

RELATE BRADFORD & LEEDS

YEAR 2022 - 2023

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
31 MARCH 2023

CHARITY REGISTRATION  
NO. 1013811

COMPANY REGISTRATION  
NO. 02652414  
(ENGLAND AND WALES)

**Relate**  
Bradford & Leeds





# A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

2023 has been yet another busy year for Relate Bradford & Leeds!

It has been tough for the whole of the third sector – money is tight from a commissioning perspective, and we too have suffered from funding reductions or contracts ending because of the financial plight of some of our commissioners. It is also tough for our staff with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, so the Board being able to award a pay rise to staff was very meaningful, albeit our financial situation like with others remains very tight.

There have been a number of notable successes in 2024. Some of our team qualified for their master's degrees, with one of our team successful in receiving a fully funded masters for the year ahead. Many of our students that work with us qualified and we also welcomed new students – Liz and Janine – into the organisation. Welcome too to Vas and Katie to the organisation who enhance our capability in relationships, family and play therapy, and welcome back to Kaye who has done a great job not least supporting some of our business development work. I am delighted to see such personal growth within the Relate Bradford & Leeds family.

Whilst we have seen some vital contracts that support the needs of our communities come to an end due to the austerity needed by some of our funders, we were delighted to be commissioned for new work supporting those affected by domestic abuse, working with children, young people and families. And we are excited to be launching our new mediation service this year – utilising our real expertise in relationships to support parents, couples and families when they need this third-party provision.

A highlight for me of 2023 was the building up of amazing expertise on our trustee board. I am delighted that we have attracted such strong talent – bringing skills from the NHS, private sector, third sector covering expertise like HR, financial management, charity management, strategy, delivery, clinical and leadership. Welcome back too to Catherine Jowitt who left for a sabbatical and re-joined the Board as Deputy Chair. I also want to acknowledge the fantastic contribution of Jonathan Smith and Magda O'Connell who have left the board during 2023. I know the board is well placed now to lead the organisation for the next few years, and I want to thank all our trustees for their tremendous efforts in 2023.

The organisation needs to come together in 2024 to ensure we are as efficient as possible, filling all our counselling slots, increasing our commerciality, and ensuring we remain a stable organisation financially so that we are able to grow our services. We also need to look wider than commissioned work to get a more balanced source of income so that we don't suffer disproportionately through public spending cuts. I would ask every single employee, volunteer, partner and client of ours to think about how they can help support Relate Bradford & Leeds to thrive so that we can help more and more people in the coming year. Every one of us can create a difference.

Finally, I wanted to note that this will be my last annual report, as I now leave the organisation and move to a new challenge chairing an NHS Trust. It has been an amazing two and a half years for me to get to know some really dedicated people at Relate Bradford & Leeds, and to Tina our CEO, thank you especially for everything you do. You all make such a huge difference to the communities of Bradford and Leeds every single day. Thank you everyone – trustees, staff, volunteers and commissioners - for your efforts in 2023 and all the support you have given me as your Chair, and I wish you all the success you deserve in 2024!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mahmud Nawaz', written over a horizontal line.

**MAHMUD NAWAZ**

CHAIR



## OUR 75TH BIRTHDAY YEAR

BY TINA AND TAMARA

2023 was an exciting year for our charity, as we celebrated our milestone birthday of 75 years since Relate Bradford (it has had a few name changes!) was founded. We are proud of all that has been achieved over 75 years. Importantly, we have supported so many people over the years. We also would like to give thanks to all who continue to support our work across Bradford and Leeds. We really could not do what we do, without you!

“Lifestyles and choices have changed enormously. But maybe our fundamental emotional needs haven’t. 75 years ago, gender roles were fixed and rigid. That was reflected in beliefs, behaviours, and a punitive view of whoever stepped outside of that. Not that many would. Women largely stayed at home and men took responsibility for the family income; it was not considered to be a choice – it simply ‘was.’ There was a lot that wasn’t talked about back in the day! Sexual conversation was had in hushed tones (if it was had at all!) and referred to as ‘down there pet, you know...’ It was a time of change too. It was post-war, and people were adjusting to peace and ‘normal’ family life again.

This too is a time of change. We embrace choice in relationships; the stigma of divorce is largely lifted, and individual happiness is privileged. We champion diversity in lifestyle, gender and relationships and the need for self-fulfilment.

We talk more openly about sex and getting our needs met; not just sexually but our emotional needs also.

Those needs were always there and that is the bit that hasn’t changed. We are attachment seeking beings who crave connection, not just in personal relationships but with professionals who seek to connect and ‘see’ you. The wonderful thing about talking therapies is that we have a conversation with another person but also with ourselves in the course of that dialogue. We speak and consider our position around what we have shared and go on to arrive at our own truth.

Honestly, if you could bottle it, you’d be in on a fortune! But then again, 75 years ago you got a free bottle of milk at school. Hey, you can’t have everything!”

75TH BIRTHDAY EDITION

### BREAKING NEWS

RELATE BRADFORD & LEEDS CELEBRATE 75 YEARS!



**IT'S OFFICIAL**

75 years ago, Relate Bradford & Leeds first opened their doors and have been going from strength to strength ever since, proudly serving the city of Bradford, and more recently, the city of Leeds, as the relationship experts.

The team are looking forward to many more years, supporting people with their relationships.



**CONTACT US**

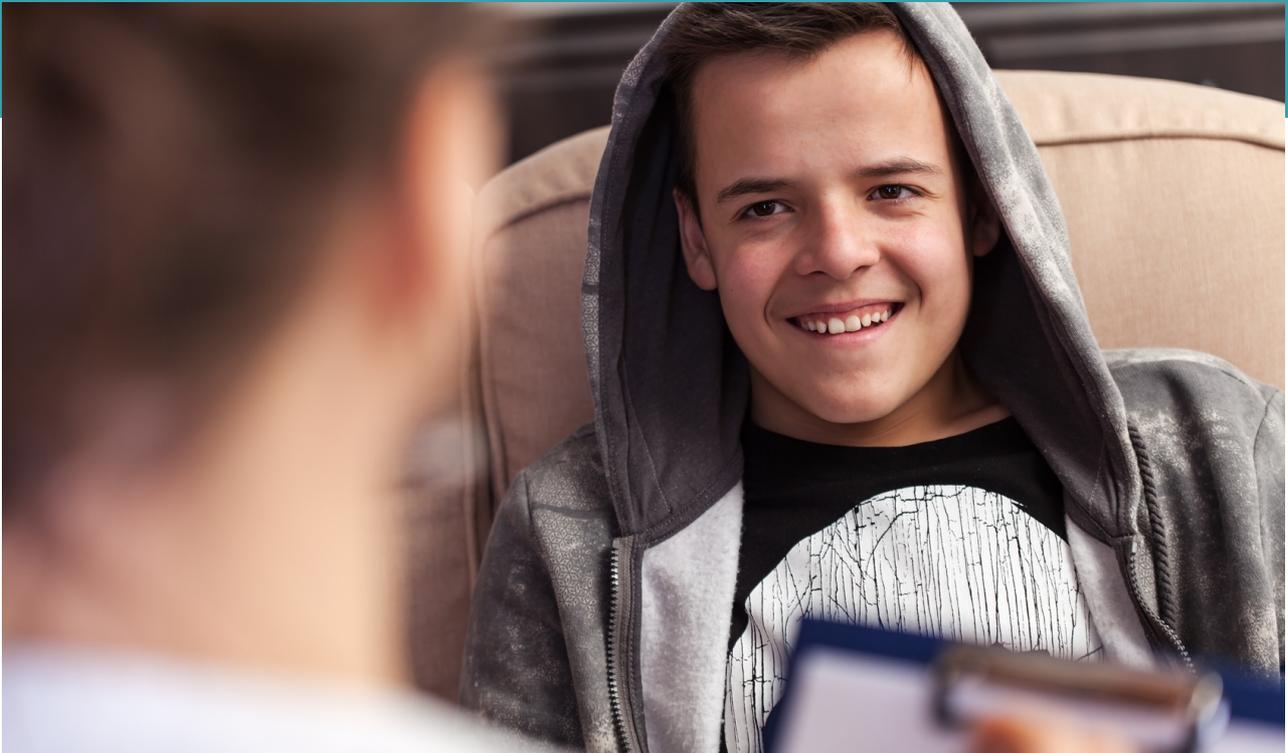
INFORMATION@RELATEBRADFORD.COM  
01274 726696

Contact the team, to find out more -

- Family counselling
- Children's counselling
- Young people's counselling
- Individual counselling
- Couples counselling
- NLP/Talking Therapy
- Psychosocial Therapy
- Counselling in schools
- Psychoeducation



WWW.RELATEBRADFORD.ORG



## CLINICAL REFLECTIONS ON OUR 75TH BIRTHDAY

BY TAMARA, CLINICAL SUPERVISOR

The clinical voice in Relate Bradford & Leeds continues to be strengthened. We welcomed back our colleague Kaye, and maintain our role as a training and organisation as we embraced yet more placement students. Our service offer continues to grow as we bring Family Mediation into our remit. This reflects our investment into our people as we recruit from within our team of skilled and committed colleagues; Kelly takes up this challenging training post.

As a long and established part of our community we have been taking stock of our 75-year history within our district. From a clinical point of view, it's interesting to reflect on the changes that have come about in terms of practice. Deeply rooted in psychodynamic ethos originally, our practice has evolved. 20 years ago, there were rumours of Systemic practice being brought into the way we worked, and I can say with some certainty that reviews were mixed!

This was a vital inclusion as we appreciated that the client was their own 'expert' and not the therapist. We moved more away from pathologising our clients and became more inclusive as we were encouraged to be 'curious about their context'.

We are a diverse community and the past recent years have illustrated that our service offer must meet that need as we welcome clients that struggle to fit into a 'one size fits all' therapy. The challenges faced by these clients can be real enough without encountering a listening voice that assumes they know how it is.

A new year always brings the unknown, but we know with certainty that this next year we will grow our clinical offer as we take on further exciting training for our clinicians so that we can foster our evolution and continue to meet our client's needs, however they present.'

## A FEW OF OUR BRILLIANT BLOGS OVER THE YEAR!

BY FAYE

Anyone that knows me will know just how much I owe in life, to my time at Relate. On Relate Bradford, and now Leeds, 75th anniversary, I am reflecting on just how lucky I am to have been a part of 10 of those years (and hopefully many more to come).

I began on Reception in 2014, I had my twins the previous year and was craving some adult conversation and wanted to begin to build a life for me and my boys.

I would never have imagined the places this charity has taken me personally, professionally and academically.

When I think back to the near the beginning when our 'work mum' (Debbie has worked at Relate for over 30 years!) changed her working days to accommodate me attending a level 2 counselling course around 8 years ago, to now being on a Master's course, which our amazing CEO won full funding for out of 25 available in the country, it really says it all about the effort for, and attitude towards other people there is at Relate.

It is the kind of thing that happens to 'other people' except my colleagues at Relate helped it happen for ME!

Then there's my children being welcomed so warmly by the Relate family here, where they now ask to go see 'our friends at work' when we nip into town.

When I think about the work we do here, it feels such as privilege to work with my fellow Bradfordian (and Leeds) clients, who allow me into their lives when many feel vulnerable, and might be having just about the worst of times, yet put so much effort and hard work into their sessions week in week out.

Aside from clinical work there has been such an array of opportunities and experiences over my 10 years such as, spending the day with the BBC and being on the news, competing in Dragon Boat races, to having a go at bid writing and winning to deliver mental health workshops in Bradford schools, to mention a few! I have met so many likeminded (and people that have challenged me to grow) people from organisations across the Bradford District and now England via study, and the conscientious colleagues I have worked with past and present who, as well as being able to trust wholeheartedly for advice to help our clients, have supported me through my own life struggles, it's easy to see why I am so openly enthusiastic about Relate.

We use systemic theory at Relate and one of the, if not THE, main ideas about systems theory is that the whole equals the sum of all parts, meaning we are all as important as, and have an impact on each other; therapists, admin, clients, trustees, and the relationships we have mean this system works. The quality of our relationships determines the quality of our lives.

These are core values here at Relate, and I really think and hope that reflects in our work with our clients. None of us can do the work we do without each other.

Our 75 years must mean we are doing something right!



## A FEW OF OUR BRILLIANT BLOGS OVER THE YEAR!

BY BECKY

Many of you will have read over the last couple of years, the blogs that Becky has been writing and have been posted for you to read.

We are delighted and very proud, to share that our Becky has now written a book!

Please see a few words from Becky, as an introduction to her book, 'A Survival Guide for Women Who Feel Stuck In Their Marriage, Should I stay or Leave?'



My name is Rebecca and I work as a Relationship Therapist for Relate Bradford and Leeds.

After seeing a recurring pattern in the therapy room of many women feeling lost and confused in their marriage/relationship, I decided to put my knowledge on this subject into a short book/ guide.

This is also a journey I have walked myself and I think, to have a real passion for something, you need to fully understand it from the client's/reader's perspective!

My book helps the reader to strip back all the layers and breakdown some of the biggest challenges women will face in their relationships, and how our early environment will also play a huge factor in the partners we are attracted to and why they will later become a significant source of conflict. As women reach their late 30's to 40's, they will often go through an awakening process where they start to value themselves more and look at life very differently.

This can often feel very confusing and scary at times, and therefore, I felt it was important to reach out with the lessons I have learned on my journey to help other women feel heard, validated, and completely supported.



## A FEW OF OUR BRILLIANT BLOGS OVER THE YEAR!

BY VAS

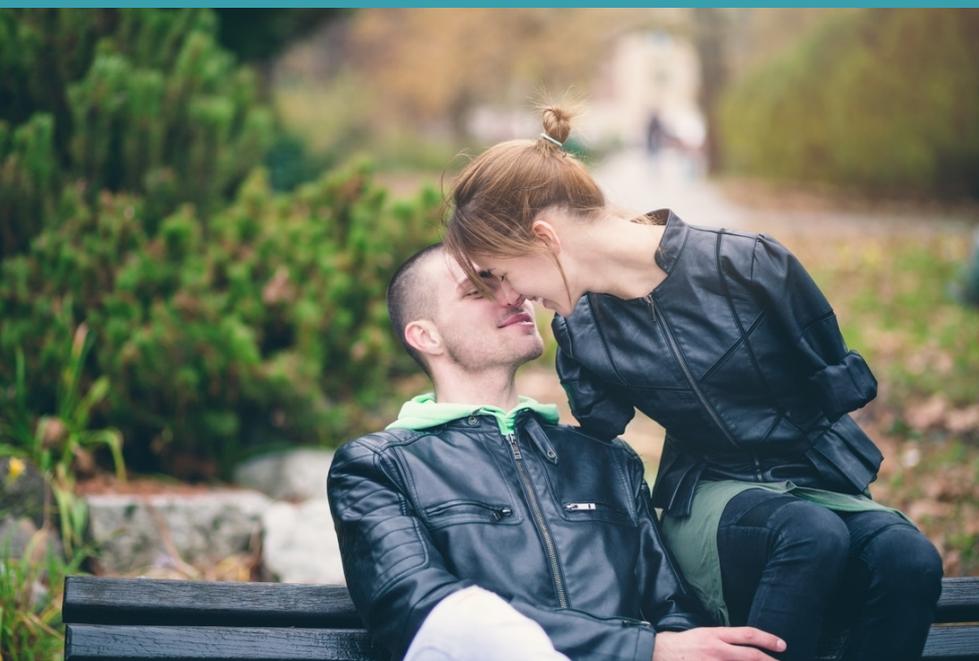
I will start by wishing 'Happy Birthday' to our amazing organisation, Relate Bradford & Leeds. An organisation, that adopted me firstly as a student in 2022, and later in 2023 as a part of their team. A team that is no ordinary team – it's a team formed of dedicated people, whose only goal is to support the community with their best knowledge, a team enriched by their diversity, knowledge and commitment. A team that defines and enhances the ethical values of our organisation.

Relate Bradford & Leeds has created a safe place for everyone to feel welcomed and acknowledged, which is reflected in my work as a relationship counsellor. I have been able to interact with people from different age groups, cultural backgrounds, sexuality, gender identification, and complex family structures, all with their unique experiences, life stories and struggles.

The therapeutic relationships formed during the sessions are powerful both for the clients and for me as a counsellor. They bring out emotions that have been hidden, allowing the clients to release them from their shadows and flow in order to be explored and understood. These create a starting point for clients to build better relationships and more secure attachments.

What is more important, the client learns how to have a better relationship with themselves, because if you are able to show love and compassion to others, why not show it to yourself? When I work with clients, I explore with them how important they are in their own lives, and how their romantic relationship, family relationship or any other type of relationship can benefit if the relationship with themselves is good.

I feel I am part of an organisation able to grow and willing to reach everyone who is struggling with their mental health. Although we are sometimes limited by funding, availability and the client's needs we can cover, we try to find a way to listen to every story. So, on our 75th birthday, 'Happy Birthday and keep going Relate!'





## A FEW OF OUR BRILLIANT BLOGS OVER THE YEAR

BY KAYE, CLINICAL SUPERVISOR

### “Mental health boils down to one word: hope.”

Wise words there, from former US First Lady, Rosalynn Carter.

If we have purpose, we have meaning in our lives. If we have hope, we can achieve greater endurance in the face of the challenges life throws at us, and we push harder to reach our goals.

At Relate Bradford & Leeds, we like to think that along with a sprinkle of our 75 years' expertise, we can offer a dash of hope to our clients for forming and maintaining better relationships with family, partners and friends, and even with colleagues.

This year we celebrate 75 years as a relationship counselling charity helping local people. Get in touch to find out more about our services or to give others hope by making a donation.

Thank you.



### “What's 75 years long by 92 years wide?”

As you'll have read in our posts recently, we're celebrating our 75th birthday (yay!) In a rare, idle moment, we wondered whether we currently have 75 years experience within our existing team of 20...? So we did a little digging and we discovered we are as broad as we are long! Well, a little bit broader than long actually...we counted 92 years service between us all in the Relate Bradford & Leeds Team of '23! That's a lot of relationship counselling expertise!

Happy birthday to us xxx



## FEEDBACK



Our counsellor was amazing, and we looked forward to our sessions every week. It was easier to talk about our problems with an impartial person and we could see the improvement week by week. My partner found he was able to open up due to the counsellor's support.



We would recommend Relate 100%. It's not a magic wand but the process encouraged us to think more deeply and more constructively about things that had affected our relationship. Our counsellor was more than we hoped for and helped us massively.



The surroundings were calm, the staff lovely and made me feel very comfortable. The counselling sessions have made me come to understand I'm not to blame for everything and that I don't have to tolerate disrespect. It helped me to become a stronger person.



The counselling I've received has been excellent and it's helped me in immeasurable ways. I'm so so grateful that this service was available free of charge as I wouldn't have been able to access it otherwise. Thank you so much for all you have done to support me and in turn my children and family.



The counsellor gave us hope to try and save our relationship when I thought it was impossible. We learned to listen to each other and realise the value of things that we took for granted.

## IMPACT AND REACH



“ Just wanted to say thank you for your help in our sessions and helping me see my worth. I’m really excited to see what my future holds and reaching my potential. Wish our sessions did not have to end. You’re amazing. Thanks again. ”



# 3,799

Sessions have been delivered!

# 1,270

People have accessed counselling!



“ Please keep providing this service as much as you can. It is invaluable and I wish more people had access to it. Thank you.

10/10 +

Everyone from Admin to our Counsellor was fab, so keep up the good work!





## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

BY KAYE AND TINA

We have been busy analysing our positioning within the local 'counselling landscape' in order to see where there are gaps in service provision within the catchments of Bradford and Leeds that we can fill and to identify opportunities to expand our working alliances with other local organisations.

Last year we have:

- Been talking to one of the local universities about offering a programme of psychoeducation for students, to help them develop and/or improve their relationships. We have devised a short list of suitable topics and are currently assessing their relevance and appeal to this target audience
- Continued to be an active member of the local counselling collaborative
- Continued to be an active member of Forum Central Leeds
- Been meeting with key people in the Integrated Care Board (ICB) landscape, to raise awareness about the services we offer

This year we hope to:

- Trial, and possibly also expand on the list of, psycho-education topics/sessions and offering them to other educational establishments, charities, organisations and businesses
- Look to diversifying our reach and in seeking alternative funding – becoming more self-sufficient and less reliant on statutory partners for funding
- Launch our new business development strategy
- Recruit more volunteers
- Work more in partnership with others
- Work more closely with Relate National
- To prioritise our sustainability, growth and productivity in all areas
- Work collaboratively with local businesses where possible, to offer complementary services, expand our reach and raise awareness of relationship issues and our relevant services

## TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSES

Our team's passion and dedication to their work manifested in some amazing achievements and training opportunities this year, adding further expertise to our offer.

- After completing her Post Graduate Diploma in Systemic Therapy, Faye was accepted on to a Masters course in Systemic Therapy at The University of Leeds. We fought hard to secure a bursary for her studies, beating numerous applicants to be awarded only one of twenty-five funded places on the Masters course.
- After joining Relate Bradford & Leeds as a placement counsellor, on completion of his hours, Vas was appointed a paid counsellor position. Vas has recently qualified with a Masters in Contemporary Relationship Studies through The University of Hull
- Adeola initially began her journey with Relate Bradford & Leeds, as a placement counsellor and on qualifying, was offered a clinical post. This year, Adeola successfully achieved an MSc in Psychology, at Leeds Beckett University
- Kaye returned from a short study break with a First-Class BSc Honours Degree in Counselling, and rejoined the team as a Counsellor, Clinical Supervisor, and Senior Leader
- Caz first joined us as a Psychosexual Therapy student and has recently qualified as a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Contemporary Psychosexual Therapy from Hull University and achieved her professional registration and will become an MSc in March - her second in fact! Caz is more recently on an NHS funded Talking Therapies course, as a student, working with couples at Relate Bradford & Leeds

### External support

- Inspired by The Big Help Out initiative created by Prince Charles (as he then was) we put our own request for business development help via LinkedIn posts this year and received free help in various guises:
- Laura Toop of Yowah Radio, interviewed our counsellor Rebecca, as a guest presenter on her Flourish radio show, to talk about relationships and her new book, 'A Survival Guide for Women Who Feel Stuck In Their Marriage, Should I stay or Leave?' Laura is a Leadership Coach and Consultant with Project Me
- Vanessa Tierie – a retired marketing professional, helped us with looking at key focussed areas in marketing and communications
- Management consultancy, Partners In Change, helped us to use their diagnostic tool on change leadership

“

**My counsellor was warm, friendly, listened very well and asked really helpful questions. We built a good rapport and I felt able to work well with them and use the tools and techniques suggested.**

”

## TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSES

This year we welcomed Katie, a qualified Play Therapist to the team, meaning we're now able to offer counselling for 5 to 11year olds

As a training organisation, we have continued to provide placement opportunities to three students this year:

- Liz is studying a Level 5 counselling qualification with Chrysalis
- Janine is studying a Masters in Integrative Counselling at Leeds Beckett University

### Our Board of Trustees

In a bold and ambitious move, in order to expand and refresh our existing board, with fresh minds and expertise and to complement the existing Board of Trustees, we held a dedicated targeted Trustee recruitment campaign. This was a huge success and we welcomed seven Trustees; Hazel, Su, Will, Karen, Sabreen, Nazia and Fiona to the team.

### Other achievements

Our Chair of Trustees, Mahmud Nawaz was acknowledged as a hidden GEM (Gifted Ethnic Minority staff) in the #75@75 list in collaboration with the Nationale BAME Health and Care Awards.

Through an internal recruitment process, our Service Administrator Kelly, has signed up to participate in a Mediation Training course, adding skills to her already strong administrative background, and hopefully expanding our offer into the service area during 2024.

Our clinicians received a free 90-minute in-house training session from the National Centre for Domestic Violence, keeping them up to date with current laws and developments in this context.

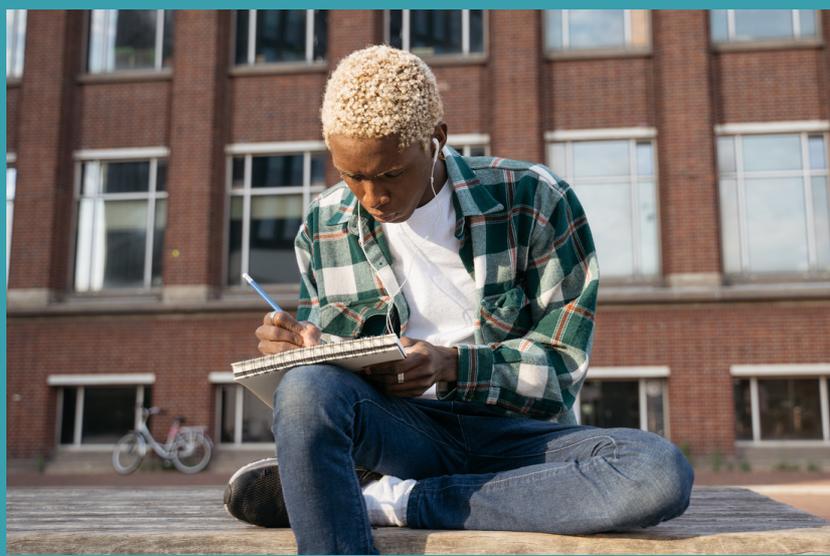
We have also just secured some in-house training on 'working with autism in the therapy room' for all our clinicians in 2024.

Adeola is also currently on a Relate family therapy course and is undertaking her training with us, which will help us to reach more families.

### The University of Bradford Summer Experience - a few words from Peter

"During my stay last year, I got the chance to help with counselling and relationship support which is Relate Bradford and Leeds. Working with a committed team to offer significant support to people managing many facets of their relationships was a fulfilling experience. My role involved tasks like outreach support, web design, content drafting, and research. It was an incredibly rewarding experience because of the dedication to creating healthy connections and the positive impact on people's lives."

We give thanks to Emi, who continues to volunteer with us, following their completion of the Summer Experience.



# AWAY DAY

As a thank you to the hard work and commitment of our fabulous team, we were all treated to a day of pottery painting. Great fun was had by all, and not only were we blown away by the amazing creativity within our small team, but also within the feedback gathered afterwards.



“ Great to see everyone so engaged in it!  
It was indeed very therapeutic and the atmosphere and chat was just what we needed.  
It was #PositiveVibes  
Exceeded my expectations.  
The away day was lovely it could not have been done any better.  
Very good company, food, good activity and fun.  
Nothing, it was incredible.  
Absolutely nothing :)  
I thought it was great!! Tonnes of fun! ”



## COMMITTEES

We are addressing various key areas and issues, via a number of internal committees, chaired by Trustees of the Board, designed to support the strategic direction of the charity.

### **Continuous Improvement Journey (CIJ)**

The staff team and Trustees meet to discuss operational focus and to oversee continuous improvement related work.

### **Governance Committee**

To review governance documents and processes  
Performance Committee (PC): To scrutinise, review financials and performance, service delivery data development, productivity and utilisation activity.

### **People Committee**

Focus on organisation development and people.

### **Development Committee**

Marketing, pathways/engagement/developing Leeds or other new streams/marketing/comms/client. pathways/activity

### **The Board**

With key oversight, all committees feed formally into the Board with some Committees having interconnectivity.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

BY CAROLINE, HEAD OF FINANCE

After a couple of tough years, the income generated by Relate Bradford & Leeds has recovered to pre-pandemic levels as the number of sessions delivered returns to the levels we are used to operating at, albeit in a different landscape post Covid. We have maximised “lessons learnt” from working flexibly during the pandemic and are now able to offer new ways of delivering the service. Pre-Covid nearly all sessions would be delivered face to face. Now we are able to offer traditional face to face, but also video and telephone consultations, which has been welcomed by our customers. This has contributed to enabling us to meet targets set by our funders and ourselves.

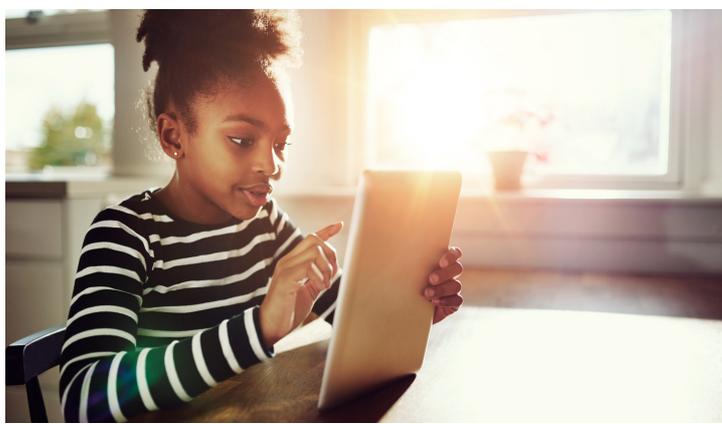
Our income has recovered despite losing some of our contracts; these have been replaced with new contracts as we endeavour to continue serving the communities of Bradford and Leeds. We have also been able to reopen the doors to room hire income as other businesses and therapists reassess the value in face to face contact. This has some way to go to replicate room hire income pre-pandemic, the world operates differently now, but we continue to look for room hire revenue and other non-activity based income generation that can help us to subsidise our services and meet the demand.

In 2022/23 we find ourselves in an economy where many organisations have had budget constraints, and this has affected our commissioners and therefore our funding. In the year under review our long standing contracts had minimal uplifts, despite costs increasing over the year - similar to households and businesses, our utility bill almost doubled in the year. So, whilst income returned to previous levels, we have had to look very closely at our costs and continue to trim wherever possible.

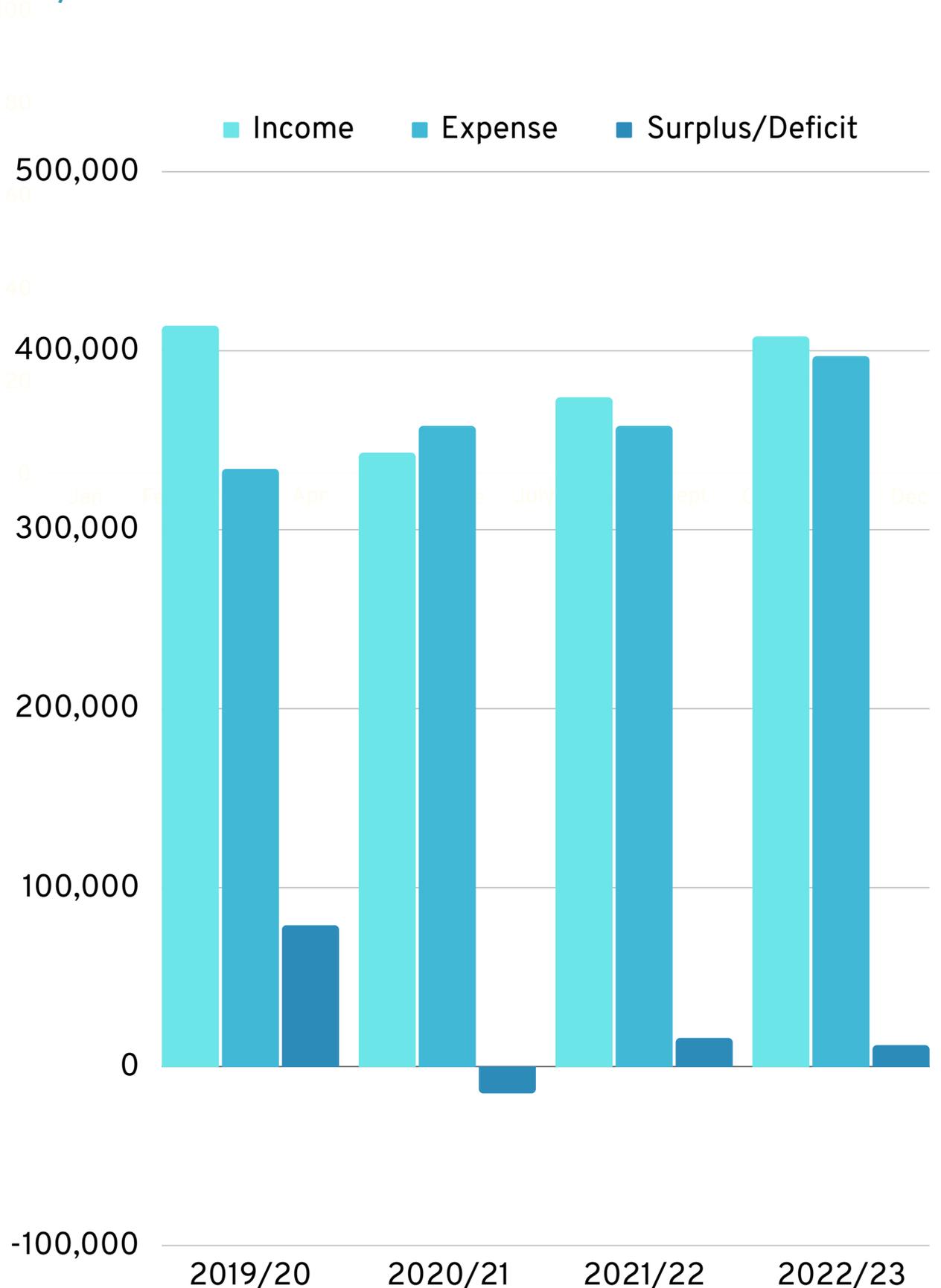
Our total income increased by 9% year on year, and we were able to restrict our non-pay expenditure to 9% also, despite increased activity and rising prices. However, this year our income was mostly generated from activity (3,799 sessions delivered this year compared with 3,234 the previous year, a 17.5% increase), and our salary costs increased by 11%; this reflects increased numbers of staff hours, plus a pay award that the trustees and senior leadership team felt we had to grant to acknowledge the efforts of our colleagues and to alleviate the Cost of Living crisis. The fact that the increase was only 11% demonstrates increased productivity of the workforce.

The result is that, although we still made a surplus, this was less than the previous year as we return to business as usual.

Looking forward, we have challenging times ahead, as a reflection of the continuing difficult economic climate. An NHS review into counselling provision is coming to an end, which will see us rebidding for some of our key contracts. But we have a strong team of passionate employees, backed by a board of trustees committed to helping us weather the storm.



# INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND SURPLUS 2019-2023



# INCOME SUMMARY 2022/23

- Client Payments
- Invoiced Income
- Granted Income
- Other Income

