

# Battle Scars

Newsletter – April 2022

Dear members

And before we know it, another financial year has come to an end! We were concerned we'd start this year in a rather weak position financially but things are looking better than expected.

Competition for funding is fierce at the moment. Funders are inundated with requests and funds are limited. We've been successful with a few small bids that will go in the wages pot and we'll definitely be dipping in our reserves to cover gaps. Because of this, we unfortunately had to let our administrator go at the end of her contract.

On the plus side, the Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS) have just awarded us with funds to continue and even expand our FRESH project also providing us with extra and unexpected money to employ a volunteer manager. We'll be starting this process as soon as the money is in our account.

Things are tight but we are very hopeful we'll cover our needs. A huge help has been the big demand for our training and the fact that it brought in twice what we were hoping for.

Our other big news is finding out we're the winners of the Leeds Compassionate City award for Health & Wellbeing. Myself and two of our volunteers, Emma and Michael, attended the award ceremony at the Leeds Civic Hall on March 10<sup>th</sup> (originally scheduled for December). We were over the moon to be presented with this award! It was such a memorable evening and we have now also forged links with the sponsors, Munro K, who seem very keen to continue supporting us. An extra top-up arrived a couple of weeks later in the post informing me that I had

been nominated for the Unsung Hero of the Year award as well.

As we intended, we launched two face-to-face groups in March: at the Lovell Park Hub near the city centre on a Wednesday evening and at the Vale Circles Hub in Beeston on a Tuesday evening. Both these groups will run every 4 weeks. We have facilitator teams of 4 for each group, 2 men and 2 women, and we're trying a much more self-sufficient model which, if successful, will mean that we can set these groups up anywhere. In the last 2 weeks alone we have been offered venues to run groups in Huddersfield, Brighouse, Harrogate and Guilford! We plan to fully test the existing two before setting more up and we also plan to ensure we have secured our infrastructure before expanding in this fashion.

We are still working hard to for meaningful links with Leeds Universities and the [video for the 16-25s group](#) was released on March 1<sup>st</sup>, on self-harm awareness day. On that day we also run a free virtual event introducing ourselves and covering myths and realities about self-harm with time for Q&A. The event was quickly fully booked with 70 people attending on the day. We will be running a similar event in May for mental health week.

We discovered a few issues with referrals to the FRESH project (Follow-up Review after Emergency treatment of Self-Harm), hopefully getting resolved as we speak. We are also liaising with the GP Confederacy to get more surgeries on board. The Leeds CCG who will be funding this from June are extremely supportive and will help this project reach its potential.

Like my mentor mentioned a couple of days ago, the last month of this financial year was

all about allies. They are appearing in every sector, often surprising us with their belief in us.

I will keep this newsletter short as it's time to start writing our annual report. I also thought you'd rather see some photos from the awards!

There won't be a newsletter next quarter as we'll be sending the report out to you and

inviting you to our General Annual Meeting. We're planning on holding a hybrid meeting this year and hope to be joined by many of you.

As always, thank you for reading this and thank you so much for your support.

Please look after yourselves.

Jenny – CEO

