

**Likewise**

# Learning Report 2023



Funded by



Camden



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# Introduction

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year our work at Likewise has grown and developed in several ways, notably:

- In our partnerships with the NHS, Camden Council and other local organisations.
- The continued development of our community wellbeing hub.
- The development of a community garden space.
- In our work to influence the wider system of health and social care in Camden.
- In renewing and growing our staff team post-pandemic.

The headlines of our impact as an organization are:

- We have been able to support and uphold the wellbeing of those we have worked with in our one-to-one work.
- Our community programme has expanded, reaching more people, and diversifying the routes to engagement through the garden, providing a space for belonging and connection.
- We have been able to influence more parts of the social care system in Camden, with our Research, Learning and Evaluation lead taking a strategic position in the Core Teams and our collaborative work with other professionals becoming more central. These interactions are seeing us bring our values and way of working into contact with the broader system.

### Key data April 2022 to March 2023

#### All Likewise services

Total hours\*

 **8,936**

Total sessions\*

 **6,802**

Total participants\*

 **571**

#### Short term 1-1 sessions

Hours\*

 **2,427**

Sessions\*

 **2,385**

Participants\*

 **334**

#### Long term 1-1 sessions

Hours

 **5,055**

Sessions

 **3,344**

Participants

 **81**

#### Community

Hours

 **1,214**

Sessions

 **836**

Total attendances

 **2,542**

\*Includes a Support and Connect estimate



## OUR APPROACH TO COMPLEXITY AND IMPACT

At Likewise we are committed to complexity in all its forms, people are complex, as are their lives and the systems they are part of. We try to navigate with and bring this complexity into our work. This influences how we think about and share our impact as an organisation, as well as setting us apart from how other organisations in the sector work.

We align our work with the Human Learning Systems approach which considers complexity as describing the “processes by which the outcomes we care about are made (outcomes such as improved wellbeing for people, or having a job). If we fail to understand and embrace complexity, we will not be able to create the outcomes we seek” (Human Learning Systems, 2023).

In its most simple form, this looks like working with people, not targets. We try to avoid pre-determined KPIs such as ‘supporting x people into employment’, we work with people flexibly and support them on the intricacies of their own journey. This entails working to the needs of community and not pre-defining what success looks like as this can change from week to week. Success is not linear, and impact is difficult to precisely claim in a world where a person interacts with so many different systems which all have an influence on a person’s outcomes.

This means that whilst we have measures to get a sense of the impact our work has had on a person, we don’t set specific goals and targets around these. Instead, we observe and learn from what we’re seeing and what it says about the support we’re providing. We try to work with complexity by capturing and reporting with as much flexibility as possible, prioritising the reported experience of staff and clients in the work.

## OUR WAY OF WORKING

As well as foregrounding the complex realities of life, our model of person-centred and “relationship first” work is also essential to our beliefs about change, who we are as an organisation and what we do. This manifests in our work in a number of ways:

- We work with people in their fullness. This includes working with people who may have been denied access to, or not been able to fit within, other services. Rather than focusing on a person’s problems or diagnosis, we work with the person themselves as a mutual partner as much as possible. This enables person-to-person working and supports those who work with us to feel that their strengths, flaws, and challenges are valued in the same way ours are.

- All of our work stems from the person, we hold meeting people wherever they are as being at the root of our support. This means that however someone feels or is presenting we try and support them as they are. This means our support is adaptable to the people we work with and can flex around their specific set of circumstances.

- All of our relationships with the people we work with are underlined by authenticity. We prioritise truly getting to know the people we work with and bringing our authentic selves into these relationships.

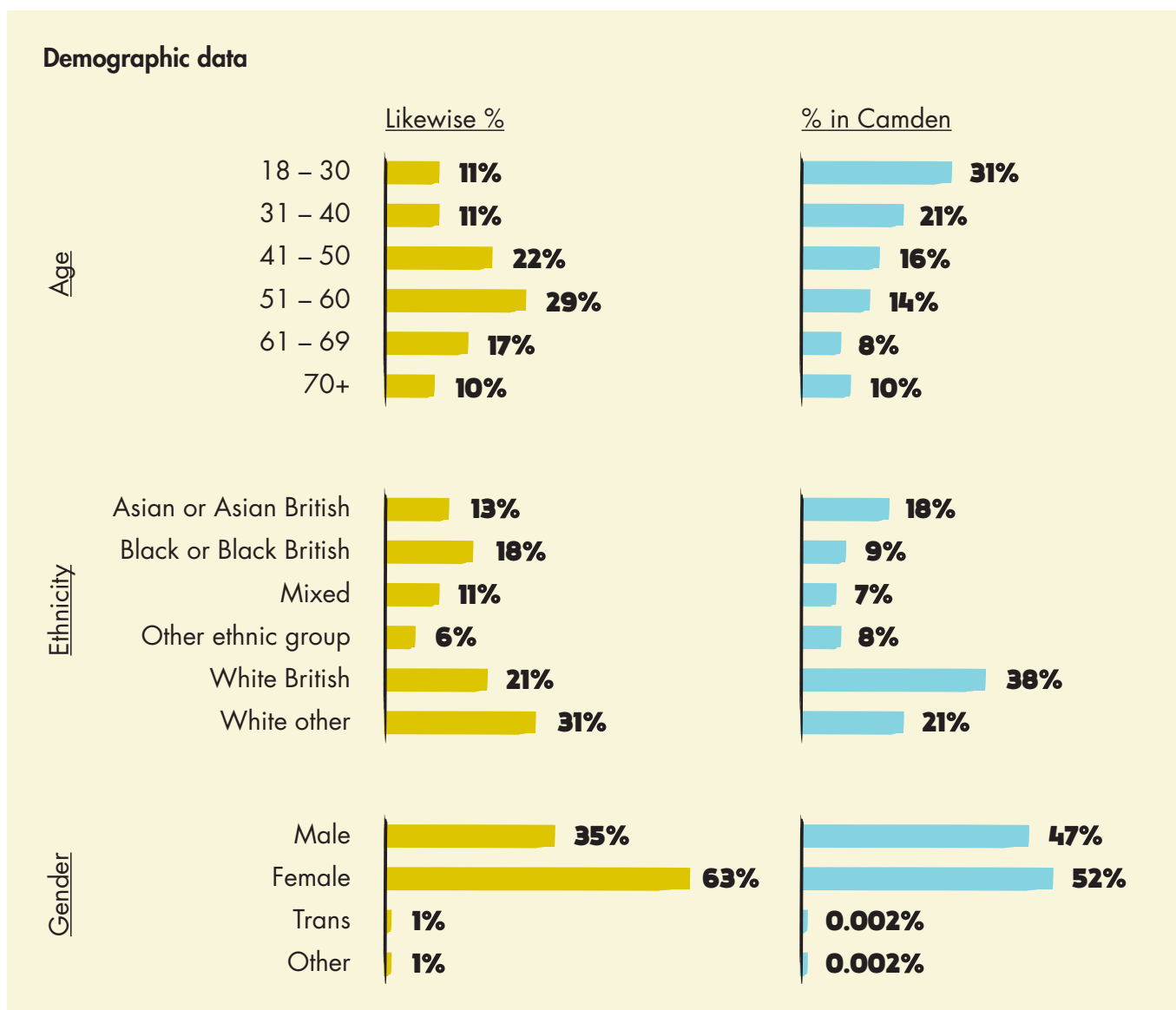
Values like these support us to create a service which is focused on the needs of our community, provides moments of belonging and connections and engages with the community in its fullness.

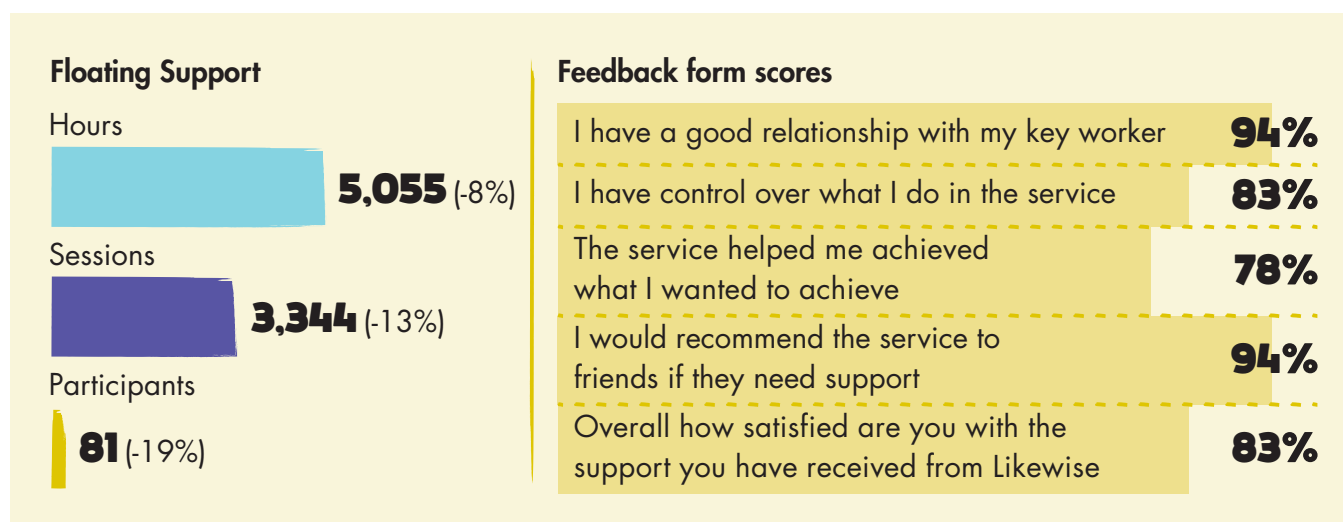


## Service rundown

Our demographics show that whilst we work with a diverse group of people, the composition of our community looks slightly different from that of the broader community in Camden. Our community contains more people aged between 40 and 70, as well as more people from the Black or Black British, mixed and white other ethnic groups. Our community also proportionally has more self-identifying women than the rest of Camden. All of this is to say that our community

to some degree stems from the need we serve. One of the main focuses of our work is providing belonging and combatting isolation, something which is proportionally more of a challenge for older communities (Camden Council, 2022). As an organisation, our diversity meets our measure of 'good enough', we have been putting conscious work this year into making the hub as welcoming as a space of possible, so we hope to continue to engage with the diversity of Camden.





## LONG-TERM ONE-TO-ONE

Our long-term one-to-one support consists of our Floating Support service, which provides flexible, person centred, emotional and practical support to the community, charged at an hourly rate.

Over the last year, we paused referrals into our Floating Support service to allow the staff team to work more sustainably with their current caseload. This means that we've worked with slightly less people and have a waiting list. The service continues as a flagship of our "humans alongside humans", "relationship first" approach, that centres acceptance, learning together and belonging. Our key challenge for this service is how to maintain a highly flexible and adaptive service that meets people in all their complexity, while managing both the human and financial sustainability of the model. The level of resourcing that is currently needed, mean that the service is part funded by charging an hourly fee. This fee covers around 60% of the cost of delivering the service.

Our sustainability enquiry centres on:

- The contractual boundaries and working agreements of the service, such as introducing a minimum hourly commitment from clients, limits to contact and support that happens outside of the contracted time.

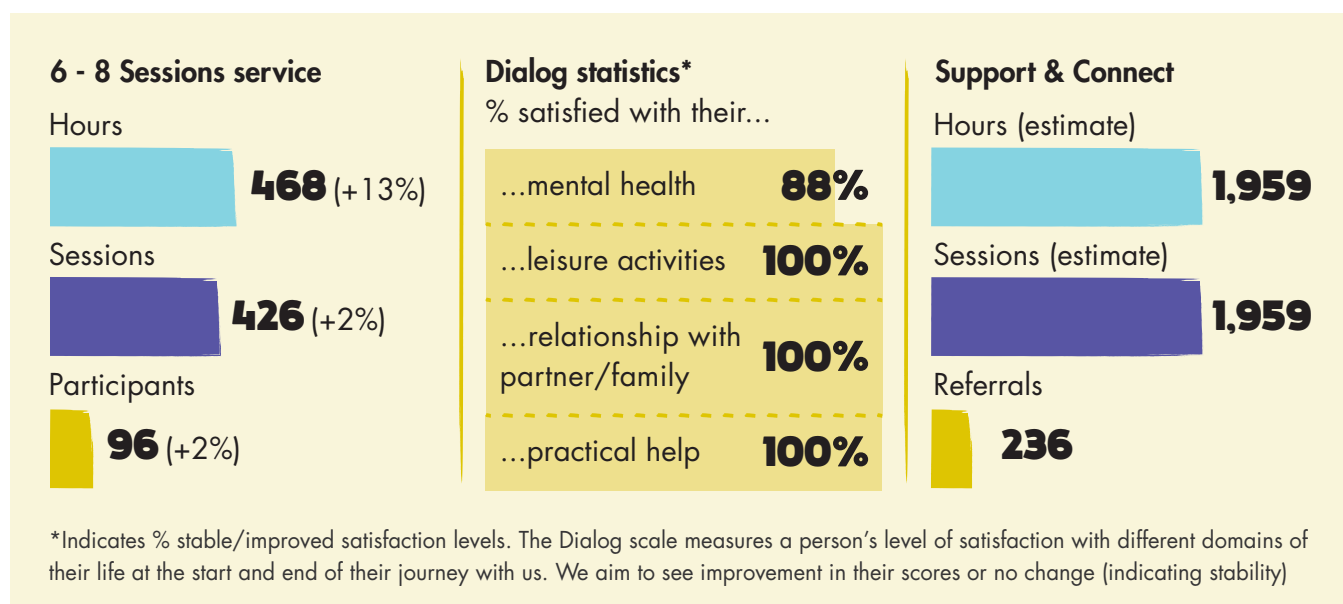
- Increasing the hourly charge for the service, in part by demonstrating how we prevent hospitalisations or pressure on other NHS services.
- Seeking new grant funding as current funding agreements come to an end.

We're very proud of the Floating Support service in supporting people, preventing hospitalisations and crisis, and working with the complexity of peoples' lives. We know from talking to the community and staff, the provision of long-term, flexible, and affordable support is a vital offering. Many have referred to the consistent presence of floating support in their life and how positive and stabilising that is.

*"The support I receive has been so helpful and has kept me out of hospital" – Community member*

Our feedback form shows some of the impact we're having, we are supporting people relationally, which is helping to build a good relationship with people and give them control over what they want to do. Ultimately, people are achieving what they want to achieve and are satisfied with the support they have received.

*"Every time I meet with Likewise, I leave my session feeling refreshed" – Community member*



## SHORT-TERM ONE-TO-ONE

At Likewise, we offer two types of short-term one-to-one support:

- The **6-8 Service**, offers up to 8 sessions with one of our support workers. The service forms part of our work within the Camden Mental Health Resilience Alliance (RN Alliance) with other voluntary community sector (VCS) organisations in Camden, commissioned by Camden Council.
- The **Support & Connect** Service, this service consists of up to 12 hours of support with one of our support workers. The service is commissioned by the NHS alongside other VCS organisations as part of the Community Mental Health Core Teams.

Both services work flexibly with our community in Camden to support them in whatever they would like from the sessions. The client sets the agenda of what they want to work on in the sessions and our wellbeing support workers figure out the extent to which they can provide support or provide a warm introduction to another service within or beyond Likewise. This means sessions can cover practical projects such

as sorting out benefits, or emotional support such as a space to talk about their feelings. These services are an asset for the borough as the support is person-centred, supporting people to reach personalised goals or work through challenges they haven't previously been able to address. This means the support can adapt to unique circumstances and be a strong presence in people's lives, ultimately supporting wellbeing as seen in our Dialog scores.

*"Support almost always starts off directional, with a clear practical need, but it becomes a gateway into building a relationship" – Support worker*

The 6-8 service has seen growth this year in terms of hours, sessions, and participants. This is a result of increased capacity to deliver the work through staffing numbers and our Alliance work starting to pay dividends. We have begun training and supporting placement support workers to deliver 6-8 sessions, thus increasing our capacity. In addition to this, our partners within the Alliance are actively supporting us to source referrals by promoting our offers and we are doing the same. This is reflected in the fact that we are now seeing increased referrals and we have a waiting list. Ultimately, we are

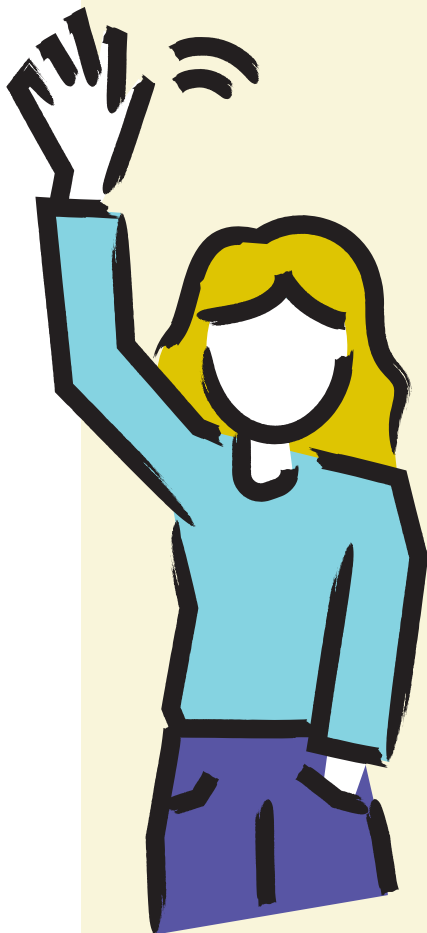


more established than ever as a central partner within the Camden mental health system, which means we're more likely to receive referrals.

Our Dialog scores show that we are able to support people to stabilise or improve their wellbeing in a number of areas. This includes, relationships, satisfaction with their own mental health, and satisfaction with the practical help they are receiving. Indeed, this is consistent with the areas of support staff have discussed providing, which will be detailed in our learnings.

We are learning a great deal within our short-term one-to-one work. The increase in referrals demonstrates the pressures on the whole system as a response to the context the residents of Camden are living in. The re-opening of services

after the pandemic is one explanation for additional pressure on the 6-8 offer. Additionally, we are seeing the effects of the cost-of-living crisis on the mental health and wellbeing of the people we work with, again contributing to demand. We are also learning about our clients' needs. This year we have seen housing, benefits, and cost of living support be major factors in the practical support provided, as well as the need for emotional support around these issues. We're also learning more about how to do partnership working whilst retaining our identity values. This means working within different organisational cultures but still bringing the features of our own. This is challenging, and we've learnt that to enable staff to do this, there needs to be intentional support and space for reflection embedded into our own processes.



### Case study: Hannah

Hannah is 51 and has lived in Camden for all her life, she even remembers seeing our hub in Swiss Cottage during her childhood. When we started working with Hannah, we explored what we want to work on together. She quickly identified a particular task, one she had been putting off since she was 19. She wanted to go through some paperwork concerning her past, this is something she has struggled with as she has found it distressing. However, since working with Likewise, she's been able to make progress on this in a way she hadn't before. She credits the work she's done with her support worker for this. She highlighted how her support worker was able to be empathetic, patient, and consistent when they were working on the paperwork. This comfort is what she sees as allowing her to make progress on her files.

Hannah believes that Likewise has had a really positive impact on her life. We have been able to work flexibly on what is important to her and support her to make new progress in her life. We are continuing to support Hannah with going through the files, with her commenting on how strong her relationship with her key worker is.

"I've allowed myself to be more comfortable with [my support worker], normally I would have given up by now. I feel like I can face difficult things even though I know it can be painful."

## LEARNING PROGRAMME

**43** People on a working and learning placement

**2,868**

Days of placement support worker time

The learning programme sees Likewise hosting students on long-term university placements who carry out both one-to-one and community work. This programme is integral to our delivery of services and the amount of placement support worker time available in the last year demonstrates this. Placement support workers keep our services resourced and operating at the level of quality we want and in exchange we offer real-life, front-line experience working with a diverse client group, with a tailored support system and access to training and leadership opportunities.

Over the last year, with the support of the Learning Programme Lead we have seen several changes, such as:

- The structure of placement support worker journeys has been updated. This has involved students joining in cohorts rather than individually and having a structured training programme for the first period of their placement. A regular peer space has been established for placements support workers to reflect on their experiences in the work and grapple with our organisational values. This reinforces support amongst group and learning about the way we work.

- We have redeveloped our supervision practices this past year, which sees a member of staff create an hourly space for a placement support worker to reflect on their work and role at Likewise. All these changes have supported us in strengthening the learning journey of the placement students with us. Growing their learning outcomes from their time at Likewise and their skills, as well as enabling them to deliver higher quality support with people in our one-to-one and community services.

This year, all students who have completed their placements have reported feeling 'up-skilled' in all areas we measure. This includes, emotional intelligence, working with physical and mental health challenges, as well as working with the values and culture central to our work. These experiences support the personal and professional lives of our students, many have commented on how the lessons they've learnt on placement will be taken with them as they move into the professional world.

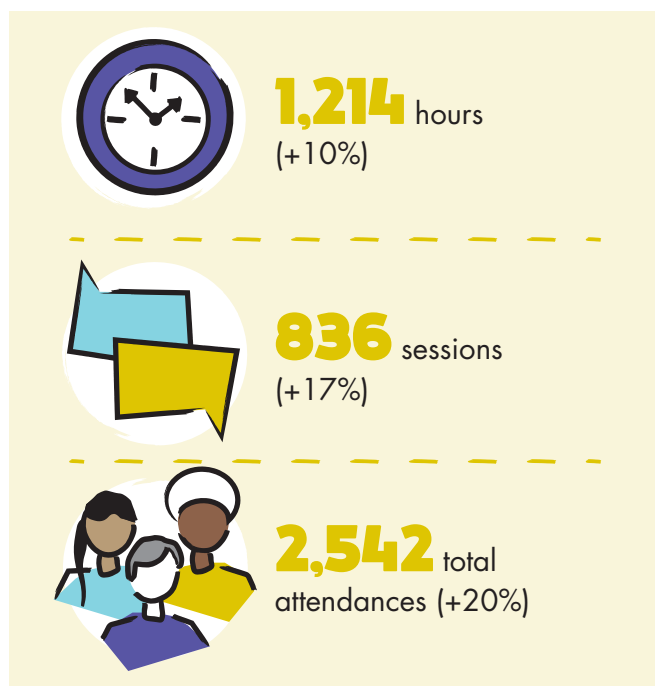
There is also co-learning that stems from our Learning Programme for the people we work with. Our placement support workers are usually with us for a maximum of 9 months, this means these are short term relationships between placement workers and clients. In practice, this has meant a lot of learning for our community around working with and navigating change. Whilst this can be challenging, we have been able to support with this process, as new placement support workers join, replacing those who have finished their placements. This meeting change has been a useful way for our clients to work with complicated feelings and form new relationships.

The aspect of the Learning Programme we are most proud of this year is the leadership opportunities we have been able to offer, in particular the fact that a number of placement support workers have gone on to take part

time work with us. We've seen placement support workers step into leadership within certain parts of our work such as community development and our garden working group.

This experience has put them in a position of being to take on more responsibility within the community-facing work and lead and hold their own relationships within our 6-8 service. It's exciting for us that we have been able to create a learning journey that has seen team members progress from placement students to being a member of staff holding relationships within our services.

## COMMUNITY



Our community hub offers a range of activities and events to support wellbeing through connection, relationship, and a place where people can come and feel safe to be themselves. Over the last year we have offered a diverse programme that allows community members to participate and connect on their own terms, supported by placement students, volunteers and staff team.

For example, we have offered:

- **Baking for Wellbeing sessions**, where an experienced baker leads community members in sessions learning to cook different savoury and sweet treats.
- **Community Café**, a supported open session where community members can enjoy tea, biscuits and socialising, focussing on belonging, connection and building relationships.
- **Culture Trips**, opportunities to get out and about as a group to visit different museums, galleries, gardens, etc, within London for community members.
- **Davi's Creative Colouring**, a space for community members to try their hand at creative expression, led by one of our community members.

We offer activities like these:

- To support belonging, connection, and community, where people feel accepted and safe to be themselves.
- To provide an inclusive place for our community to be their authentic self, free from judgement. This means meeting people wherever they are, through good days and bad.
- To provide opportunities to learn new skills, through being in the hub community members can learn new skills that they can bring home and into their own lives.
- To support the voice, participation, and leadership of community members.

Our community offer, provides a range of avenues for our members to learn, grow and experience. This regular engagement with people (some of whom have been coming to the building for over



20 years) can be a hugely important presence and stabilising factor. The criteria for someone to join activities at the hub is that they are looking for connection and emotional wellbeing, our offer is actively targeted at supporting these two aspects.

For instance, the regular community café sessions have proven to be a helpful space for staff and client learnings. This space is one of the liveliest and well attended sessions we hold. The open-ended nature of it means that community members and staff often hold learning conversations with each other, be that around setting boundaries or exploring emotions. One recurring theme here is around changes in the space and within the community programme and how these affect long standing members. We actively grapple with issues like these during the sessions, supporting learning, self-discovery, as well as simply trying ideas out.

Through support we received from local councillor, Nayra Bello O'Shanahan, we received a grant from the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund to support the ongoing journey and evolution of the community hub from "referral only" mental health day centre to an open community wellbeing hub.

This grant has helped us diversify our offer and attendance, seeing growth in the number of sessions offered, hours of delivery and participants. Most notably, total attendances are up by 20% meaning that community activities are being attended by more people and more

frequently. Overall, this means we can bring the benefits of the community programme to a greater number of people, supporting wellbeing and connection in the community. This also means that we've been able to form stronger connections with our regular community members, as we see them more often, allowing us to have more learning and support conversations.

An essential part of our community programme is providing a space for belonging, non-judgement, and acceptance as an antidote to social exclusion, isolation, and loneliness. Putting relationships first, meeting people where they are at, and letting people know they are welcome as they are helps to co-create the space.

We have been approaching coproduction within the community programme through hosting regular community conversations sessions where we provide updates on things happening in the programme and take on board members' thoughts on different subjects, we're making decisions about within the community. This has resulted in our strategic thinking within the community programme being able to be more rooted in the thoughts and feelings of community members. This means that we can recognise and support member's needs as they appear in the space and implement them into how we think. Whilst we're learning about the needs and thoughts of our community, there are challenges present in terms of change and how that impacts on long-standing community members.

For instance, we recently created a set of belonging principles that capture how we uphold mutuality and inclusivity in the space. This covered topics such as how we hope to treat each other and the values we bring in the community space (both community members and staff). Engagement with this was positive, although a part of this work was engaging with fears around the principles voiced by some long-standing community members. With our coproduction we must be conscious of these fears and put work into acknowledging them, while supporting members to build trust and experiment with changes.

*"I love the group activities. There is a good variety of activities, things that you can enjoy doing." – Community member*

The aesthetics, look and feel of our community hub has had attention this year, in support

of continuing to create a place of wellbeing belonging and connection. The inside of the building has been repainted and new furniture has been installed. In addition to this we have added new activities in our garden and in our hub, such as Yoga, and book club.

The ongoing diversification of our community programme is supported by partnership working. In 2022/23 we worked with:

- Garden of Earthly Delights to develop our community garden and offer woodworking sessions.
- Feast to bring community members together over a meal.
- The Zen Bus to offer 6, full day long-events centred on wellbeing and mindfulness.

### Case study: George

George attended the hub for the first time this year after hearing about us through another service. When he first arrived, he was quite anxious, however, he has been able to settle into attending community activities. As part of this settling in he commented on how much of a difference the way the hub looked made to his first impressions.

"You walk into the building and it's clean and well presented, that makes such a difference to making you feel welcome"

He also noted how our non-hierarchical approach, in particular, the way staff rotate duties manning the front desk and greeting people, supported their belonging and feelings of mutuality with staff, through making the space feel like it's free of judgement. George continues to attend community sessions following this positive introduction to the hub.

"Seeing a smiling face at the hub even when you're having the worst day, can make you feel so much better"





The impact of this has been:

- Reaching more members of the community through creating all-day events with attract more people and tapping into other organisation's attendees, growing our reach and impact.
- Expanding our offering in terms of developing hard skills by tapping into the expertise of the organisations around us, meaning that those who attend our sessions are taking more away from them.
- Greater connections with similar organisations within the sector, enabling future joint sessions and allowing us to work collaboratively on our group offerings. This means ultimately, we will be able to meet the needs of a greater amount of people.

*"The community Christmas party stands out to me, it was a nice way to meet the ask from the community for food to come back. It was nice to have a day where we able to put on a celebration for them" – Community Lead*

## COMMUNITY WELLBEING GARDEN

In the last year we have put time and resources into creating our Community Wellbeing Garden to improve its work as a therapeutic space and a place to connect with nature. We fundamentally believe that greater access to nature and the outdoors positively correlates with improvements in wellbeing. Academic research demonstrates this showing that time spent connecting to nature supports physical and emotional wellbeing (Martin et al., 2020). To support this, our work has seen us refit and rebuild fixtures in the garden, plant new greenery and wildlife, and build a new greenhouse.

Over the course of the last year, we offered the following events in our Community Wellbeing Garden:

- The GreenUp Event – An open space for environmental based activities. We used this space to harvest ideas and spark conversations about what community members wanted to see in the garden.

- Woodworking Workshops (in partnership with the Woodshop of Earthly Delights) – These were sessions focussed on teaching community members about woodworking with waste materials. During these sessions we repurposed 627kg of waste timber.
- Garden Guardians sessions – These are 3-hour, weekly drop in sessions where community members come together to help look after the garden. Members choose what activities to take part in, what they want to learn and are able to follow the progress of the garden over time.

This work has had the following impact:

- Lots more people using the garden for a diverse range of purposes. The woodworking sessions in particular attracted people who hadn't been to Likewise before. Community members have reported 10 different motivating factors for engaging with the garden, with connecting with the physical world, supporting a sense of community, and supporting emotional wellbeing, being the main drivers.
- Community members reporting benefits to their wellbeing in terms of their anxiety/ mood, sense of belonging, purpose, and connection. Members used the following words to describe their experience of the garden "calming", "collaborative" and "communal".
- Community members learning new things and developing skills that will support them to grow their own food and build structures in which to grow them in.
- Huge increase in the amount of biodiversity within the Likewise Garden – butterflies, over 100 new plants grown from organic seeds – many are heritage varieties.

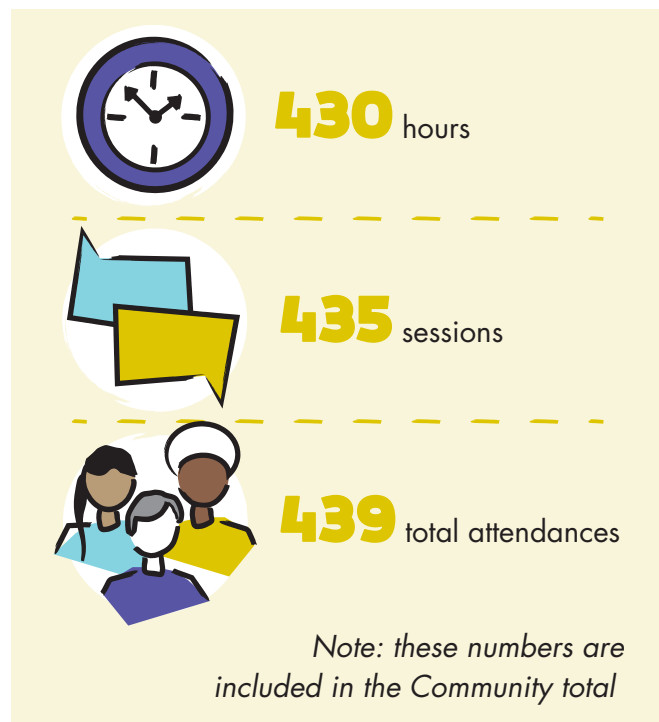
Our learnings have been:

- In addition to community members enjoying doing things together in the space, members have really valued simply being together in an outdoor setting.
- Having a loosely structured drop in space with lots of options for how people can participate seems to meet a variety of needs and changing desires.
- Looking after a garden is hard work! There is always lots of practical tasks that can be done in the garden to keep plants healthy and the space looking nice. There is a balance to be struck in terms of getting things done and being able to go at the pace of the group who may need lots of time and support to do things.
- Some community members find it more difficult to get up and about early- so afternoon gardening course could be trialled next time.





## CREATIVE THERAPIES



We've diversified the activities we offer in the community hub, and one of the services that developed in response to requests from the community (and an offer from a therapist) is our Creative Therapies service. We now offer over 300 hours of one-to-one creative therapy through art, movement, music, and drama psychotherapy, as well as ongoing creative therapy groups.

Traditionally our immediate community and people in our referral network may not have had access to this kind of therapy; a service that is free with no barrier to entry, on their doorstep and integrated into a community hub. As the service is embedded in a community hub, it is visible, trusted, and accessible to people in the community. People may have a sense of belonging at the hub before requesting therapeutic support, and others may first be referred to us for therapy, and then begin making use of the community hub for other mental health and wellbeing support activities. Likewise, then becomes somewhere they can feel a sense of belonging and being known.

Through our partnership work and reputation as an organisation that supports people with complex needs and mental health challenges, our Creative Therapies service is embedded in a referral network of other Voluntary Sector Organisations, GP surgeries, NHS services and professionals working in Health and Social Care. In 2022/23, 58% of referrals to the Creative Therapy service identified as having a disability relating to their mental or physical health.

One of the people who attended therapy sessions at Likewise shared their experience:

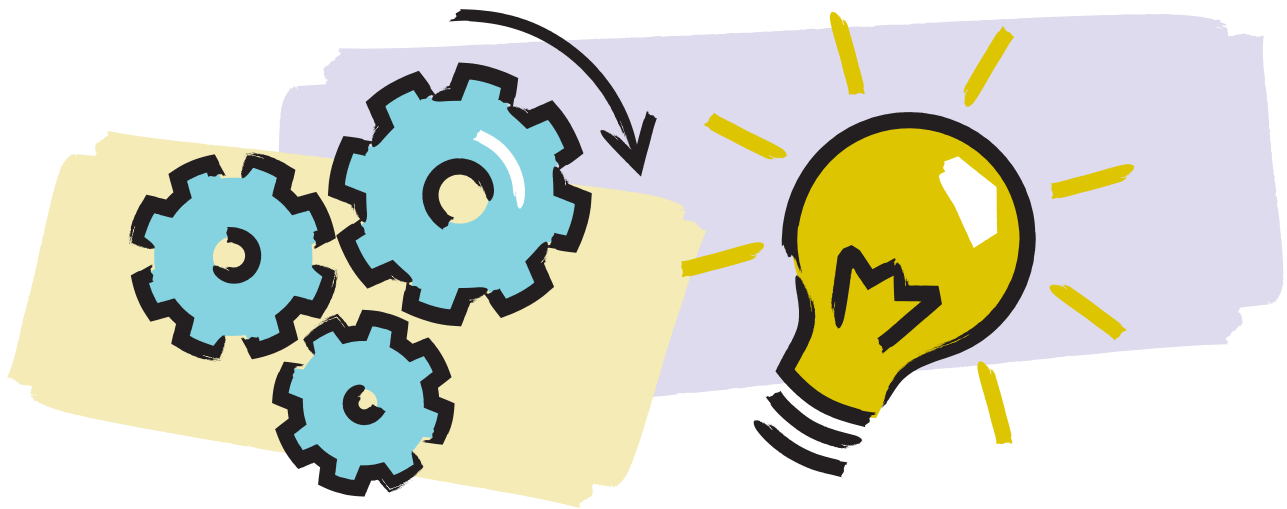
*"It's hard to overstate how helpful music therapy has been for me over the last few months. I have ADHD and CPTSD both of which are fairly severe, as well as a number of physical health problems which together create a lot of pain and I've been experiencing this for about eight years. Prior to the onset of therapy I was in a dark place and was troubled by a lot of suicidal & self-harm thoughts.*

*For the duration of therapy, I felt a lot safer and had a sense of hope for the future that had all but disappeared in the preceding couple of years. While I appreciate it is not necessarily the goal, I also became creatively unstuck and began to play and listen to music again, make more art and generally feel like a human being again.*

*It has been extremely heartening and hopeful to discover that therapy doesn't have to be painful and that there is a form of it which can work for me, I no longer feel that I am untreatable or beyond help, and that in itself is a huge weight off my shoulders. I am now keen to try out any other creative therapies I can as I feel that they could be a big part of the answer to recovering and managing my difficult to treat conditions."*



## Partnership work and systems change



In the past couple of years, Likewise has co-led the development of two partnerships within the Camden Health and Care system:

- Together with Camden Council and three VCS partners (Mind in Camden, The Advocacy Project and Voiceability), we've launched the RN Alliance. We provide community-based services that support people's mental health and wellbeing needs, with a focus on prevention and tackling the wider determinants of health. Our 6-8 session service and parts of our Community Programme are funded by this contract.
- Following a successful partnership during Covid, we've worked alongside Camden & Islington NHS Trust (C&I NHS Trust) and Mind in Camden in the implementation of a national transformation programme. This has led to the creation of new core community mental health teams (Core Teams) where our Support & Connect Workers work alongside NHS clinicians to provide holistic support, via three multi-disciplinary neighbourhood teams.

We believe that these partnerships offer an opportunity to learn from others and influence systemic change. We are supporting other organisations and services to move from being mostly transactional, problem-centred, and bureaucratic to being more relational, human and learning-centred and adaptable to people's complex situations.

### ACHIEVEMENTS – SETTING THINGS UP FOR SUCCESS

We've invested time and resource into influencing the RN Alliance during its set-up. By taking the Likewise organisational model as a reference, bringing our learnings into discussions, and advocating for what we believe in, we've seen several positive results:

- Through a series of workshops, we co-produced a set of agreements and principles which lay out the culture and values we wanted to be guided by in all our work together. These were used in a values-led recruitment process for an external Alliance Manager in which Likewise played a central role.

- We've co-facilitated relationship-building meetings amongst staff from all partner organisations, setting people up for deeper and more fruitful collaboration.
- We've led the adoption of a similar meetings structure that is used at Likewise at all levels of the governance structure of the Alliance: beginning with a check-in and asking, "what's it for?", as well as ending with "how did we do and what are you left with?" have helped us in establishing an open culture, supported by trust and safety.
- We've co-led the development of the outcomes framework for the RN Alliance, intentionally designing it to centre learning and align with our approach to the work.

In our work with C&I NHS Trust, we've continued to take every opportunity to shape things at all levels: overall partnership and governance, service design, operational matters, working with individual professionals and people accessing our services.

*Likewise, have shown commitment and determination in supporting the transformation of NHS mental Health services. They have demonstrated leadership through bringing their own learning as an organisation to support the development of new approaches in local NHS services. Alongside this, they have shown a*

*willingness to listen and engage in meaningful, and if necessary challenging conversations. Underneath this, is a clear sense of values which hold as intention for the organisation and the individuals that work for Likewise.*

**– Tom Costley, Head of Community Mental Health Services in Camden, C&I NHS Trust**

We've also secured additional funding for a Learning Programme for the whole of the Core Teams project. This contract will see Likewise and Mind employ a Learning and Evaluation Lead and a Community Practice Lead for 18 months. Together, they will:

- Facilitate learning conversations with staff and people using services.
- Continuously monitor and evaluate by capturing data across agencies.
- Create a culture of collective learning and accountability.
- Embed coproduction and collaboration.

We believe that these roles – and the strong buy-in for them we've had from partner leaders – will influence positive change by setting up an overall learning and evaluation framework that steers Core Teams professionals towards being community-oriented and providing person-centred, human-friendly, and relational support.

## LEARNINGS – CLARIFYING AND EVOLVING OUR APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP AND INFLUENCE WORK

Our learnings in relation to partnership work and systems influence this year have been rich and centred around two challenges:

- Becoming clearer in what we mean by influencing systems change: what do we want to achieve? How we “do” systems change? And how will we know we’re being successful?
- Supporting staff with a sense of overwhelm that can come when working in a deeply embedded way with the NHS system.

We’ve worked hard to allow those issues to be normalised and discussed openly in various team and individual spaces. This has allowed the Likewise Core Teams team to

feel supported and bonded by the common challenges, and has enabled us to be aware of and respond to the challenges:

- One important structural solution has been to re-model the 1-1 programme and create a team dedicated entirely to our CTs partnership. This has given staff more focus and a better sense of belonging.
- We’ve developed a clearer approach to partnership and systems influence by creating a guide to partnership work and a systems change strategy for our Core Teams partnership. The guide highlights the crucial importance of using our relational approach in how we engage with colleagues from other organisations – with a mixture of acceptance and challenge. The strategy will give the team a tangible and practical plan for achieving certain changes within the Core Teams.

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### References

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