



## Sir Norman Lamb Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund Impact Report



A review of the difference our 2024 grant funding has made in 2025





## Our Vision

When Norfolk Community Foundation and I established our Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund in 2019, we set a challenge as to what we could do to improve support for young people in the heart of local communities, so that we can catch them before they fall and end up requiring clinical intervention.

Existing challenges have only been compounded by the Covid-19 crisis, with 1 in 4 teenagers having a mental health difficulty, an increase from 1 in 6 in 2021.

Early intervention is key to prevent deterioration in a young

person's mental wellbeing – with the voluntary and community sector perfectly placed to address these challenges.

This report highlights just some of the innovative projects we've been able to support thanks to the generosity of people across our county. We know the need has never been greater, but I believe that by continuing to work together, we can keep young people safe and well.

**Sir Norman Lamb**

**[I enjoyed] just talking about my problems and worries on my chest.**

- Young person supported by Sunbeams

**The only change I have made was to be more compassionate towards myself and my situations that could be short term.**

- Young person supported by Break

## The Sir Norman Lamb Coalition for Young People

The first task in understanding how we could improve community support was to go to the local charities and community groups and ask them what it was they needed to strengthen their services and support for children and young people. They told us they needed training for staff, that they'd like to join up with other organisations to refer to and learn from, that they wanted to work in partnership, and that they wished to become more visible. Underpinning all of this was regular grant funding to secure and develop their offer.

The Sir Norman Lamb Coalition for Young People was subsequently established in 2020 to respond to these needs and to help strengthen and develop community services for young people. Continuing to consult with the groups is vital to ensure that the work of the Coalition remains relevant, meaningful and adds value to their work.

**There is so much that E cannot do, not only because of her total sight loss but because of other problems associated with her illness. For E to be able to do something fun and active like this makes such a difference to her.**

- Parent of a young person supported by Vision Norfolk

We've been delighted with the impact of the Coalition in its first five years; now supporting over 60 organisations across Norfolk working with children and young people, including those with special education needs and disabilities.

As well as funding opportunities, members get an opportunity to network, access shared resources and learn from one another.

Access to training, delivered by expert speakers, has enabled members over the last year to develop and upskill staff on a range of topics including Youth Mental Health First Aid and eating disorders.





## What has your support helped us to achieve over the last year?

Alongside training opportunities, shared resources and partnership working, the Coalition has provided vital grant funding to meet the needs of youth work services.

The focus of the annual Sir Norman Lamb Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund grant programme is decided based on the needs of

Coalition members and aims to strengthen their services.

Our members told us they wanted grant funding to focus on supporting the provision of counselling services or one-to-one therapeutic interventions for young people (priority one) as well as open-access and targeted youth work approaches that include interventions to actively support young people's mental health (priority two).

**Here is a snapshot of just some of the projects funded with your support.**



**£75k**  
awarded to  
15 groups



**86%**  
reported  
improved  
wellbeing



**10,994**  
hours of support  
delivered  
with an average of  
**16** hours of support  
per young person



**50%**  
feel more  
able to deal  
with changes



at a cost of  
**£107** per young  
person



**67%**  
feel more  
confident

## Priority One

Organisation	Project Summary
Action Community Enterprise CIC Limited	To provide in-house mental health support to students in the form of 1:1 sessions with a qualified counsellor.
Cup-O-T: Wellness and Therapy Services	To fund 50 hours of 1:1 occupational therapy for six young people aged 11 to 25.
Eating Matters CIO	To deliver counselling sessions for young people (11-25) with mild to moderate eating disorders.
Great Yarmouth & Gorleston Young Carers Project	To cover the costs of six 1:1 counselling sessions for 16 young carers.
New Routes Integration	To work with MAP to provide accredited counselling sessions for up to 20 displaced young people.
Sunbeams Play	To fund counselling sessions for up to 15 young people with autism and/or their young carers.
The Norwich Centre	To fund a counsellor one day a week in support of Youth Connect; a dedicated BACP accredited counselling service for 18-25s.

## Priority Two

The Village Orchard East CIC	To cover the costs of four psychological sessions a week for six-months for children and young people
Break Charity	Towards the running of their Thinking Positive programme for care-experienced children and young people.
EP Youth	To continue 1:1 targeted youth work support with young people aged 11-19 either in schools and/or EP Youth's base in Fakenham.

## Priority Two Cont.

Organisation	Project Summary
Henderson Trust	To continue to run their fortnightly Girls Group and Youth Group.
MTM Youth Services CIC	To deliver two Young Carers' groups for Years 8 to 10 in South Norfolk.
Norfolk & Norwich Association for the Blind (t/a Vision Norfolk)	To deliver a programme of holiday/weekend activities for young people (6-18) with visual impairments.
Norwich City Community Sports Foundation	To contribute towards the cost of running their Onside programme, which aims to break the cycle of poor behaviour and help to steer young people back into the right track.
The Garage Trust Ltd	To support young people facing challenges to access The Garage's Big Breaks follow-on intervention programme.



## EATING MATTERS NORFOLK-WIDE

**Eating Matters were funded £5,000 to deliver counselling sessions for 12 young people aged 11-25 with mild to moderate eating disorders.**

Eating disorders are defined as an unhealthy attitude to food that takes over an individual's life and makes them unwell, are most prevalent with those aged 14-25. Eating Matters receives referrals from health services and self-referrals, and supports young people at the early stages of disordered eating to change their behaviours and prevent them developing a more severe and entrenched eating disorder, potentially requiring inpatient care.

Eating Matters supported 12 young people with 1:1 counselling with the funding received. All of the young people had self-referred to Eating Matters for support with their disordered eating behaviours. Their counselling programme offers 20 weeks of counselling with the same counsellor for continuity of care; development of the client counsellor relationship builds trust, giving the young person the best chance to fully engage in the counselling process, leading to better outcomes.



### CASE STUDY

S, age 15, self-referred to Eating Matters following recommendation from the hospital. They had been in hospital 4 times in 2 years; 3 occasions following an overdose and the more recent due to acute food refusal. At assessment they presented with restricting their food intake, history of bullying, suicidal ideation, isolation, deliberate self-harm, low mood and confusion around gender identity. S was struggling to attend school regularly.

They had little insight into why they were restricting their food; they were able to identify wanting to explore their lack of relationship with their dad since he left the family when S was a baby. An Eating Matters counsellor worked with S over 28 weeks; they attended 19 person-centred therapy sessions and engaged well. The focus of the work was on their relationship with their body, their confidence and discovering who they were as a person. Throughout the weeks their relationship with food improved significantly as did their mood. Their biggest change was in their confidence to dress and express themselves how they wanted to. Their gender identity played a part in this.

At the end of therapy S hadn't self-harmed for 6 months and they were no longer experiencing suicidal thoughts or thoughts of wanting to harm themselves. At the end of therapy we ask: What changes have you been able to make and S said "I have been able to wear more clothes that show my body without worrying. I have also been more able to express myself and feel more comfortable in myself." In response to the question What has been helpful about your counselling, S replied "It was nice to have someone to talk to who I felt could understand what I meant. It was good to have counselling focused around my eating issues as I feel it helped."



## CUP-O-T: WELLNESS AND THERAPY SERVICES

### SOUTH NORFOLK

**Cup-O-T were funded £5,000 to provide 50 hours of one-to-one occupational therapy and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy for six young people aged 11 to 25.**

Therapy sessions were delivered by a senior occupational therapist who has experience working with young people in forensic services, eating disorder services and community mental health.

Cup-O-T are targeting young people who have been waiting too long for therapeutic support. Just over one in three young people with a diagnosable mental health condition get access to NHS care and treatment (NHS Five Year Forward View for Mental Health dashboard). In a YoungMinds survey, three-quarters (76%) of parents said that their child's mental health had deteriorated while waiting for support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Cup-O-T youth workers recognised a need for one-to-one therapy and some young people needed support prior to joining in with Cup-O-T therapy groups. The aim of this project was to work with young people identified to reduce their time on waiting lists and the detrimental impact of this. The young person could then access group therapy programmes, youth work, or attend youth provision by a local partner organisation to continue supporting them in the community.

## CASE STUDY

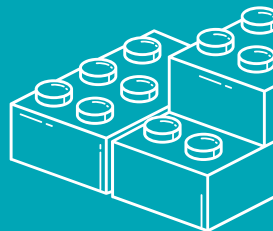
J is one of the young people who received 1:1 occupational therapy to process the loss of his father, grandfather, and anxiety about school-related trauma. J said: "The therapy was hard but I enjoyed the setting in the forest and in the office. The office was good because it was quiet, it felt calming, the seats were really nice and the walls had moss on them. I like spending time with Catherine because she is nice and understanding."

J's Mum talked about why he accessed therapy and his experience of the process: "J was 2/3 when his father became ill and passed away. I have always felt that J had not properly processed the loss of his father due to his age. I feel that EMDR therapy has helped join the dots with thoughts and emotions from his past that he is unaware of but comes out in anxiety. Before EMDR therapy J had quite strong emotions and anxiety regarding his father but now he is better able to hear stories about his dad without feeling such strong grief/loss. He has also been telling me memories of his Grandad without getting very distressed which is a huge step.

J seems 'lighter' in himself. I feel he has been a bit stuck, unable to process things that he felt in his body while he was experiencing these traumatic events. Even though he found the therapy difficult at times, once he was rested and had a good night sleep he bounced back the next day and said he felt better.

He seems calmer, less anxious and his general wellbeing is higher." J said therapy helped him "by making me feel like I can think about daddy and grandad but not get instantly upset so I can think about them in peace more and deal with my grief better."

## THE VILLAGE ORCHARD EAST CIC NORWICH



**Village Orchard East were funded £5,000 to cover the costs of four psychological sessions a week for six-months for six children and young people.**

This organisation is staffed by highly qualified practitioners that can support children and young people with a variety of techniques, including Art Therapy, Dance Movement Psychotherapy, Child & Adolescent Psychotherapeutic Counsellors and EMDR therapies. Therapeutic practitioners provide safe spaces for children and young people that allow them to explore their experiences, trauma, or self in a non-judgmental and client led way.

Village Orchard East CIC work to support children and young people 'where they are' and adapt to their needs to support them as an individual, whilst also taking opportunities to work alongside parents & other family members as well as schools, social workers & other professionals around the child.

During sessions, the child's needs, desires, presentation and age are all discussed and taken into account, the client was then placed with an age & modality appropriate practitioner and offered up to 24 sessions of weekly psychological support. Across the 6 clients, the average number of sessions attended was 17.

108

Sessions supported 6 individuals aged between 4-16 over the life of the project, each with their own unique journey, and led by the practitioner most suitably matched to their needs.

### CASE STUDY

T's carers and teachers felt that counselling would give him a safe space to express his feelings and help him to make sense of events in his past. T had experienced a traumatic childhood and after a period of time living with extended family was taken into care with a foster family. Teachers reported that T could sometimes find peer relationships difficult and T felt he occasionally 'got into trouble for saying things that he shouldn't.'

A 'tool-kit' of therapy items was brought to each session. This included art materials, a small sand-tray, small people figures, Lego and a small selection of games. T's exploration and play often involved building precarious structures that were liable to fall down and, in many sessions, it felt like T was testing the limits of what a structure or figure could or could not hold. T demonstrated patience and resilience in returning, time and time again, to reconstruct or reinforce a structure that had fallen down.

As the therapeutic work continued, T was increasingly able to voice his feelings about his sessions and his wish for them to continue. With his therapist, T was able to appreciate that this may have felt the safest, and perhaps only way, to return to and begin to process, traumatic moments from his past.

**Poignantly, T was able to identify and articulate that his play and exploration had served as a metaphor for difficult experiences in his early childhood.**





## BREAK NORFOLK-WIDE

**Break were funded £5,000 towards the running of their Thinking Positive programme for care-experienced young people.**

Through talking and listening to other young people like themselves they felt less isolated and can build peer support networks. Break encourage young people to think positively about their future and set goals which they can help them achieve. They also provide meals during sessions, as some of care-experienced young people are affected by the cost of living crisis and are experiencing food poverty: care leavers living independently in the community are eating on a very low budget, sometimes missing meals.

12 young people received a total of 92.5 hours of one-to-one wellbeing support and 52 young people received 2,557.5 hours of group support. Activities took place in small groups so young people feel safe to discuss their concerns and challenges. Break delivered a range of wellbeing and aspiration sessions, including recording podcasts; first aid training, volunteering with Break fundraising team to collect Xmas trees, educational sessions at Gressingham Museum, a cat cafe visit, a beach clean-up day, and sailing from Helsinki to Tallin.

In addition during this period, six young families were able to bring their babies home from hospital after birth. The Emotional Wellbeing Service helped them to improve their own emotional regulation and better communicate and cooperate with local authorities to demonstrate their fitness to parent. This has helped to break the cycle of children of care leavers ending up in care.

## OUTCOMES SURVEY

- **80%** of young people have found that due to accessing the lifelong opportunities team they feel less lonely/isolated.
- **75%** of young people have said that they feel as though their social skills have improved.
- **80%** of the young people that the lifelong opportunities team work with have said that their skills for working have improved.

## CASE STUDY

After engaging with Break's Building Futures project RI had decided that he wanted to work in maintenance. Break helped him to secure a college place for an apprenticeship. He had a 35 hour week with 1 day studying in college and 3 days working outside college.

However, RI's anxiety about being in a group with unfamiliar people was so severe that he found it too difficult to attend college; this led to him then also calling in sick to his work experience placement. The Opportunities Team realised he was struggling and so provided chances for him to socialise at Break events ensuring he did not become isolated while he strengthened his confidence in interacting with others.

The Team also provided support so that so he could continue working with Break's maintenance team and independently study to obtain his qualification. RI said that without this support he would have failed his apprenticeship. RI has been working with the Break Fundraising Team on a number of events, both preparing for and attending public facing events which is an enormous step for him and he is really flourishing -it is always a pleasure to see him in the Fundraising office.

## VISION NORFOLK NORWICH

**Vision Norfolk were funded £4,987 to deliver a programme of holiday and weekend activities for 61 young people (6-18) with visual impairments.**

Research indicates vision impairment is associated with greater symptoms of anxiety and depression with significant challenges due to social isolation. In the experience of Vision Norfolk, the limited ability to detect non-verbal clues, including facial expressions and body language leads to struggles to interact and engage. Activities provide a safe environment for children and young people to meet others with similar experiences, to share new experiences, and build the confidence to lead an active, full life.

Vision Norfolk ran 13 successful events for children and young people with vision impairment during school holidays and weekends. Activities included engaging day trips to the Mobile Planetarium, Sea Life Centre, Dinosaur Park, Thrigby Hall, and Pleasurewood Hills, as well as group activities such as ten-pin bowling and outdoor adventure sessions at Hautbois.

Vision Norfolk also offered opportunities to try something new, including Clip and Climb and snow tubing. Seasonal highlights included a festive Christmas train ride and party. In addition to these, they piloted an intergenerational session involving lantern painting and a sunflower-growing competition, providing a creative and inclusive way to bring different age groups together. Some activities were adapted from the original plan.



### CASE STUDY

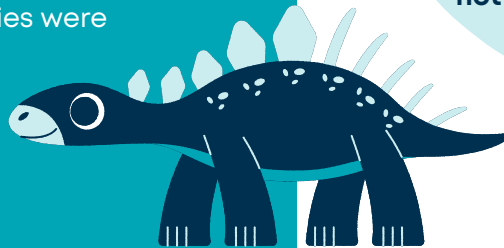
before Covid, M was a healthy, fit young person with a love of drama and musical theatre, performance and life. However, Covid had a huge impact on her health, resulting in many conditions, including complete sight loss on the right and very significant impairment on the left which over the past 4 ½ years has deteriorated. Although they contacted various organisations, there appeared to be no support available.

The deterioration in her sight was significantly impacting her ability to access learning, causing a loss of independence and resulting in increased anxiety. The mother and daughter felt very alone in this. Through the internet she found Vision Norfolk, and then met our CYPF Coordinator Josh Bartholomew.

“Immediately I felt my daughter and I were no longer alone in this journey, and that there was someone who understood what my daughter was going through, how her sight loss was impacting her and also my fears, worries and anxieties as her parent.

Through Vision Norfolk my daughter and I have received so very much support. She has gone from feeling very isolated, alone and a burden to her friends and family members when going out – so often avoiding activities with them, to taking part in group activities with Vision Norfolk and thriving! She has regained her confidence, smile and enjoyment of aspects of her life she found almost impossible.

**She loves taking part in the activities with Josh and the other young people, making friends, helping the young people and spending time with others who see her as M not as her disabilities.”**







## Find out more or get in touch

-  [www.norfolkfoundation.com](http://www.norfolkfoundation.com)
-  01603 623958
-  [shinebrighter@norfolkfoundation.com](mailto:shinebrighter@norfolkfoundation.com)
-  1st Floor Carmelite House, 2 St James Court, Norwich, NR3 1SL

**Front cover image:** Swan Youth Project / **Back cover image:** Sheringham Little Theatre



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