



Annual Report

1 October 2023 -
30 September 2024

1. Administrative Information

Charity name	Families Out Loud
Registered Charity Number	1189345
Registered address	12 Fuller Avenue, Corsham, SN13 9NF
Trustees	John Pendrey (Chair of Trustees) Susy Lenihan Debra Hawley Susanna Lisle Kayleigh Malone Bonnie Simpson
Independent Examiner	Berkeley Hall Marshall, 6 Charlotte Street Bath, BA1 2NE
Bank	Lloyds Bank plc, Victoria Branch

2. Chair's Report

If 2023 was a good year for Families Out Loud, 2024 was a great year. It started with the 3-year lottery grant that has enabled us to employ two part-time people: Donna, our fundraising manager and Anyonita, our marketing coordinator. Both have brought a professional approach to Families Out Loud, and both have proved highly effective.

Our client base has increased year on year with Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury remaining the areas of most activity. The number of website visitors has almost doubled through the year and social media numbers have also increased, with an average monthly Facebook reach of 18,000. The number of teen clients has increased, although we all know there is more need out there. New enquiries have

been spasmodic between 4 and 18 per month, nonetheless the numbers are always positive. Across the board KPIs are very encouraging.

Once again committee members, trustees, volunteers and counsellors have stepped up to the mark and pushed the charity to a wider audience. We have been into schools, attended many external events, and held craft stalls at various venues across Wiltshire. We also held a meet and chat lunch for all volunteers, counsellors and supporters in March. It was good to put a face to an email and chat about things outside Families Out Loud.

On a personal note, I have decided that the time is right for me to step aside as Chair and member of the committee and let other people carry on the good work. I shall though continue as a trustee. I have come to this decision mainly because I have every confidence in the people that we have volunteering and working for Families Out Loud. I shall therefore hand the Chair over to Sara from the January 2025 committee meeting. I have every confidence that she will prove to be a great Chair. I have also taken on other less emotional responsibilities outside of Families Out Loud.

There will be other yearly reports from other people. We could not be where we are today without them, and I certainly would not have lasted this long. So to you, a personal thank you.

John Pendrey

3. Objectives

This summer the charity worked with Reppik Partners to begin the implementation of a Balanced Scorecard. This tool will facilitate National Lottery (and other funders') reporting and will be a framework for monitoring implementation of our 3-year strategy. Creating a Balanced Scorecard, funded by The National Lottery, has resulted in the adoption of FOL's eight **strategic objectives**:

- Increasing our client reach to more families – adults & teens
- Increasing our external profile and reach
- Enhancing and diversifying our long-term funding streams
- Expanding the Board of Trustees, their skills and role
- Engaging more counsellors and volunteers
- Increasing FOL's internal and external skills
- Increasing measured risk taking and transformation
- Increasing understanding of addiction impacts

When working to achieve these aims, Wiltshire families affected by another person's addiction will be central at all times.

3.1 Our Purpose and Vision

Families Out Loud is a Wiltshire charity working with families challenged by someone else's drug and alcohol dependency, supporting them to bravely build a better life.

We want to reach every family impacted by drug and alcohol use, so they can speak out, free from stigma, and receive the support, care and help they need.

3.2 Our Values

Listen - We want families to be heard. To do this we must listen with empathy, thoughtfulness and optimism. We listen to what our families and colleagues say. We listen with curiosity and apply creative and constructive thinking to all we do, asking questions to help us understand and connect.

Care - We want families to feel valued and supported. To do this, we must be thoughtful, empathetic and kind. We will be respectful and inclusive in our actions. We understand the little things that made our families and friends smile before the chaos of drug and alcohol dependency.

Be Practical - We want families to receive the help that works for them. We will be professional and act with integrity in all we do. We will be practical and realistic in finding the best way forward for our families.

Show Determination - We want families to be helped. To achieve this we must do the hard things, for both our families and our colleagues, by engaging a positive outlook and a resilient attitude. When others have stopped, or given up, we will still be by their side. Sticking with them, committed to helping them achieve their goals, at their pace, for their chosen future.

4. People

People are at the centre of everything that FOL does. The support services that we provide for Wiltshire families who are affected by addiction are open-ended and based on individual needs. Nothing would be achievable without our fantastic team of people including paid staff, volunteers, trustees and committee members.

4.1 Client support

The total number of FOL clients as at 30 September 2024 was 215. During the year, we delivered:

- 626 one-to-one client sessions
- Monthly in-person support groups in Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury
- 36 online support group sessions

Our range of in-person and online services is as follows:

- 1:1 counselling/ therapeutic support to suit individual needs
- Specialist counselling/ therapeutic support for family groups
- Face-to-face and online peer support group sessions
- Bereavement support
- Specialist teen support

In autumn 2023 we launched our new **teen support service** to help young people who have a family member using drugs or alcohol. This specialist service for 13 to 17-year-olds is delivered by our expert young person's counsellor. Teenagers can struggle with their emotions when someone in the family is using drugs and alcohol. It is common for them to withdraw, to struggle at school, and to exhibit changes in behaviour and extremes of mood that are difficult to manage. Support from a specialist counsellor, who encourages expression of emotions which are then heard and accepted, can help the young person realise they aren't responsible for the actions and outcomes of their loved-one's behaviour.

Through our Values of **Listen, Care, Be Practical and Show Determination** we endeavour to take all of our clients on a journey towards improved mental and physical wellbeing by helping them to:

- Deal with feelings of anxiety, distress, shame, guilt, fear, isolation
- Understand where responsibilities lie
- Step back from chaos
- Stay safe in their own home
- Manage their own behaviour
- Take back control and focus on other relationships and activities
- Accept another person's choices without enabling

4.2 Client satisfaction

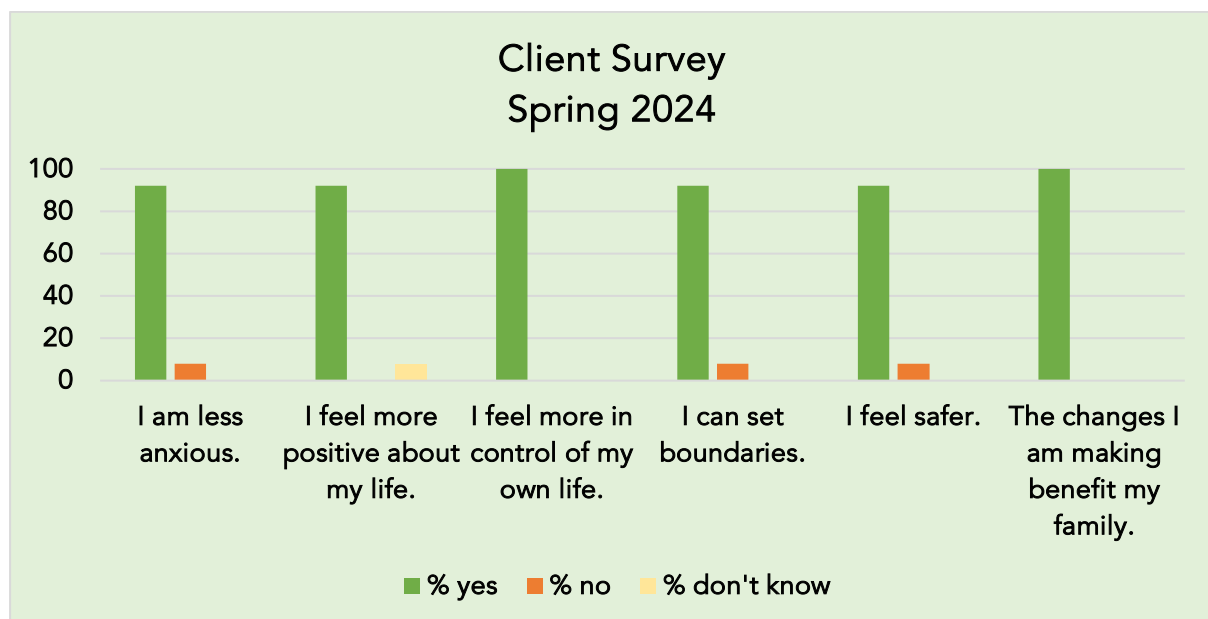
To check our approach to services, we ask for client feedback in a number of ways:

- Wellbeing scale- a method of monitoring recently introduced, new clients answer a series of questions when they first receive one-to-one support and answer the same questions at the end of those sessions. The first results are due in October 2024.

- Client wellbeing check-in calls re follow-up/ progress after more formal sessions are complete and also following missed appointments
- Client telephone surveys re suitability of services such as days/ times of in-person or online peer support group sessions
- Client online surveys re one-to-one support sessions/ benefits of services on wellbeing or family life etc

4.3 Outcomes and Impacts

Results of client survey, spring 2024:



Here are a few - of many - client testimonials:

- *"This charity has been my lifeline for almost 5 years. I can't imagine life without it." Anon, Wiltshire*
- *"FOL has been a lifeline for me. I feel better equipped to deal with my daughter and her addictions now." Jean, Wiltshire*
- *"The patience, love and support I have felt from Families Out Loud is life changing and keeps me moving forward, thank you." Angie Wiltshire*

Shared stories - some clients are happy to share these for publication on our website:

<https://familiesoutloud.org/addiction-problems-in-wiltshire/>

4.4 Recruitment

It was a busy recruiting year during which we were pleased to welcome the following people to our charity:

- Trustees – Susanna Lisle (previously a committee member), Kayleigh Malone and Bonnie Simpson
- Committee member – Jordan Holloway
- Volunteers – Jo Pudney, Hannah Perry & Penny Fernandes
- Counsellors – Vicky Hackett, Andin Tagni & Natasha Vaughan
- Fundraising manager – Donna Duffy (position funded by The National Lottery)
- Marketing coordinator - Anyonita Green (position funded by The National Lottery)

4.5 Volunteering

Our team of volunteers, contributing over 4,000 hours annually, getting involved as follows:

- **Volunteer Makers** create beautiful items that are sold at craft markets, in local shops, online or by word of mouth to raise funds for our cause.
- **Volunteer Helpers** sell items and promote us on market stalls, at conferences and events, and help to raise our profile in their locality.
- **Volunteer Writers** produce articles and create marketing material for publication on our website, on social media and in the local press. Writing from the heart and from experience, their words reflect the reality of living with substance abuse in the family.
- **Volunteer Fundraisers** assist with grant applications, do sponsored activities and sell raffle tickets.
- **Volunteer Speakers** go to community groups such as the WI, GP surgeries or local schools and talk about the work that we do.

5. Marketing, Events & Communications

Our branding has recently been refreshed and this is reflected on our website, where this year we've been able to incorporate more detail about our organisation and post broader content relevant to those seeking us out, including more news stories and personal experiences.

Our quarterly newsletter mailing list continues to grow and we now communicate with over 470 contacts including clients, professionals, sponsors and followers.

FOL is very active on social media with a Facebook Reach high of 24,800 people in January. By the end of September we had a total of 399 Facebook followers and 289 Instagram followers.

5.1 Craft Market Stalls

The Craft Committee members, Dinah Wellenkamp, Bridget Green and Susanna Lisle, have run nine craft stalls so far this year, with more scheduled for the rest of the 2024. Our volunteers and makers have worked hard to help us, and to make beautiful items. A special mention must be made to Barbara Pearce who has made a wonderful contribution to FOL with her beautiful bags, cushions and other items, as well as helping at events. We would also like to thank Jane Eaton who has donated all the sales from her artwork to FOL.

We continue to be supported by Matthew and his team at The Nursery in Hilperton where we have run three stalls. Although the weather has not been very kind at this outside venue we have done well. It was particularly popular over Easter with the Easter Bunnies made by Dinah and St James Church Hall in May was also a good day. The Made in Bradford on Avon Summer Fair was very successful and resulted in us being invited to have a permanent space in the Made in Bradford on Avon shop where we are now selling cards, books and calendars. Barbara, with new volunteers Penny and Tanya, ran the FOL Craft stall at the Salisbury Hospice Summer Fair at Wilton and in September Dinah and her daughter Anja ran the stall at the Corsham Street Fair. At all our events the volunteers have engaged with the public, distributed leaflets and provided information.

The Craft Committee will be holding Christmas craft stalls in November and December at the Civic Hall in Trowbridge, the Sunflower Events Christmas Fair in Devizes, the Boscombe Down Christmas Market and the Air Ambulance Christmas Fair. All these events will be new to our Christmas schedule.

Next year the Events Committee are planning several larger events as well as more market stalls.

We would like to thank all our volunteers who have helped on the stalls to promote Families Out Loud or have made the lovely things we sell to raise money for the charity.

5.2 Networking Events:

Here are some of the events around the county which were attended by a FOL representative:

- Nov 23 – NHS APA Virtual Conference
- Dec 23 - St James Christmas Tree Festival in Trowbridge
- May 24 – Wiltshire College Mental Health Awareness events in Trowbridge & Chippenham
- Jun 24 – Connect Wiltshire Substance Misuse training
- Jul 24 – Corsham Wellbeing Team Youth meeting
- Aug 24 – Selwood Housing charity football match
- Sep 24 – Connect Substance Use Service for young people – team meeting
- Sep 24 – Army Welfare Services event in Neston

6. Structure and Governance

Families Out Loud is governed by a constitution, the objects of which are:

For the Public Benefit, the relief and assistance of adults and young people (13-17) in Wiltshire, who are adversely affected by the misuse of, principally, alcohol and drugs, by a family member or friend, by providing them with support, counselling and advice either in person or online.

Trustees serve a 4-year fixed-term after which they step down and seek re-election. New trustees are subject to the Trustee Interview Process where they are interviewed and selected by existing trustees.

For governance and training purposes, the charity has adopted the following policies: Board of Trustees, Adult Safeguarding, Child Protection, Equal Opportunities, Privacy, Data Protection & GDPR, Finance & Reserves & Whistleblowing.

7. Finance and Fundraising

Since launching in 2018, our finances have supported a steady growth in client numbers and support team staff. During this period we have also expanded our board of trustees, committee and volunteer base. The experiences of the past years mean that the charity is now operating on a strong foundation in terms of administration,

people skills and charitable practice, which we will continue to build on over the coming years.

This past year has been a period of growth and change. In January we were awarded 3-years' salary funding from The National Lottery. This grant covers two part-time roles of fundraising manager and marketing coordinator.

In April we welcomed our new fundraising manager, Donna Duffy who is an innovative charity sector development and income stream specialist bringing many years' fundraising experience within both small and large national charities. We are already reaping the benefits from her expertise, having received multi-year grants and financial support from a variety of trusts and other organisations.

With strong demand for our counselling services, which are our highest costs, expenditure has increased from £12,256 in 2022/23 to £20,210 in 2023/24. Income for service provision was generated mainly through grants received from the following generous supporters: St James Trust, Trowbridge Town Council, Trowbridge Area Board, Martin Geddes Charitable Trust, Jack Lane Charitable Trust, Wiltshire Community Foundation and Westbury Town Council. Further income was derived from donations from individuals and also from organisations such as Holman Fleet Services. In addition, client contributions for support services rose from £2,760 in 2022/23 to £5,020 in 2023/24.

Fundraising was also achieved through selling high-quality goods - handmade by our amazing volunteers – at craft markets, in local shops, and to friends and family. In May we were honoured to be chosen as Selwood Housing's Charity of the Year which involves a number of ongoing fundraising events organised by Selwood staff.

Full details of FOL's financial activities can be found in our annual accounts.