

Bullring Wellbeing Hub Annual Impact Report 2023 - 2024



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Community Partners

The Bullring Wellbeing Hub is open to anyone, whether they have a mental health diagnosis or not. No appointments are needed, and people can remain anonymous if they wish. Our public presence at the Bullring, enables us to provide such an accessible service. There are friendly and welcoming staff that provide a listening ear alongside signposting. We also tackle the loneliness and struggles of wellbeing through the creative arts. We work alongside our co-production partners to provide employment, housing and addiction support and information.

Meet the Team

- **Fatema Hickson**
Bullring Wellbeing Hub Team Leader
- **Sandy Thompson & Jack Bodington**
Wellbeing Hub Navigators

“Knowing the wide reaching scope we provide is the added bonus for me.”

Sandy



“It’s great to be able to support a plethora of people with different needs – no two days are the same and that makes the hub a great place to work.”

Jack

“I have relished working for a brand new service in the heart of the city. It is a unique service and a challenge not seen by Birmingham Mind before.”

Fatema



Rachel McNair

Communication & Marketing Lead

From The Very Beginning

Twelve months after the first covid lockdown, at the point where we were all trying to navigate our return back to the office, Abigail Redmond, the Environmental and Community Coordinator at the Bullring, reached out to me at Birmingham Mind.

From our first initial contact in March 2021, we recognised quite quickly that the staff and support teams working onsite at the Bullring were in need of some external wellbeing support. The Bullring and Grand Central site, had become a known destination, especially amongst the homeless community, as a safe place for people to take their own lives and over the course of six months, their security and staff team had been called to six attempts on life.

Whilst the Bullring & Grand Central team worked hard to implement suicide prevention measures, we looked at how Birmingham Mind staff could assist and support the staff on site. With Abigail's support, we devised the concept of **Wellbeing Wednesdays**, a monthly, friendly, fun and informal drop in meeting hosted by Fatema and Owen from the Birmingham Mind, Community Development Team, offering a safe and quiet space for staff to come together, support each other and talk openly about their wellbeing and any concerns.



As the relationship developed between Bullring and Birmingham Mind staff, we looked at how we could extend our support to the shoppers and public passing through the centre every day.

In May 2022, as part of Mental Health Awareness Week, we launched our “No Bull” campaign, hiding the infamous Bullring Bull in a box for a week. As part of this campaign, we hosted a pop-up Wellbeing Space on the top floor of the centre, in an empty unit gifted to us by the Bullring team – and in that one week we saw over 300 people.



For a long time, it had been our aim, to provide a mental health and wellbeing service in the city centre. Having looked at a couple of options, it has only been with the support of the Bullring & Grand Central team that we have finally been able to do this.

At our Wellbeing Hub, we prioritise creating a welcoming and safe environment for all. Unlike other services, attendees do not need to book an appointment, they don't need to have a mental health diagnosis, or even give their name.

This level of accessibility ensures that everyone can seek support without barriers. Our commitment to inclusivity sets us apart as a leader in wellbeing and none of this would have been possible without the strength of the partnership between Bullring & Grand Central and Birmingham Mind and I for one are very grateful for that.



Fiona Coakley
Operations Manager
Community Services



Our Birmingham Mind Wellbeing Hub has been at the Bullring Shopping Centre for one whole year! Time has flown by, and in the past 12 months we have established a safe, welcoming space for members of the public to drop in for information. We also use our creativity to deliver sessions, events and regular groups, for example a men's peer support group that meets weekly.

“Time has flown by”

We continue to welcome visitors, organisations and partners to our unique Hub in the heart of Birmingham, which deserves a massive thanks to Bullring & Grand Central for the amazing commitment in supporting our work. Our partnership grows from strength to strength.

The Birmingham Mind Wellbeing Hub provides a safe, secure environment to anyone aged 18+ living in Birmingham or Solihull seeking mental health advice, support and signposting. The Hub is able to offer signposting, a listening ear and sessions that support better wellbeing.

Based on Link Street between Bullring and Grand Central, we opened in June 2023 and have delivered 1-1 support for 608 people. So far we have engaged with 632 people in group sessions and events.

Latest update: With thanks to support from the Inclusive Communities Fund which has funded the service since March 2024, we have been able to employ two additional dedicated wellbeing hub navigators and continue to seek our further opportunities to fund and invest in the Hub.

Funding Secured!

We have been successful with our application to the **Inclusive Communities Fund - A legacy of the Commonwealth Games**



Fatema Hickson

Bullring Wellbeing Hub, Team Leader

I was seconded for the position of Team Leader after six years as a Community Development Worker and five years as a support worker with Birmingham Mind. I am a people person, a great listener and well equipped to provide an excellent signposting service with a good knowledge of Birmingham and it's support services.

I visited the hub soon after I was appointed, an empty, bright pink space in a prime spot between two of the busiest spaces in the city centre, Bullring and Grand Central.

“It has been an opportunity to learn new skills”

With support from the Bullring, we were able to cover the glass frontage with our branding complete with QR code and helpline telephone numbers. An impressive visual presentation, stating “we are here!”

The next few days were a blur, shopping for furniture and essentials that would allow us to open to the public. Which was managed in record time. From guiding lost delivery van drivers, building flat pack furniture, shopping for comfy sofas and creating a warm, welcoming space.

For me, it has been an opportunity to learn new skills and to rediscover old skills, less often used, to provide a unique and special new service to the city.

I wanted to be able to capture as much information as possible as we were originally only there for three months as a pop up.

We worked to capture essential information without being too formal or clinical in a space we wanted to be warm and welcoming. The informal nature of the service is something we are proud to offer. We want people to engage with us, if that means giving a name or no name, that's fine. It is the conversation that matters.





Julie Carnell
Service Manager
Community Development Workers Team



It has been fascinating to observe the development of The Bullring Wellbeing Hub since its conception in 2023. From the beginning, we were supported by both The Bullring management and staff, and our colleagues from different teams within Birmingham Mind. I am hugely grateful for all the support and good will that enabled us to open the door to better mental health and wellbeing to whomever passed by and needed help.

As a Community Development Team, we committed ourselves to being on site every Wednesday, it is clear that there is a huge need for wellbeing support for the diverse communities that live, work and move through Birmingham City Centre. I am thrilled that this little hub is helping to de-stigmatise mental health and offers support to the general public, most of whom would never have previously had a conversation or accessed help.

“Good will enabled us to open the door”

Genuineness, empathy and unconditional positive regard are the core conditions of the person centred ethos of Birmingham Mind. I have observed these conditions in effect at The Hub alongside tenacity and sheer will to open even when the chips were down and we didn't have a dedicated staff team.

I am so proud of Birmingham Mind and all my colleagues and partners, thank you for all you have done to make this project a success. I look forward to the future developments at this amazing space and its wonderful staff.



Community Connections

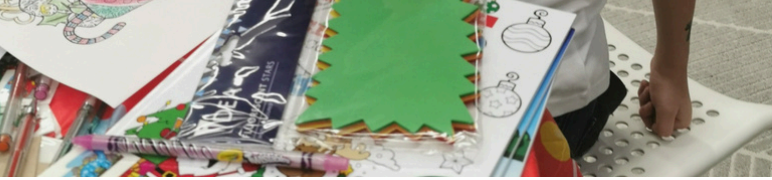


It was always a priority that the Bullring Wellbeing Hub would be a space for working with other organisations. It's central location and visibility makes it a perfect location for different charities to work together and get attention from a different crowd.

“Our work with partners has given us the opportunity to make friends and support each other with out projects. Our work with Sampad is an ongoing art therapy projects that will be at Bedlam.”

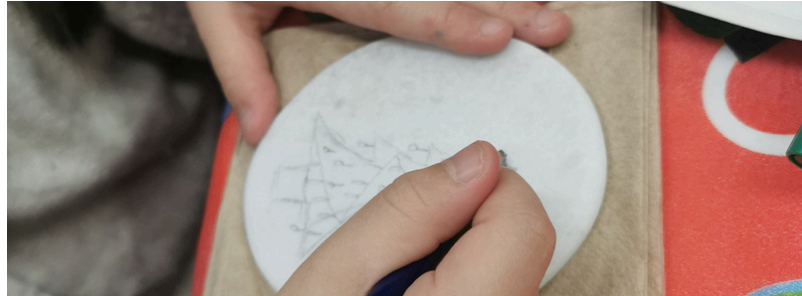
The different partners have all brought something different to the Bullring Wellbeing Hub. For example, the Shaw Trust came to speak to the mens group that meets on a regular basis. This gave hope and opportunity to men who were struggling to find work. Anawim supported us with our Womens day event. This was a one off Saturday which we worked in partnership with lots of organisations to promote signposting and bring some joy to the women in Birmingham.





“Lovely smile as I walked through the door, lowered my stress levels as soon as i walked in”

“Referred someone who was in crisis, joined up and responsive service. It really is all about the person.”



“It was lovely speaking to Fatema, she made us feel very comfortable and welcome”

“100% would recommend, really helped me :)”



Case Study 1 - Tamir's* Story

Men's Health & Wellbeing Peer Support Group

The Men's Peer Group offers a peer led support group for men, this group is growing and it is clear that there is a need for this type of information setting for men to meet up, have a coffee and feel comfortable to talk about how they feel. Tamir is a man who walked in a few weeks ago, and since then has attended regularly.

The Beginning:

When Tamir joined our group, he had been off work for over 6 months with anxiety and depression, he felt unwell because of work related stress. Tamir felt unmotivated, unable to sleep properly and was experiencing "crushing anxiety". After a few weeks, Tamir started to open up to the group, he talked about his family and how he felt about his job. Tamir also talked about a bereavement that had caused huge heartbreak to him, his wife and extended family.

The Challenges:

Tamir was able to think about the barriers he felt prevented him from moving forward, he spoke of the following issues to his friends in the group.

- **Mental Health Problems:** Feeling overwhelmed and stressed by his personal and work life.
- **Loss:** The heartbreak and sadness from a very recent bereavement to him, his wife and the family.
- **Worry:** Worried about returning to his demanding job, which he wasn't enjoying and caused him anxiety.
- **Confidence:** Being away from work and personal issues have lowered Tamir's confidence in himself.

The Solution:

Listening to others' stories made Tamir realise he wasn't alone and helped him feel better understood.

A safe place to share his grief about losing a child and a space to get support from others who had gone through similar losses.

He learned new ways to cope and got information from the SHAW Trust sessions and our men's toolbox talks, which helped him manage his anxiety and think about new career options.

The encouragement and shared lived experiences in the group helped Tamir feel strong enough to consider new work opportunities.

Our Impact

With his new found self-esteem and confidence, plus support from the group, Tamir decided to change his job role and now works for a Birmingham based public transport company. Tamir informs us that he feels happier and more in control of how he thinks and feels. He stated that when he walked through the door for the first time he felt very low and alone. Being able to confide in a safe space and talk to other men in a non judgmental way helped him to think.

This case study shows how important support and community are in overcoming personal challenges. The Men's Drop In sessions gave Tamir useful resources and a safe place to share his experiences.

Tamir says he feels stronger now and more confident. His journey shows how when men seek and find help and embrace new opportunities, it can lead to positive changes and recovery. When men are given a safe environment in which to talk and receive Peer Support, they benefit from the experience.



Case Study 2

UNRAVEL: Crochet & Knitting Group



UNRAVEL, is our longest running wellbeing group at the Hub. We run every Tuesday morning, and is open to everyone regardless of age, gender and ability.

Utilising the expertise of those with years of crochet and knitting experience, this group gives people the chance to learn a new skill, make friends and break isolation.

“The format is very simple, come as you are”

Using creative art is a proven way to improve wellbeing, Unravel provides a space in the city centre where people can come to improve their wellbeing.

It is an informal group, on arrival we check in to introduce new people. The format is very simple, come as you are and use the time to focus on either a knitting or crochet project, with informal guidance by peers.

We wanted people to feel comfortable or we provided some basic to get people started, when people get started they return with their own materials. There is no pressure to be making anything or to create something amazing. The group can share their work to inspire each other and teach each other.

- We provide a safe space for service users to learn a new skill
- Confidence building
- Skill sharing
- Promoting a cohesive community
- Friendly place to socialise
- Informal support network
- Peer support

“I like the social aspect of Unravel, connecting with people helps with my depression. These sessions are regular which is just what I need”

“For me, I like the relaxed atmosphere and the busyness of it. There is a buzz, we talk to one another”



The Difference We Make...

June 2023 - May 2024

1240

People attended
the Hub

We hosted

93

Groups, Sessions
and Events

608

1-1 Interventions

151

Hours

Delivered at Groups,
Sessions and Events

297

Contact Hours
For 1-1 Interventions

33

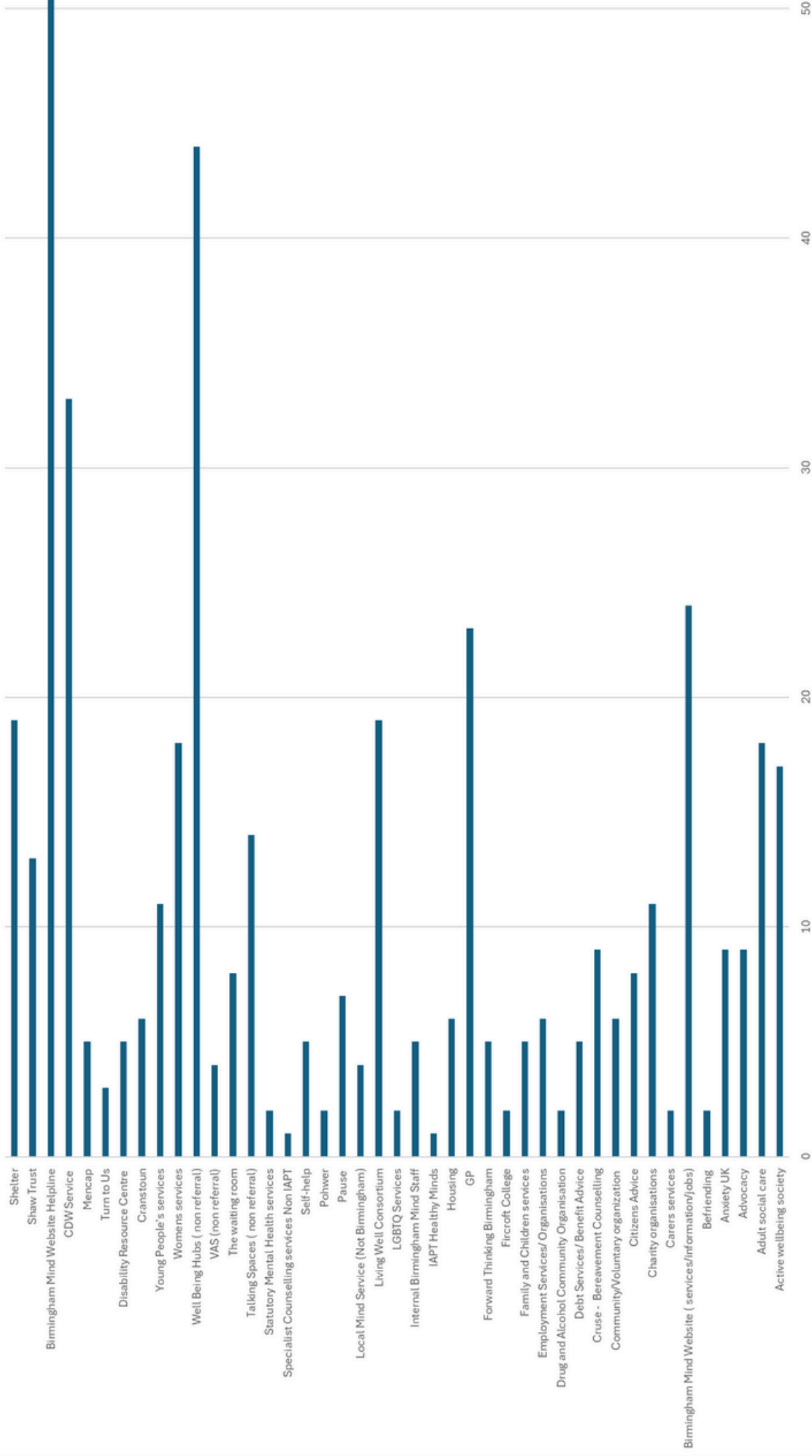
Minutes

Average length of time
for 1-1 Interventions

The Difference We Make...

June 2023 - May 2024

Signposting



Co-Production Partners

OUR ROOTS



Bethel Health & Healing Network

Living Well Consortium UK



IBIC CHANGE
I BELIEVE I CAN CHANGE



shaw trust



aquarius



IN. Society



BARCLAYS



Anawim
Birmingham's Centre for Women

 mind Birmingham

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