



**SelfHelpServices**   
helping people to help themselves

**impact report**

**April 2013 - March 2014**

# introduction

**SelfHelpServices** is a user-led mental health charity (no. 1122063) which helps people help themselves. We provide a range of support, services and opportunities for people living with common mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, phobias and panic attacks, including:

**Community Services** such as drop in self help groups and courses; Overnight crisis support at **The Sanctuary**; **Psychological Therapies** such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and counselling; **Online CBT** (eTherapy); and **Positive Alternatives** - services to support individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

We worked with over **10,000** clients last year

**81%** said they are now more in control of their lives

**89%** said they are more hopeful about the future

**82%** said they are more in control of the challenges they face

**75%** said the services gave them the opportunity to do things they valued

**99%** of the people we asked said they were satisfied with the support they received.



@selfhelpservice

**80** volunteers gave their time to help deliver our services this year. **25%** of our new recruits were volunteers first. **59%** of new staff and **66%** of new volunteers and facilitators recruited this year have personal experience of mental health issues.

*“My role as an apprentice is to work with volunteers, both recruiting and managing them. I left university in a bad way, after starting, but not finishing, my degree. I was feeling stressed, feeling pressurised and I didn’t just want to get the first job that came along to appease people. I was becoming very forgetful but I think it was the stress as that has passed now. I don’t feel that the apprenticeship was my only option, but I took it because it is a good way in. It is definitely going well, it has boosted my confidence and is helping me to develop my personal wellbeing. I went for this apprenticeship because it was in the field of mental health. I would maybe like to become a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner or counsellor. It will definitely help me towards my end goal, I thought having no formal qualifications would be a barrier as I only have an A level in Psychology, and no degree or experience so this apprenticeship is a really good way in.”* Sam, Placement and Experience Apprentice

# community services

Community Services provides community based self-help initiatives such as drop-in groups, structured courses and after therapy support services in Manchester, Stockport and Trafford.

This year **3,496** people accessed Community Services.

**77%** of people using our community services said they are now more in control of their lives; **85%** said they are more hopeful about the future; and **82%** said they are more in control of the challenges they face. **78%** said services gave them the opportunity to do things they valued.

Our **8** groups ran **50** weekly sessions each, helping **2,732** attendees.

The groups cover anxiety, low mood, depression and social phobia, and associated issues like low confidence and self-esteem. A high proportion of people who attended our groups have been living with long-term health conditions and an increasing number came to us with stresses around welfare reforms.

96% of attendees said the self-help groups gave them a better understanding of their condition.

**75%** said the groups helped to reduce the main symptoms of their condition.

**93%** said the groups helped them to reduce social isolation.

**95%** said the groups helped them improve their self confidence.





## ***Self Help Services staff give out Winter Survival Guides in Manchester***

***“I took part in the Boost: Emotional Resilience Course and because of it I am now able to see the sources of my anxiety and depression, and with a sense of inner strength and developing self worth I am making headway into my issues. At the beginning of the course I had bad mental health and my head was a mess, now feel I’ve learnt to control myself and am feeling a lot better. My illness has improved greatly as have my self esteem and confidence, so much that I have just began a new relationship that I would never have had the courage to do so before. Thank you. I feel much more able to cope with situations which in the past have left me feeling stressed angry and upset. I have become more confident in showing and telling people about how I am feeling.”***



# The Sanctuary: Manchester helping you through the night

Launched in September 2013, The Sanctuary Manchester provides overnight mental health support to people struggling to cope with anxiety, depression, panic and suicidal thoughts. It is a non-clinical peer support service offering a range of support, including help with managing panic attacks, offering a space to talk and assistance with coping through and after crisis.

In its first 7 months, **174** people used The Sanctuary

Staff provided over **700** sessions of peer support by phone or in person; just under **25%** of clients reported that they would have gone to a hospital A&E department if The Sanctuary did not exist; another **10%** said they would have called the police and **7%** would have self-harmed or considered suicide.



/thesanctuarymanchester





## ***The Sanctuary: Manchester***

***“I was in a real low place. I could see no place to turn, no one to listen to or hear the pain and destructive thoughts I was experiencing. I found the Sanctuary on the internet. I was apprehensive about contacting the services for fear of hearing there is nothing we can do to help you.***

***By the end of the initial call all the apprehension I had built up was unnecessary, I found myself feeling comfortable and much lighter. Following the conversation I was advised to come down to the centre.***

***I have received a lot of support, more than from any other service. Had it not been for the kindness, understanding and compassion I have received from staff, the support through the night – the hardest hours... I wouldn't be where I am now. It is because of The Sanctuary that I shall continue to grow as an individual, continue to choose to take on board the advice offered and continue to live my life while making many positive adjustments to myself and the world I choose to create around me.”***



# psychological therapies

We provide a range of psychological therapies including counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy and guided self help in Manchester, Stockport, Halton and St Helens.

**6,338** people accessed our Psychological Therapies this year.

**82%** of people using our services said they are now more in control of their lives; **89%** said they are more hopeful about the future; and **81%** said they are more in control of the challenges they face.


**74%** said the service gives them more opportunities to do things they valued.

**99%** said they are satisfied with the services they use.



*Stockport IAPT Team*





*“Some years ago I became the carer for three family members, and I found this really demanding. My brother was in hospital at the time and he could only come home if I cared for him, and so I gave up full time employment. This was hard as I’d always worked ever since I left school.*

*The depression came on gradually, I’ve always felt it there but more like a cloud hanging over me. I used to fight it and if I felt bad I would distract myself and do something busy. But then came the point where I couldn’t fight it any more. I was put on medication by the GP and then referred for counselling.*

*They were very good, the counsellor was excellent. She didn’t judge me in any way; she listened to everything I had to say. When I first started I thought I wouldn’t have anything to talk about but soon I couldn’t shut up! Now I’ve finished counselling I’m putting everything I was taught into practice. I never thought I could ever have felt as bad as I did before. Years ago I was one of those people who would have told me to pull myself together. But I never want to go back to where I was before.”*



In 2013, eTherapy won 2 awards for their work at the Tech4Good Awards – the Community Impact Award and the Winner of Winners Award which was voted for by those attending the event.

# e-therapy

**2,324** people accessed eTherapy in **24** venues or from their own home with telephone support, a **34%** increase on last year.

**82%** of people using our e-therapy service said that they are more in control of their lives.

**91%** are more hopeful about the future.

**86%** are more in control of the challenges they face.

**76%** said services give them the opportunity to do things they value.

**99%** are satisfied with this service.

***“My CBT advisor for anxiety and depression told me about the Sleepio service. My anxieties and worries were giving me many sleepless nights and poor sleep. I need to get back control of those anxieties and my sleep.***

***I found it helpful in a similar way to the advice I got from my CBT course; writing thoughts down or doing a ‘to do’ list at a set time of the day. I always did this towards bedtime – putting the day to rest. The progressive muscle exercises worked well when I was physically tense as your muscles hurt after a while and the bed feels uncomfortable as a result.***

***After doing the course I’ve got pretty good control of it I think, bad sleep is certainly less than it was. I have reduced the amount of sleeping pills I’m on.”***

# Positive Alternatives



## positive alternatives

Since May 2013, Positive Alternatives has delivered mentoring and clinical services for people at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. People using the service have experienced substantial reductions in anxiety or depression symptoms, reduced aggression, and increased self esteem and well being.

**74%** of the people we have worked with said that they are more in control of their lives;  
**79%** are more hopeful about the future and **63%** are more in control of the challenges they face.  
**79%** say the service gives them the opportunity to do things they value.  
**100%** say they are satisfied with the clinical support services we provide.

*“It helped me to come to terms with my flaws and confront my setbacks...”*

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