important issue in one of the projects. As the programme approaches its final year, building up capacity to support people in the longer term may increasingly become the focus of grant holder organisations.

OVERALL LEARNING IN YEAR 2 (CONTINUED)

Learning about project participants

- > Several grant holding organisations find that many of the people they work with need support with a variety of issues, often complex ones, beyond their mental wellbeing.
- > Being able to respond with effective signposting and referrals is key, as is the ability to help people with everyday needs.
- > Organisations also find that some of their project participants need more intensive support through individual support worker time.
- > Some grant holders reported that people were more open to accessing other mental health services following their awareness raising and trust building work. At the same time, some reluctance was also noted when this would mean people leaving a familiar and friendly setting that grant holders provided.
- > Being able to, or intending to, offer language support is noted by some organisations as important in enabling people to engage with mental wellbeing activities and removing some of the other stressors from their lives.
- > At programme level, men and women were supported in similar proportions but this varied between projects. A couple of projects noted managing to or needing to attract more men to participate. A few organisations also reported issues specific to women (such as ability to find time to participate, or experience of domestic violence).

LEARNING BY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Calm and Centred CIC

- > The project continues to demonstrate clear demand for a culturally sensitive bereavement service. Service user feedback affirms that the service is helping with low moods and anxiety, helps to reduce stress, panic attacks, anger and sleep deprivation.
- > An area of further development planned by the team is to expand their current offer delivering more peer support groups focusing on specific issues such as child loss, sibling loss and partner loss.
- > In recognition of its work, the Organisation won the Leeds City Council Compassionate City Commendation Award in December 2022. It also raised £49,000 in additional funding from the NHS per year in Year 1 and 2 of the project.

Chapelton Youth Development Centre

- > There is a high level of mental health need among young people in the community CYDC works with; awareness raising and reducing stigma “has opened the floodgates” – which is positive but also creates much demand.
- > Communities were open to the messages shared by CYDC because they were embedded in the trust and cultural understanding built up over years.
- > The second year of the work focused on young people who were involved in gangs, criminality and anti-social behaviour and meant working in schools, via community projects and referrals through a multi-agency initiative. The team reflected that more outreach delivery would have been preferable in young people’s own home.

“Worked with a young boy that was part of gang he witnesses his friend get murdered from a knife attack. He also been attacked himself by a knife leaving him in hospital. He wanted to leave his gang but couldn't and he was a heavy cannabis smoker. He didn't also like working with services as he thought they was police.

With our Every Mind Matters Mental Health Worker and our other services we built a relationship up with him and then supported him in getting him into boxing to help him deal with his anger and build his confidence. Helped him with his gang relationships, keeping him away from the streets. We got him a job in food shop. Supported him with applying for cscs card and driving license”

Chapeltown Youth Development Centre

LEARNING BY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Flourished Minds Ltd

- › Flourished Minds commissioned an independent evaluation of their first year's work with 10 young people, which identified several benefits for students at risk of becoming disengaged from school, such as increased confidence and self-esteem, better self-regulation, improved relationships, better concentration, greater engagement at, and enjoyment of, school.
- › Limitations and issues identified for the future focused on the time-limited nature of the coaching engagement (6-10 weeks) with young people. A positive outcome from these concerns was the school offering training and support to its own staff in gaining coaching skills.
- › In the third year, Flourished Minds will use the 'Child, Teacher, Parent' model they developed in the past two years to include other significant people in supporting each student and to generally help build a wellbeing approach at school.

GIPSIL

- › The project confirmed the role of music as a mental health coping strategy for young people. Finding a credible alternative to gang culture has been particularly important for young gang affiliated members.
- › The project opened up more activities and opportunities to participants on top of the core music making offer in the second year. The organisation also notes that some young people do need extra help – they engaged a wellbeing worker to attend group sessions and referred 10 young people to other mental wellbeing services.
- › The increasing number of asylum seekers in GIPSIL's catchment area meant more young people coming on board with mental health issues such as anxiety and PTSD.

LEARNING BY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

HOPE Bereavement Support CIC

- > HOPE was not able to sustain running support groups in the second year due to staffing issues. HOPE focused on delivering two events instead: Light of Remembrance, a public event in Leeds city centre in April 2022 and an online conference with UK and international speakers entitled 'The Unspoken Topics' in October 2022.
- > The Light of Remembrance event was both an opportunity to raise awareness of mental health needs by mixed heritage speakers and for members of minority ethnic communities, particularly those most impacted by COVID-19, to openly grieve for their loved ones lost in the pandemic.
- > The online conference showed that there is continued need to bring professionals together from different places to share best practice and ideas to improve mental health outcomes for minority ethnic communities.

IMPACT North

- > Group support sessions for staff in the supported partner organisation have been challenging to fill; these are no longer scheduled. However, there has been good take-up of (and now a waiting list for) one-to-one therapeutic staff support sessions. Group supervision sessions are also well used by Hamara Centre staff.
- > Centre staff continue to deal with complex issues and a range of needs that people they work with bring to the Centre. The support provided to staff to help respond and to look after their own wellbeing is important and necessary.
- > Staff retention and recruitment challenges, reflected elsewhere in the sector, can affect ongoing therapeutic work with staff members. This was mitigated by offering standalone training and consultation opportunities to them.

LEARNING BY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

New Wortley Community Association

- › Some of the volunteers participating in the project felt stressed by the cost of living, childcare issues and various other problems and were not able to attend regularly – this also led to a turnover of volunteers. Those who were able to attend on a regular basis built and shared skills and formed friendships.
- › Language support has been key for volunteers: the Cultural Café was extended by a weekly volunteer led Conversation Café and by ESOL classes that the Centre’s family support workers can refer participants to.
- › Connections with other services that can support with other issues such as mental health, employment and skills, immigration and welfare have proved crucial in successfully supporting participants.

The Geraldine Connor Foundation

- › Creative self-expression in a safe space has been much needed among young people to increase confidence and self-esteem, boost wellbeing, break down stigma and be able to seek help. Playfulness and fun also helped reduce stress.
- › As a result of reflection and self-evaluation after Year 1, the team decided to work with young people less intensely but over a longer period in the school holidays. The organisation supported 25 young people in the second year.
- › A productive partnership with Music House, the hosting organisation, and close teamwork and joint skills development with the creative facilitators have helped to create a deep, shared understanding of the young people they supported.

LEARNING BY INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Give A Gift

- > Bringing women together in an informal, welcoming space from different ethnic, cultural and faith backgrounds enabled mutual learning and peer support and led to outcomes such as improved confidence, becoming more socially outgoing, better overall health and wellbeing and openness to seeking support elsewhere.
- > Sessions based on participants' suggestions worked particularly well e.g. on period poverty, a subject previously perceived as taboo.
- > Some of the issues faced by women were complex and some of the participants needed intensive individual support from a case worker: signposting or referrals sometimes worked, but some remained reluctant.
- > A new drop-in clinic with a local Imam helped to further break down stigma attached to mental health.

CASE STUDIES

COMPLETE WOMAN CIC

Complete Woman CIC was awarded a grant of £29,628 over 3 years to break down barriers, challenge stigma and improve education levels on mental health among the families it works with.

Over the first two years of the project they worked with 78 participants, mainly from minority ethnic backgrounds, providing monthly group sessions and individual support. In the first year, the sessions were more educational and informative, in the second year, more practical, including stress reduction techniques, improving life skills such as budgeting, and signposting to further support services (e.g. counselling and domestic abuse support).

The organisation learnt about the many and varied challenges that their participants, particularly women, can face and the importance of being able to refer people on for further help, often in the face of long waiting lists and cultural or language barriers. Other issues they often come across are people with PTSD and other medical issues that had not been addressed before.

Complete Woman report a “tremendous mindset shift” among participants in their awareness raising work, away from mental ill health being seen as a sign of weakness, or the influence of demons, towards greater receptiveness to medical and other help.

They secured £15,000 in additional funding from Sport England for weekly yoga and mindfulness classes to help reduce stress, anxiety and depression.

“A 43 year old mother of 4 reported, “Thank you Complete Woman, this programme has been truly my saving grace while dealing with my recent health diagnosis. I came from being anxious and learnt to better engage with my healthcare providers after learning relaxation techniques”.

“I enjoyed ‘the stress container exercise’ because it helped participants understand how they can take charge of their own well-being, avoiding overwhelm and eventually breakdown”.

"A is a 15 year old girl, born in Zimbabwe and migrated to UK with her mother and younger sister, 3 years ago. When A's mother first came to one of events, her main concern was her withdrawn and somewhat depressed daughter. A was happy to chat with our support worker after attending one of the young people sessions where she revealed that she had been contemplating suicide.

The support worker discovered that A was being bullied at school for having an African accent, a foreign name and not being so familiar with the British culture as a new migrant. Our support worker advised the mother to speak to the school for support. She reported back to us that the school will address issues of discrimination and support A through counselling.

A is a bright and creative pupil who actively participates in our Healthy Holiday funded projects, creating some of the most amazing art pieces. She is friendly and supports the younger pupils too so we do hope that she will be able to confidently express herself and fully heal from the mental health issues resulting from the bullying.

"As a single parent, I probably became consumed with work and the need to provide material stuff and neglected the emotional needs of your children. Thank you Complete Woman and your funder LCF for the opportunity to openly talk about real mental health issues, before I had lost my only daughter", said A's mum. "

Complete Woman

LEEDS MINDFULNESS COOPERATIVE CIC

Leeds Mindfulness Cooperative CIC was awarded a grant of £12,689 over three years to deliver accessible mindfulness training courses to adults and young people from minority ethnic communities and to people working with them. They have several partner organisations in Leeds, including Shantona, Hamara, New Wortley Community Association and Feel Good Factor.

Over the first two years they have worked with 120 participants, 89 from minority ethnic backgrounds, delivering taster sessions and courses in formats tailored to the groups, and a course for Third Sector staff. (See testimonials from a mix of participants on the next slide.)

The organisation noted that people supported by them had been greatly affected by social stressors, including racism, refugee trauma, gender roles, domestic violence and economic stress. Mutual support among course participants was a strength. Language was a barrier for some women participants. In response, some of the follow-up funding was allocated for language support.

Some participants, particularly among women from South Asian communities, found it difficult to protect their time for participation amidst family commitments – this was accommodated by running an open group, shorter sessions and sharing YouTube videos captioned in community languages.

“This has been a very far reaching experience for me personally and professionally it has given me a range of tools and models of thinking that will help me to connect with and develop provision for others but more importantly it has developed my own mindset and self perspective.”

“I had struggled with burnout at work this course has greatly helped me to modulate my stress levels it has decreased my anxiety and depression.”

Feedback from the Third Sector staff course, Leeds Mindfulness Cooperative

TESTIMONIALS BY MINDFULNESS COURSE PARTICIPANTS



[Watch Gulshan's testimonial](#)



[Watch Maryam's testimonial](#)



[Watch Mercy's testimonial](#)



[Watch Zubeda's testimonial](#)

Leeds Community Foundation
51a St Pauls Street
Leeds
LS1 2TE

0113 242 2426
info@leedscf.org.uk
@LeedsCommFound



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

Registered Charity Number: 1096892