

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Cogwheel Counselling

Registered charity 1157141

Affordable help when life slips out of gear

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OVERVIEW

Established in 1988, Cogwheel Counselling is a charity working throughout Cambridgeshire to improve the emotional and psychological wellbeing of local people. Cogwheel endeavours to carry out its mission by:

- Providing a range of counselling services for all ages (in-person and online), including providing services which are affordable to those on low and limited incomes
- Promoting emotional and mental wellbeing
- Ensuring the charity provides the highest quality of service through its accreditation with BACP (the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy).

After the huge challenges of 2020, we have continued in 2021 to build on the changes made last year as we adapt to the new era of life post-covid.

With our working processes having moved online, you can see in this report how we have continued to provide affordable mental health counselling, either online or face to face, for local individuals, children and young people, and families.



CHAIR OF TRUSTEES REPORT

2021 was never going to be an easy year following the enormous disruption in 2020 resulting from Covid-19 but I think many of us hoped it would be a year when things returned to a new normal as vaccinations became available. Whilst it was another challenging year I am pleased to report that we were able to deliver over 3,900 sessions during the year, largely online but with some in-person counselling opening up later in the year, particularly for children and young people.

Few people could foresee the full impact that Covid-19 and the ongoing and repeated lockdowns would have on the country - businesses and charities alike have been struggling to find new ways to operate and generate income to cover all the additional costs of remote and hybrid working. Our fundraising, finance and communications staff have been working hard in the background throughout the year to maintain the momentum needed to manage our finances, essential work to ensure that Cogwheel is able to continue to deliver affordable counselling.

Alongside all the changes imposed by Covid-19 we have also had some significant changes in staff. Towards the end of the year we were sad to lose two key personnel in the office. Our Office Manager, Sarah Sharpe, who had done a wonderful job implementing our new Client Management system, left early in 2022.



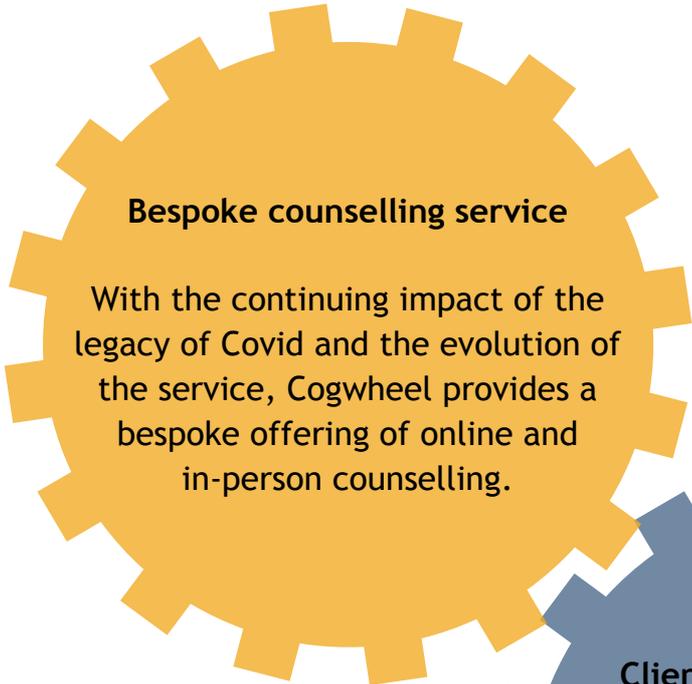
Esther McNeill, our outstanding Head of Counselling, advised us that, after 12 years at Cogwheel, including 5 years as Head of Counselling, it was time for her to step down to focus on her private therapy practice and further studies. At the start of the pandemic, in the space of just a few days, Esther, with the support of all the team, had turned Cogwheel from an organisation providing in-person counselling to one that operated virtually for every aspect of the service. In the two years since then Esther has continued to work at an extremely demanding pace and to go the 'extra mile' to ensure that each new challenge has been well managed. We are very grateful for all that Esther has contributed; her well-thought-through management strategies, her calm manner when faced with a crisis and her patience in explaining the complexities of the counselling world to the trustees who come from a range of backgrounds. In fact, we are grateful for all that she has done to shape Cogwheel so that we are fit for purpose for the post-Covid world. We are very pleased to announce that, after a comprehensive interview process her deputy, Isabelle Dolis has been appointed as our new Head of Counselling Services and will take up the post from Easter 2022.

As ever, I am very grateful to everyone on the Cogwheel team: counsellors, supervisors, office staff, volunteers and trustees who have worked so hard this year to ensure that, despite all the changes, Cogwheel continues to provide affordable counselling to those that need it most in Cambridge and the surrounding area.

Elisabeth Silver, Chair of Trustees

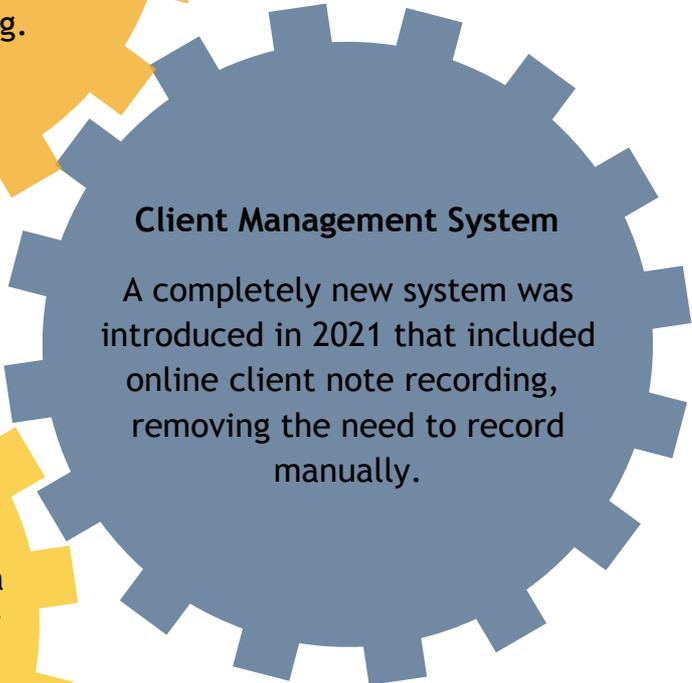
2021: THE COGS OF CHANGE CONTINUE

Following the immense changes to our operations that were needed in 2020, the pace of change has continued into 2021, as we adapt for a post-Covid era. We look briefly at some of the significant changes that have taken place this year.



Bespoke counselling service

With the continuing impact of the legacy of Covid and the evolution of the service, Cogwheel provides a bespoke offering of online and in-person counselling.



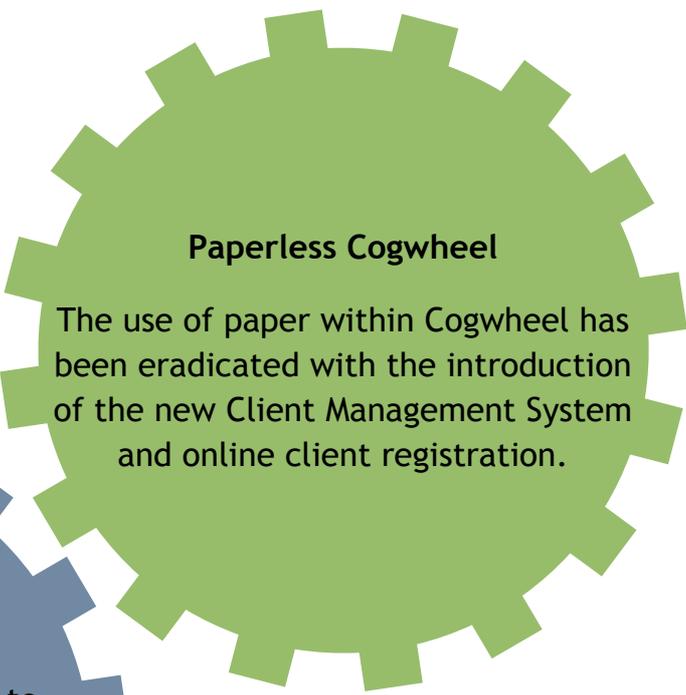
Client Management System

A completely new system was introduced in 2021 that included online client note recording, removing the need to record manually.



New, improved charity website

The Cogwheel website underwent a transformation in 2021, with a new homepage, improved website navigation and new online client registration.



Paperless Cogwheel

The use of paper within Cogwheel has been eradicated with the introduction of the new Client Management System and online client registration.



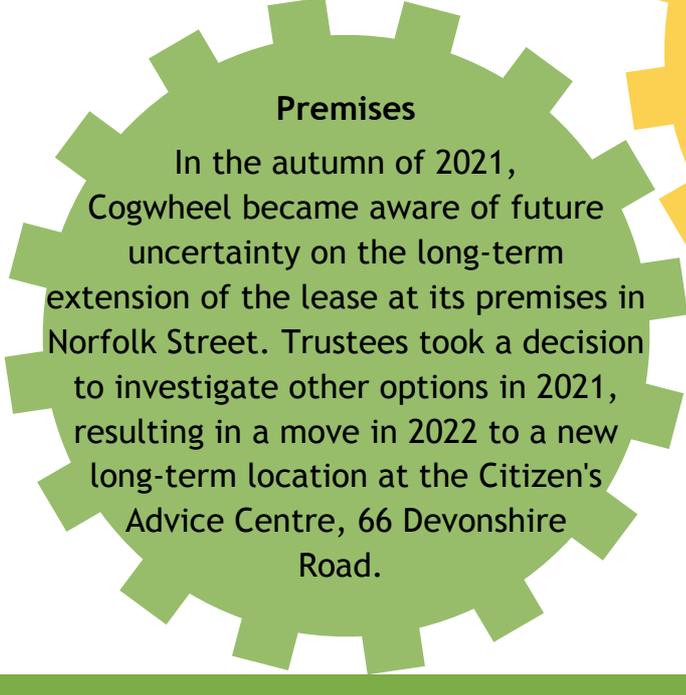
Cogwheel Counselling Support Fund

This fund was initiated in 2021 to provide further support to clients who are on low incomes and unable to afford the minimum session contributions.



Family therapy team

With the provision of grant funding, foundations were laid in autumn for the establishment of a new family therapy team with the appointment of a lead therapist.



Premises

In the autumn of 2021, Cogwheel became aware of future uncertainty on the long-term extension of the lease at its premises in Norfolk Street. Trustees took a decision to investigate other options in 2021, resulting in a move in 2022 to a new long-term location at the Citizen's Advice Centre, 66 Devonshire Road.

COUNSELLING WITH COGWHEEL IN 2021

Cogwheel continues to be unique in Cambridgeshire, being the only counselling provider that provides affordable counselling for adults, children/young people, families and those in relationships, and also remains one of the few providers in the county that is registered with BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy).

In 2021, Cogwheel was approached by over 500 people who referred themselves for counselling support and over 3,900 sessions were provided, including 380 sessions for children/young people.

Our family counselling service has been a particular focus this year. The family service has always been an important but small part of our counselling service, and in the past has depended on the availability of family counsellors. The service offers counselling to families who are experiencing a range of difficulties. These may stem from changes in family life, such as separation and divorce, developments within step-families, illness, or loss or bereavement. There may be worries about how to support a troubled adolescent, a child experiencing bullying, or a young person in the family who is struggling to become more independent.

Frequently, a child's/young person's mental wellbeing concerns can be connected to issues within a wider family environment, and family counselling can help address these issues to help provide a holistic solution. At the beginning of 2021, after consultation with a number of local stakeholders, Cogwheel found that the provision of affordable family counselling was a real issue in the Cambridge area. With the help of a grant from the Cambridgeshire County Council Cultivate Fund, Cogwheel was able to appoint a lead family therapist and provide free courses. It is hoped that Cogwheel will now be able to develop a sustainable family counselling service.

Most clients who have had counselling with Cogwheel continue to show a marked improvement in mental health and wellbeing as a result of their counselling. This is measured using an industry-recognised CORE questionnaire, which is filled out by the client at the start and end of counselling.

TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE LIVES

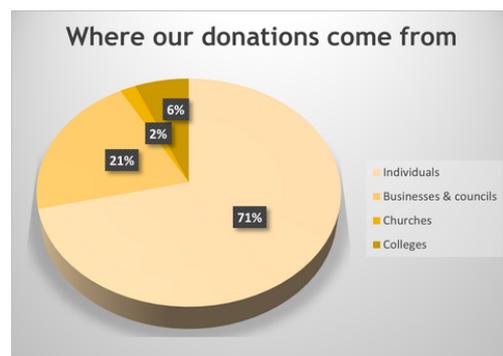
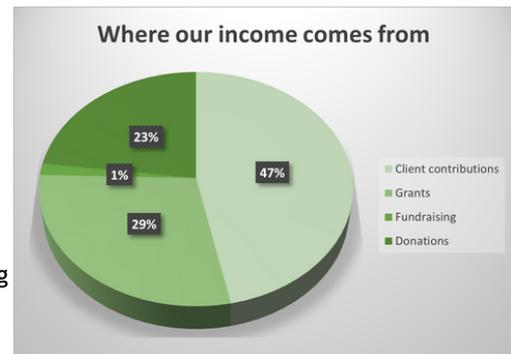
Charity finances: an overview

Cogwheel Counselling is a small mental health charity which continues to receive no statutory funding from the NHS or local councils to provide the affordable counselling to clients.

Cogwheel therefore relies totally on income from client session contributions and from grants, donations and community fundraising.

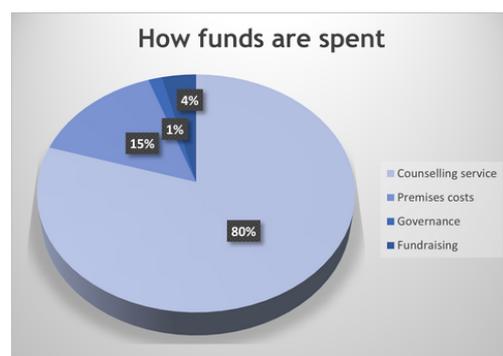
Cogwheel found 2021 to be a tough year financially, with a resulting loss of £14,800, which compares with a surplus of £7,225 for 2020.

Consequently, Cogwheel ended the year with a decrease in general funds held of nearly £15k from that held 12 months previous.



Cogwheel's two funding sources are:

- Client session contributions increased slightly from £91k in 2020 to £94,500 in 2021, from 3,900 sessions provided. The number of sessions is still around 700 sessions fewer than pre-Covid, and this does result in our counselling income being around £25K less.
- Grants and donations: Cogwheel's income held up well in 2021.



Cogwheel incurred additional employee costs in 2021 to assist with the introduction of the new Client Management System and to support clients exhibiting high risk on their initial referral to the charity. There was also an increase in the counsellor costs, partly to offset a reduction in the number of volunteer counsellor sessions provided.

During 2021, Cogwheel increased the minimum counselling session contribution further from £15 to £20, and also introduced a Counselling Support Fund to support those clients unable to afford the minimum session contribution. Cogwheel was fortunate to receive a couple of new sources of funding to support this designated fund.

It is wonderful when offers of support are received out of the blue - one such offer was made by the East Anglian Timber Trade Association for Cogwheel to be their charitable beneficiary from their Annual Dinner held at King's College, Cambridge. A fantastic amount of £2,500 was raised on the night.

Cogwheel is so grateful for the generosity of everyone who supports us financially and raises funds for the charity so that we remain able to provide 3,900 affordable counselling sessions for those who otherwise would not receive counselling.



TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE LIVES

Grants and supporters

Cogwheel is so grateful to the following grant funders and supporters:

- A2O Group
- Acteon Communications Ltd
- ARM Ltd
- Alfred Haines Charitable Trust
- C3 Church
- Cambridge Community Foundation
- Cole Charitable Trust
- East Anglian Timber Trade Association
- Elica Ltd
- Ely Diocesan Board of Finance
- Evelyn Trust
- Girton Town Charity
- Jesus College
- John Huntingdon's Charity
- Magdalene College
- Marsh Christian Trust
- National Lottery
- Northwick Trust
- Pye Foundation
- Sawston Parish Council
- South Cambridge District Council
- Strangward Trust
- The Leys Community Foundation
- Thomas Parsons Charity
- Trinity College
- Waterbeach Parish Council

Donate or fundraise

There are lots of different ways that you can support us. You can get involved by joining in one of our upcoming events, holding an event of your own, by making a donation, organising your own fundraiser or by leaving a legacy.

- You can support our work by making a one-off or regular donation with CAF Donate. Visit cafdonate.cafonline.org/18755 or scan the QR code below. You can also send a cheque to our office: 66 Devonshire Road, Cambridge, CB1 2BL.



- You can text to donate*: To donate £5, text COGWHEEL to 70970. To donate £10, text COGWHEEL to 70191
- You could create your own fundraising page with Facebook - for example, some of our supporters have created a 'birthday fundraiser'.
- You can also support us when you shop online using Easyfundraising and Amazon Smile UK.



* Fundraising, payments and donations will be processed and administered by the National Funding Scheme (Charity No: 1149800), operating as DONATE. Texts will be charged at your standard network rate. For Terms & Conditions, see www.easydonate.org

What could your donation do?

- £5 could help us to provide a listening ear when a client makes initial contact
- £10 will provide a counselling session through the Counselling Support Fund
- £25 could subsidise an initial assessment session
- £50 could subsidise two play sessions for a child in distress
- £100 could provide 4 weeks' clinical supervision for 3 counsellors
- £250 could subsidise 10 weekly sessions for a depressed person on benefits
- £375 could subsidise 15 sessions for a financially disadvantaged couple who are struggling in their relationship
- £500 could give someone a safe place to address long-standing issues with 5 months of counselling



Take on a

Cogwheel 100 Challenge

Help provide 100 subsidised counselling sessions per month

TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE LIVES

Volunteering

We are able to continue playing a vital role in providing counselling when people need it most because of the amazing support of people like you.

Volunteering can be a really rewarding and useful experience. You can get involved by joining in one of our upcoming fundraising events (setting up, marshalling, etc.), holding an event of your own, creating your own online fundraiser, making a donation, or becoming a Cogwheel Ambassador in your community.

We also keep a register of volunteers who we can call on for events. If you would like further information on any of these please do get in touch with our Business Support and Fundraising Manager at neil@cogwheel.org.uk.

We are very grateful to everybody who supports Cogwheel by volunteering as counsellors, trustees, fundraisers, or by providing admin and IT support.

thank you



Join our team today and become a

VOLUNTEER

YOUR TIME, EFFORT, AND PRESENCE AS A VOLUNTEER WILL MAKE A WORLD OF A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF SO MANY!

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

We would love you to support us! You can get involved by joining in one of our upcoming events (setting up, marshalling, etc.), holding an event of your own, making a donation, or becoming a Cogwheel Ambassador

Please email your contact details to Neil at neil@cogwheel.org.uk

Want to know more?
Visit our website at www.cogwheel.org.uk



