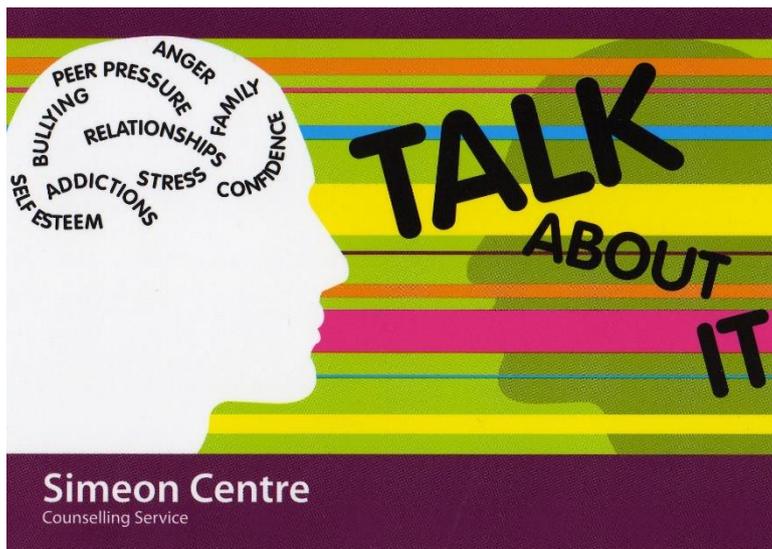


Annual Review 2020-21



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An introduction from the Chair

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about what we do and how the Centre has delivered its counselling services over the last 12 months.

It's clear that the last year has been challenging, both for individuals and for organisations, as the pandemic and lockdowns have seen a huge increase in demand for our services, at a time when we were not able to deliver them in the way that we traditionally have.

It's thanks to the tenacity and resilience of our Centre Manager, Gary, our Administrator, Jen, and the amazing volunteers that we have been able to continue supporting the people of Bolton.

Providing online and telephone counselling has been really important to lots of people and we are grateful to all who undertook the additional training necessary and have risen to the challenge.

As a voluntary organisation the Simeon Centre could not have the impact that we do without the many volunteer counsellors, greeters, administrators and management committee members who give their time. We depend on their dedication, commitment and skills in caring for those in need. On behalf of the Trustees, thank you for all you do.

The Simeon Centre remains committed to providing a quality, professional and accessible talking therapy service, free at the point of use for local people. A service we know, from direct feedback, that has significant benefits to the health and wellbeing of its service users.

We are also committed to improving training and development opportunities to qualified and student counsellors.

The Simeon Centre is a founder member of 1point North West, Bolton's Psychological Health and Wellbeing Alliance and Gary continues to have a significant input into its success. Working in partnership with the NHS and 1point has helped to put the Simeon Centre on a firm footing.

The physical, psychological and economic impacts of the pandemic are going to be felt for a long time to come and the demand for our service is growing. The Centre is well placed to continue delivering the highest standards of talking therapies and is committed to expanding and developing its service.

Peter Green
Chair

About the Simeon Centre

Since 1999 we have been proud to provide professional talking therapies, free at the point of need, to people aged 16 and above, living in and around Bolton.

Throughout the year we had **43 trained and qualified counsellors or therapists supporting our service**. This figure included 20 students at various stages along the way to a professional talking therapy qualification. Our service is highly regarded by many colleges and universities across the region for providing a quality placement experience for their students.



Just a few of our dedicated volunteers
Clockwise from top left: Peter, Kate, Christine, John, Liz and Joan

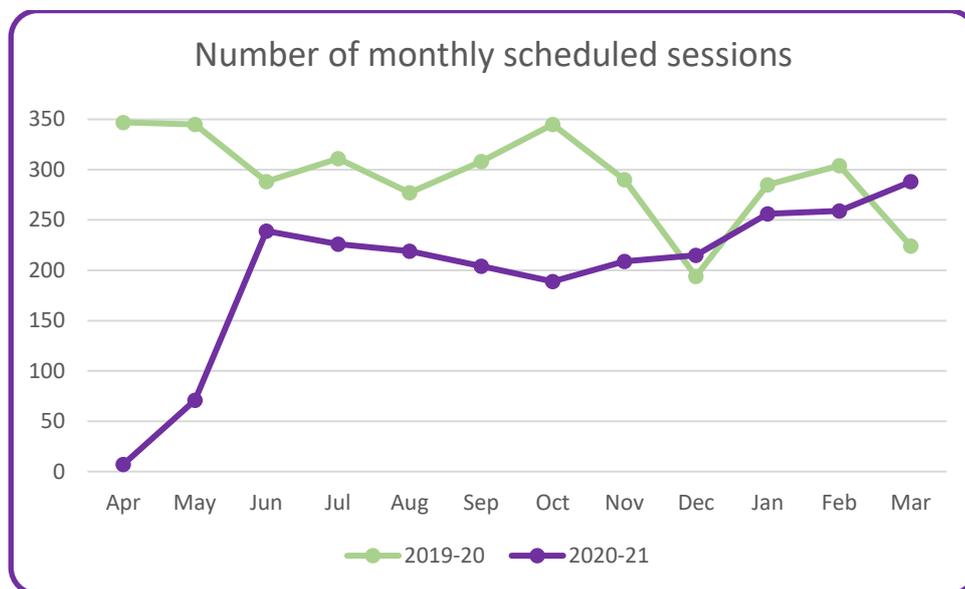
On average, each one of our volunteers gives around 3-4 hours of their time every week.

In addition to offering a chance to be heard by welcoming and non-judgemental professionals, the aims and goals of our service are to help individuals:

- restore their self-image and confidence
- plan positively for the future
- make decisions and choices in their lives
- return to work
- reduce their dependence on medication

Facts & figures

Throughout the year our service was accessed by **349 local people** and in total we scheduled **2,382 therapeutic hours**. Sadly, this represents a 32% reduction in comparison to the previous year. Due to the national lockdown, training and restructuring to introduce a ‘remote’ service, virtually no sessions took place until the final week of May.



Number of counselling sessions offered each month compared with previous year

Although only 78 sessions took place in April and May combined, the effect of the new remote service can clearly be seen from June onwards.

By the end of the year, we were getting close to achieving a similar number of appointments to those offered in 2019-20.

We do whatever we can to encourage all clients to engage weekly. However, cancelled and missed appointments are inevitable. These cannot be offered to others at short notice and are therefore wasted.

Sessions Attended	Sessions cancelled by clients	Where clients did not attend (DNA)	Total sessions scheduled
2063	211	108	2382
86.61%	8.86%	4.53%	100.0%

Interestingly, this year we experienced a huge reduction in the percentage of wasted appointments (13.39%), which is 10% fewer than last year. This can be attributed, partially, to counsellors' flexibility and willingness to re-schedule when clients cancelled or missed their appointments.

Partnership working

The Simeon Centre remains a full and active member of 1point (north west). We work closely with colleagues at 1point and the other member organisations (Beacon Bolton Counselling, Fortalice, MhIST and St Georges Counselling) to provide a professional talking therapy service with standardised procedures and shared values.



1point's usual programme of training for local therapists was suspended due to the pandemic. However, 1point sourced and funded excellent training from experienced remote therapy professionals. This was made available to all Simeon Centre volunteers who were willing to continue to offer counselling using telephones and/or webcams.

*"The service was brilliant I really do not know how I would of got through these last few months without my counselling. I feel like a new person and I could not have done it without the help of R*****"*

Simeon Centre client comment

Service user feedback

We routinely ask clients to provide feedback of their experience of our service. Thanks to the 78 people that completed an evaluation form. While some of the figures speak for themselves, we are always keen to read comments from clients and a few have been included throughout this annual review.

Of those responding to the question:
“What has changed for you as a result of your therapy?”...

- 55% are more optimistic about the future
- 55% are more able to cope with day to day living
- 47% are less anxious or worried
- 46% feel more confident
- 33% can now accept the way they are
- 17% reported other positive changes
- 9% say nothing has changed for them
- 5% are returning or have returned to work
- 5% no longer need or are less dependent on medication
- 0% say things seem to be worse for them now

Clients are asked to subjectively rate the way they felt on a scale of 0 to 10 (zero being worst) BEFORE starting therapy and again AFTER completing therapy.

The average score BEFORE therapy was 2.4 out of 10
The average score AFTER therapy was 7.3 out of 10

On average, our clients rated themselves feeling almost 5 points better upon completing therapy with us.

We also ask clients to evaluate their whole experience at the Simeon Centre with the following range of questions:

- Q1. Did staff listen to you and treat your concerns seriously?
- Q2. Have we helped you better understand and address your difficulties?
- Q3. Did you feel involved in making choices about your treatment and care?
- Q4. On reflection, did you get the help that mattered to you?
- Q5. Did you have confidence in your therapist and his/her approach to you?

%	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Never	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.0
Rarely	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
Sometimes	0.0	2.5	1.3	6.4	1.3
Mostly	0.0	15.4	6.4	2.6	1.3
Always	100.0	80.8	92.3	89.7	96.1

- Q6. Were you satisfied with the accommodation where your therapy took place?
 Q7. Were you satisfied with the administration staff supporting this service?
 Q8. Overall, how satisfied were you with the Simeon Centre's service?

%	Q6	Q7	Q8
Very Dissatisfied	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dissatisfied	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unsure	16.7	1.3	1.3
Satisfied	11.5	15.4	7.7
Very Satisfied	71.8	83.3	91.0

100% of all responders 'always' felt they were listened to and their concerns were treated seriously

98.7% of responders were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall service we provide

We receive many comments from clients on our evaluation sheets and we are unable to include them all but here are just a few we received throughout the past year:

"Fantastic caring service with a wonderful counsellor who adapted to my needs which couldn't have been easy as I brought to the table a complex situation that changed on a daily basis.

Thank you for all your support x"

"Excellent service & excellent therapist, the service was ultra professional & has helped massively"

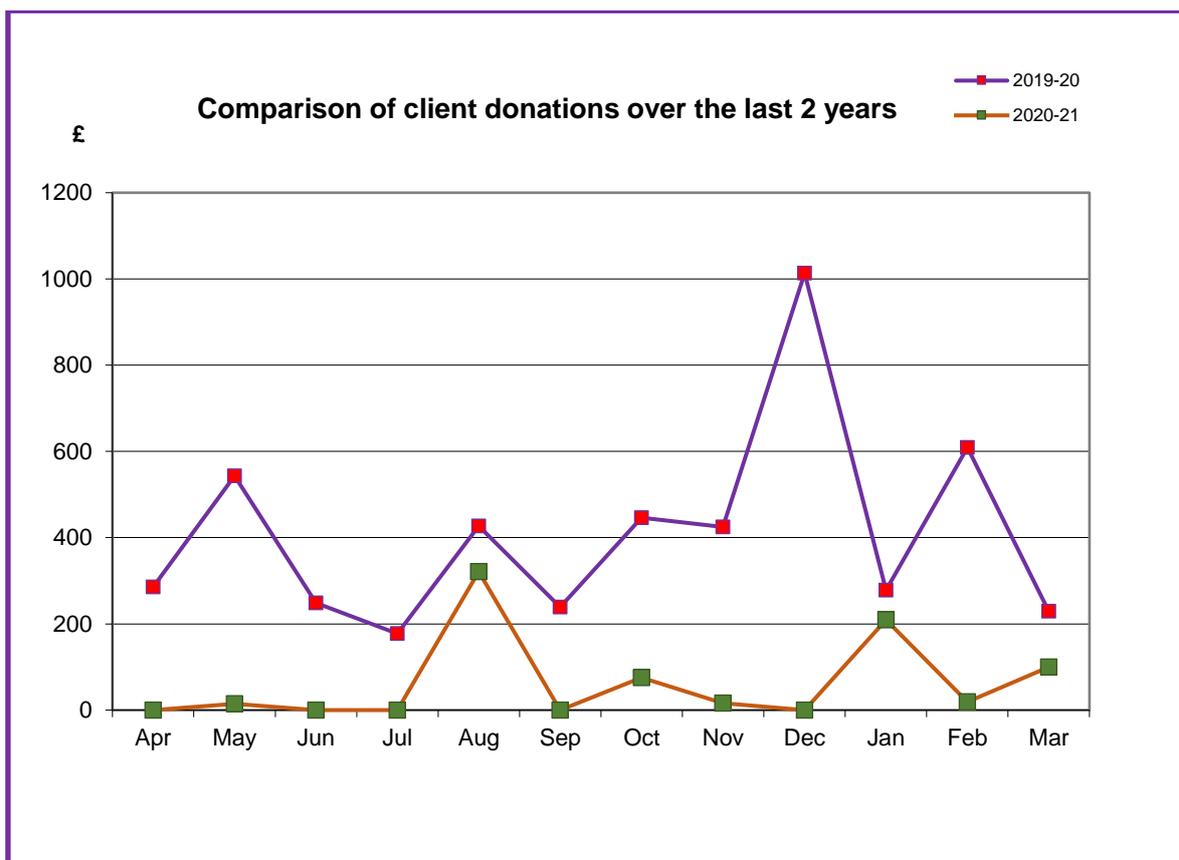
"I was dubious at first thinking that counselling wouldn't be helpful to me but I was wrong as it has made me look at things in a different way. Thank you very much for the time that was spent on me."

Finances

The creation of a brand new 'remote' counselling service brought added expenditure. Fortunately, additional financial support was provided by 1point to help us to meet these costs and bring the remote service to fruition by the end of May. This additional support allowed us to preserve our reserves and end the year in a sound position.

Full details are available in a separate document - *Trustees Annual Report and financial statements Year Ended 31 March 2021* which is available to download from our website. Hard copies are available on request.

Donations were severely impacted throughout the year. All counselling appointments were held remotely and although clients were encouraged to donate to us via our page on Virgin Giving, very few did so.



The lack of face-to-face appointments throughout the year severely affected the level of donations in comparison to the previous year.

‘Thank You’ and ‘Well done!’

To all our volunteers who continued to support us throughout this very challenging year. Without your professionalism, dedication and determination, our service to the people of Bolton would have been seriously curtailed.

Thanks to all who have supported the Simeon Centre throughout this year.

Jane Arkwright	John Kearney	Alex Spears
Sharon Boyd	Emma Kidd	Kevin Stamp
Wendy Congleton	Jayne Lamb	Alena Stulock
Paul Dixon	Vinita Latham	Judith Thompson
Amanda Eckersley	Faye Lewis	Natacha Thompson
Alice Edwards	Joanna Lindfield	Kate Turner
Miguel Fernandez-Arias	Ana Miller	Mary Turner
Cath Greer	Christine Moore	Fay Waldram
Rainer Gundlach	Diane Moran	Joan Washbrook
Wendy Hagan	Emma Neville	Liz White
Zoe Hall	Peter Nuttall	Tracey Williams
Harry Houghton	Rachel Patrick	Stacey Withington
Louise Howarth	Lisa Rowley	Robynne Wood
Kevin Illingworth	Simon Scriven	Fozia Yasmeen
	John Settle	

“The service was excellent. I still have bad, weepy days (due to grief) but I understand myself better and can cope better. I can now give myself permission to be sad!”

Simeon Centre client comment

... and finally

We also thank others who have helped to contribute to our success. This includes **Jen Jowles our Office Administrator**, all the staff at the Victoria Hall and the team at 1point for their continuing support.

... and a special thanks to our Trustees:

Peter Green (Chair)

Bob Bradley

Emma Lewis

Jill Orrell

Natacha Thompson (Treasurer)

Brian Tomkins

Mary Turner

*“...the centre as a whole is excellent but I have to reserve all my deepest thanks and gratitude for A**. I can honestly say without hyperbole that you saved my life. The support, guidance and help was challenging and changing... I will never forget you and I practice the things that you recommended and reflect upon your words on a daily basis. I am not completely out of the woods but thanks to you at least I can see the beauty in the trees.”*

Simeon Centre client comment