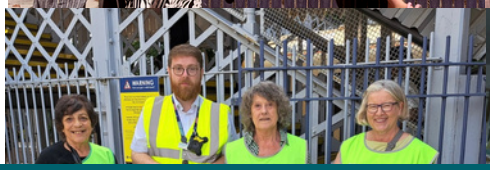
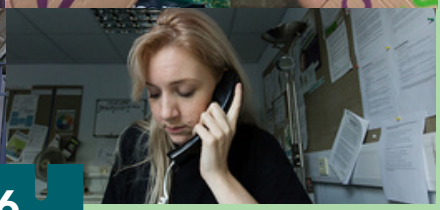
SAMARITANS

Lewisham, Greenwich & Southwark









Annual Report 2025–26

Working with COMMUNITY FUND

Every day, people across the UK reach out to Samaritans during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. They may be experiencing loneliness, despair, overwhelming emotional distress or thoughts of suicide. Behind every one of those conversations is a volunteer prepared to listen without judgement.

This Annual Report tells the story of how, during FY 2025-26, we - the Samaritans of Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark - have continued strengthening our branch **so that we can strengthen our support for others.**

SAMARITANS OF LEWISHAM, GREENWICH & SOUTHWARK

Photo credits: We're grateful to all who contributed photographs for this report, including those submitted on our volunteers' behalf. Particular thanks to Phillip Job for his photograph of Nina 1245, and to Ian Buchan and Danielle Bennett for additional images throughout.

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1. Director's foreword

Every day, people across the UK reach out to Samaritans during some of the hardest moments of their lives - and it is rare that we have enough volunteers available to answer every call in time. In 2025, only 51% of calls to the UK helpline were answered before the caller hung up, most often during our "Hours of Need" in the early hours of the morning. Here in Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark, we responded to over 19,000 contacts this year, out of more than 3.3 million made to Samaritans nationally - and closing that gap, even a little, means someone in real distress gets to speak to us rather than hang up.

That is why, in 2025-26, we set out to strengthen our branch: not for its own sake, but because a stronger branch is what allows us to strengthen our support for others.

This year, that meant investing further in recruitment and training, so more people could complete the journey from first enquiry to fully qualified Listening Volunteer. We continued the refurbishment of our phone room and wider centre, supported by the National Lottery Community Fund, Screwfix and Wickes.

This provided more listening desks and a welcoming environment for our face-to-face callers and volunteers. Having brought our finances onto a stable footing in 2024-25, we built on that foundation to keep our finances strong throughout 2025-26. Our efforts to strengthen governance and quality were recognised when the Central Charity's Independent Quality Review judged our branch's operations "excellent", praising our approach to volunteer recruitment and retention and our outreach to vulnerable groups.



David 490

Branch Director, LGS Samaritans

This is only possible with the dedication of our volunteers - our most precious resource - whether they are directly supporting callers or delivering one of the many other tasks that keep the branch running. I would like to thank each and every one of our volunteers, as well as their families and friends who share them with us on the shifts they work. I'm equally grateful to our Trustees and Leadership Team, whose guidance and governance underpin everything in this report.

On a personal note, being Branch Director would be unmanageable without the support, encouragement and care I've had from our Trustees, Leadership Team and every volunteer in the branch. Thank you - it means a great deal to know there are such warm-hearted, well-intentioned people in our community.

Looking ahead, we know the gap between the calls we receive and the volunteers available to answer them will not close on its own - so strengthening our branch remains exactly where our attention needs to stay. We are confident that the steps we have already taken, together with our plans for the next few years, will secure our branch's future: we are financially stable, our numbers are growing, and our practices and procedures have been judged sound by the Central Charity. We intend to keep providing high-quality support to our callers, while making sure our volunteers are well cared for.

We are also grateful to our donors and funders, whose generosity keeps the branch open:

"Thank you - it means a great deal to know there are such warm-hearted, well-intentioned people in our community"

To Lewisham Council, for leasing us our building at a peppercorn rent; to the late Caroline Adie, who volunteered with us for many years and left us a generous bequest of £10,000; to the National Lottery Community Fund, whose grant - awarded in 2024-25 and carried forward / funded much of this year's refurbishment; to Screwfix for their support with that same refurbishment; and to Wickes, who generously donated materials, including paint and paintbrushes, to help us complete it. We're also grateful to TfL and National Rail for welcoming us to collect at stations including Canary Wharf and Waterloo. An acknowledgement and thanks for contributions from all our funders and supporters appears in Chapters 7 and 9.

David 490

2. Who we are & our purpose

One branch, one purpose

Why we exist

Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy - and our vision, shared with Samaritans nationally, is that fewer people die by suicide. Our mission is to be there for anyone who needs someone: to give people ways to cope, and to be there for others, whatever they are going through.

People contact us for many reasons - loneliness, despair, grief, relationship breakdown, financial worry, or thoughts of suicide - and what they have in common is a need to be heard. We don't offer advice, and we don't judge: we listen, in confidence, and we let people reach their own decisions about their own lives. That is what a Samaritans conversation is, wherever in the country it takes place, and it's what people in Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark can expect every time they contact us.

A local charity, nationally connected

Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and one of around 200 local branches that make up the Samaritans charity across the UK and Ireland. We are independent - we raise our own funds, and govern ourselves under our own constitution - but we operate under the Samaritans brand, and in line with its policies, procedures.

That independence comes with a collaborative culture. This year's Branch Development Plan was drafted by our Trustees and Leadership Team, then shared with every volunteer for comment before our priorities were agreed - a decision-making culture built on listening to the people delivering the service, not just those leading it.

Our values

Listening | **Non-judgemental** | **Confidentiality** | **People making their own decisions** | **Human contact**

Technology provided by Samaritans nationally means that anyone who dials the free number, 116 123, is routed to the next available volunteer anywhere in the country - which is how the service can run 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, even though most individual branches, including ours, are not staffed around the clock. Our branch covers between 110 and 120 hours of listening each week, including many of the overnight and early-morning hours - our "Hours of Need" - when demand is often highest and the availability of volunteers is most limited.

More than a listening service

Being a Samaritan is about more than answering the phone. At HMP Belmarsh, a high-security prison in South-East London, we've supported a Listener Scheme for over 30 years, training selected prisoners to support fellow inmates through some of their darkest moments. Every month, we visit St Mungo's which is an assessment centre for homeless adults in the London Borough of Lewisham to offer emotional support to their residents.

We also work with Network Rail at stations across our area - responding when incidents happen, and supporting national campaigns such as Small Talk Saves Lives, which encourage people to look out for one another.

Powered by volunteers, guided by our values

Every part of the branch depends on volunteers - not only those answering calls, but Support Volunteers, trainers and mentors, our prison and outreach teams, and the Trustees who govern the branch. The same values that shape every conversation with a caller - listening, non-judgement, confidentiality, and respecting people's right to make their own decisions - shape how we recruit, how we train, and how we support one another too.

We are committed to improving the diversity of our volunteers so we can better reflect the diverse communities we support. During the year we took steps to better understand our current diversity, which told us we were well represented in terms of gender, sexual orientation and disability. We are less representative in terms of age, ethnicity and nationality.

3. Our year at a glance

In 2025-26, we strengthened our people, our finances and our building - so we could answer more calls, from more people, more often.

11,288

Total listening hours delivered

Our hours grew from **853** hours in April 2025 to **1,092** in March 2026

19,270

Contacts responded to

7.5% increase on FY2024-25 including **1,060** emails & **58** face-to-face callers

22

New Listeners welcomed at HMP Belmarsh peer-support

160 formal conversations held with fellow prisoners - **18%** involving suicidal thoughts

9

Delivered Suicide Prevention Awareness workshops

"Excellent"

Independent Quality Review rating

For our Branch operations, with particulat praise for volunteer recruitment/retention, and outreach to vulnerable groups

Our year in milestones

APR 2025
FY2024-25 financial outturn confirmed - a strong foundation for the year ahead

JUN 2025
New Branch Director appointed, following a smooth handover

OCT 2025
Monthly contacts exceed 1,600 for the first time

NOV-DEC 2025
Branch redecorated & recarpeted throughout. Began pilot for ad-hoc shifts

DEC 2025
Big Give Christmas Challenge raises £5,505 beating our £5,000 target

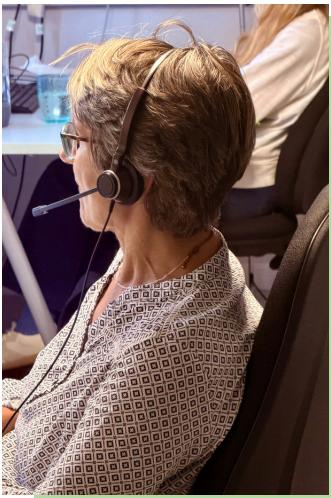
JAN 2026
New secure external doors, entry system & heating system overhaul completed

FEB 2026
Ad-hoc shift trial extended to test more flexible ways for volunteers to contribute

MAR 2026
Financial year closes with reserves of £67,734, up from £51,057 in prior year

4. Supporting people in emotional distress

Being there when someone needs us most



Esther 1467
Listening Volunteer

For 57 years, Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans has been there for people across our boroughs - in that time, more than 1,600 volunteers have given up their own time to provide a listening ear when someone has needed it most.

Behind every call, email or face-to-face conversation is a volunteer supported by a wider network: from the careful selection and training of new volunteers, through mentoring and ongoing support, to the guidance available on every single shift - all of it exists so that whoever answers the phone can offer the best possible support, whatever you are going through.

Listening without judgement

We don't give advice, and we don't diagnose. Every conversation is led entirely by the caller. They decide what to talk about, how much to share, and where the conversation goes. That is the Samaritans approach, and it's what makes it possible for people to speak openly, often for the first time, about whatever is troubling them.

Delivering support every day

We are available every day of the year, by telephone and, for those who prefer it, face to face in the branch - and we are constantly looking at ways to increase the hours our volunteers are available, particularly at the times when people need us most. The impact is already visible in the numbers, set out in full in Chapter 3: both the hours we delivered and the number of people we supported rose significantly this year.

Every listening shift is supported by a wider team, for example Day Leaders, and Shift Leaders who provide guidance and emotional support to those taking calls. This is underpinned by all the volunteers who deliver training and mentoring before this point. Our volunteer support system is explored further in Chapter 5.

Supporting people in different settings

At HMP Belmarsh, around 20 trained Listeners - prisoners who have been trained as Samaritans - are available at any one time to support fellow prisoners in a private, confidential space - this year alone, they held 160 formal conversations, totalling more than 96 hours, with prisoners in genuine distress; in 18% of these, the prisoner spoke of suicidal thoughts.

From August 2025 we began visiting St Mungo's in New Cross, spending a few hours each month offering face-to-face emotional support to its residents who are homeless adults. Our volunteers also attend local Network Rail Stations to talk to passengers and staff following incidents on the railway, and to support national campaigns such as Small Talk Saves Lives.

The difference compassionate listening can make

People often tell us that calling Samaritans feels safe and non-judgemental. People talk without fear of prejudice, in complete confidence, and can choose to be completely anonymous or tell us their first name. There's no unsolicited advice, and no pressure to do anything other than talk; the caller decides what we talk about, and where the conversation goes. We give callers the space to be themselves.

People don't have to be suicidal to call us. Callers can contact us about whatever is on their minds, whatever is causing them distress.

We hope that simply providing an ear, whenever it's needed, helps people find the support they need, and reduces the risk of someone developing, or acting on, suicidal thoughts. So that, in time, fewer people die by suicide.
There is no list of things people need to be experiencing to call us. People call us for all sorts of things as what may seem small to someone may be huge to someone else. It's what matters to that individual which is important.

As one of our volunteers, Steph, puts it:

> Simply being there for someone on the end of the phone - quietly, empathically, without judgement or trying to fix things - this is enough... **listening is not passive, it's a superpower.**

Steph 1420
Listening Volunteer

5. Supporting & developing our volunteers

Investing in the people who make compassionate listening possible

The volunteer journey

The journey to becoming a Samaritan begins with an enquiry. In 2025-26 we received applications from 510 people interested in volunteering with us, up from 464 the year before and 495 the year before that. The combination of our rigorous selection process and the finite resources we have available to thoroughly train and effectively support new volunteers means that we take on 40-45 new volunteers each year.



For those who do join us, the path runs through Core Training, Mentoring, and Embedding. The latter is deliberately participatory - letting new volunteers explore the issues that matter most to their own listening practice, from the boundaries of calls about method of suicide, to calls from prisoners and the growing number of callers living with mental health difficulties. We have also widened our approach to mentoring this year: every experienced volunteer is now a potential co-mentor unless they choose not to be, giving new starters a richer range of styles to learn from and helping mentoring complete more quickly.



Learning does not stop once someone is ‘fully fledged’. We ran several Continuous Development events this year - including sessions on safeguarding, on method of suicide calls - and we completed our latest branch-wide Co-Listening round in November 2025, giving every volunteer the chance to listen to a colleague, learn from the experience, and receive feedback on their own listening in turn.

That drive to keep learning doesn't stop with individual volunteers - it runs right through the branch. This year's Independent Quality Review reflected that back to us, and its findings, alongside our own Co-Listening feedback and Continuous Development sessions, are treated as the start of a conversation rather than the end of one - a culture of continuous learning and reflection we're determined to keep building on.





Jean 996 and Adam 1156
Volunteers in conversation

Learning and support together

Training a volunteer well is only half the task - and this year we drew on the national Samaritans Training School, alongside our own three rounds of Core Training, to do exactly that. But keeping volunteers supported afterwards is what allows them to stay, and to keep showing up for callers, week after week. As soon as a new volunteer completes mentoring, they are allocated to one of our ten Volunteer Support team members, three of whom focus specifically on those still completing their probationary period, before handing over to the wider team. Support continues for as long as someone volunteers with us: regular contact, more frequent in the early months, and always available if a call has been difficult or disturbing, or if something in someone's personal life means they need to pause or step back from volunteering for a while.

> I feel very privileged to lead the Volunteer Support Team. I am there to support the team, including my own group of volunteers, when they are facing difficult times - physical, work-related, family-related or emotional. I provide background support, helping volunteers stay connected or, at times, supporting them to decide when it may be best to pause or even to stop volunteering.
>
> **Jean 996**
> Volunteer Support Lead

Every volunteer makes a difference

Being a Samaritan isn't only about answering the phone. Behind every shift, a Support Volunteer might be keeping our garden welcoming, cleaning the branch, or making sure we're always stocked with the drinks and snacks that keep everyone going. Others take on the odd jobs and DIY to keep the space comfortable, or provide administrative support to our Trustees - like two of our former listening volunteers, now living outside London - still give their time to support our interview, selection and DBS processes. Training, mentoring, prison and outreach volunteers, alongside our Trustees, all contribute in different ways to the same shared purpose: making sure that whenever someone reaches out, there is always someone ready to listen.

6. Working with our communities

Awareness and listening beyond the branch



Key to locations

- Our branch
- 2 Bank station
- 3 Belmarsh Prison
- 4 Canary Wharf station
- 5 Denmark Hill station
- 6 East Dulwich station
- 7 Hayes Galleria Estate
- 8 Heron Towers
- 9 Ladywell station
- 10 Lewington Community Centre
- 11 Lewisham station
- 12 London Waterloo train station
- 13 Ravensbourne University
- 14 South Bank Sixth Form
- 15 St Mungos, New Cross
- 16 Summer in the park, Greenwich Park
- 17 Summer in the park, Maryon Park
- 18 The O2, Greenwich

Partnership, prevention, visibility

National awareness of the Samaritans brand is high, but many people don't have a clear idea of what we actually offer, or that support is available to anyone - not just those in crisis. Raising that awareness locally is a core part of our work: handing out leaflets and cards at stations including Lewisham, Ladywell, Denmark Hill and Peckham Rye, as part of initiatives such as Brew Monday and Small Talk Saves Lives; manning stalls at community events including Summer in the Park; and attending Freshers' Fairs at Ravensbourne University and South Bank Sixth Form College to introduce new students to our service.

This year, we also delivered nine Suicide Prevention Awareness workshops to groups of workers likely to come into contact with people at high risk, teaching practical strategies anyone can use to reach out to someone in distress - and worked with organisations including the London Borough of Southwark to advise on signage at high-risk locations such as tall buildings and multi-storey car parks.

Our partnership with HMP Belmarsh

For over 30 years, we've had a close partnership with HMP Belmarsh, a high-security prison in South-East London holding around 700 men, roughly 40% of them on remand. Together with prison staff, we support a Listener Scheme - in effect, a mini-Samaritans branch operating inside the prison, where trained prisoners support fellow inmates face-to-face, drawing on the same shared aim of safer custody and the same foundation of trust that defines our work outside its walls.

This year, we interviewed and selected around 30 prospective Listeners and ran three training courses, welcoming 22 new Listeners to the team; seven were later transferred to other prisons, where they've continued serving as Listeners, and two joined us as transfers in. We also recruited six new volunteers to our own prison support team. Our team isn't ours alone either - we work alongside volunteers from neighbouring branches across our region, together keeping the scheme staffed and strong.

We visit Belmarsh at least weekly, supporting Listeners and debriefing with them after difficult conversations, and supporting prison staff too.

That support matters most when tragedy strikes. This year, two prisoners at Belmarsh took their own lives; on each occasion, our volunteers were able to go in shortly afterwards to support both prisoners and staff affected. We were also able to support two Family Days, giving Listeners the chance to spend more relaxed time with their families than a standard visit allows.

> “I took over as Branch Prison Support Officer less than four years after becoming a Samaritan, and less than three years after first setting foot in a prison - so for me personally, it’s been an unusually steep learning curve.”

David 1455
Branch Prison Support Officer

7. Making every donation count

Your support means someone always answers

Turning generosity into impact

We could not listen to our callers without the support of our donors. From the rest of this report, you will know what Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans achieve - the number of callers we listen to, the number of volunteers who make that possible. None of this happens without the support of the London Borough of Lewisham in leasing us our building at a peppercorn rent. We also rely on the generosity of the Lottery and other grant-making trusts, and of individual donors giving what they can.

£20,000

National Lottery Community Fund grant

Meeting essential running costs without compromise

A grant awarded in FY2024-25 supported operations throughout FY2025-26

A £20,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund shows what this looks like in practice. This year, it has helped meet the running costs every branch carries year after year - gas and electricity, the IT and telephone technology our listening depends on, and keeping our building clean and comfortable for volunteers and face-to-face callers alike - alongside one-off costs from redecorating the branch. It has also paid for something easy to overlook but essential to keeping a rota staffed through the night: the taxi costs that get our volunteers safely to and from overnight and evening shifts. These are costs the branch carries every year, whoever funds them - this year, the Lottery made sure we could meet them without compromise. Donations like this also help us tell local people that our 24/7 service exists, and recruit, train and keep the skills of our volunteers up to date.

Working with our supporters

During this year's Big Give Christmas Challenge, donations from our supporters and members of the public were matched pound-for-pound using pre-pledged funds, with The Monday Charitable Trust acting as one of this year's Champion Funders - helping us raise £5,505 in total, comfortably past our £5,000 target. The Blackheath Choir returned to sing carols at Canary Wharf, raising £3,000 for the branch, and this year we were welcomed to collect for the first time at Radiohead's O2 concerts. We're also grateful to the Screwfix Foundation for their generous support with the redecoration of the branch which is a space that welcomes face-to-face callers and our volunteers.



Louise Eldridge
London Marathon fundraiser

Individual fundraisers continue to carry us further than we could manage alone: Louise Eldridge ran the London Marathon in April 2025, raising more than £2,700; and we were also deeply moved by the generosity of the late Caroline Adie, and the donations made in her memory by her family and friends - a gift that reflects the difference one person's support, and the community around them, can make.

We are also enormously grateful to Lewisham Borough Council, whose support underpins everything else we do. Building on that, we're working towards greater long-term certainty over our premises, so that future investment in the building delivers the best possible value for the people we serve.

Chapter 9 in this report thanks our named funders and supporters individually, and recognises the many donors who prefer to remain anonymous.

Investing in the future

We need to raise approximately £30,000 each year simply to maintain what we do now. But standing still isn't the ambition: we want to grow our presence across all three boroughs, increase our number of volunteers, and make sure that whatever time of day or night someone calls, there is always someone to answer, ***"Samaritans, can I help you?"***

£30,000

Approximately needed each year simply to maintain what we do now

If you would like to find out more about supporting Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans, please contact: **lewisham.fundraising@samaritans.org**, or donate directly via our webpage - details provided in Chapter 9.

8

Trustees' Annual Report, Financial Review & Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2026

Introduction

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 (as amended), the charity's governing document, and the receipts and payments method of accounting, as permitted for charities with gross income under £250,000.

Reference and adminitstrative information

Charity name	Lewisham, Greenwich & Southwark Samaritans
CIO registration	1167963
Registered office	1-5 Angus Street, New Cross, London SE14 6LU
Independent Examiner	Carolyn Holbrook of 5 Croftside, Bures, Suffolk, CO8 5LL
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited of 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ
Branch Director	David Waugh (appointed June 2025)
Treasurer	Chloe Vaughan
Secretary	Isobel Malin (co-opted May 2026)
Trustees serviing during the year	David Cope; Deborah Dowdall; Ian Buchan; Martine Leroy; Rosalie Allen; and Eleftherios Italos (from June 2025 to April 2026)

Objectives and public benefit

Our charitable purpose is to be there for anyone who needs someone, and to reduce the number of people who die by suicide. In carrying out our activities, the Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Our purpose and the difference we make are set out in full in Chapters 1-7 of this report.

Structure, governance and management

Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans is governed by a Board of Trustees, supported by the Branch Director and a Leadership Team drawn from volunteers holding key branch responsibilities, including Caller Care and Volunteer Support. Together, these form our Branch Leadership Team, responsible for the strategic and day-to-day direction of the branch - see Chapter 2 for more on how this works in practice. Trustees are recruited and appointed in line with our constitution, and serve alongside the wider Leadership Team to ensure continuity of governance and expertise.

Financial review

For the year ended 31 March 2026, the branch's income was approximately £53,253, against expenditure of approximately £36,575, resulting in a surplus of approximately £16,678. Reserves carried forward at the year end were approximately £67,734.

Our income for the year was over £10,000 more than we budgeted for - the largest component of which was other grants and trusts at £17,900. This includes the £10,000 left to us by former volunteer Caroline Adie, as well as a £5,000 grant from the Screwfix Foundation for refurbishment. Other areas where income was high was JustGiving, which brought in £7,383, and the many successful fundraising events we had this year which brought in over £5,800.

Our total expenditure was in line with budget, when it is considered that the Trustees had approved setting aside up to £20,000 from reserves held at the start of the year to refurbish the branch, in addition to the business as usual repairs and maintenance budget; this was our most significant category of expenditure. All other spend categories totalled under £2,000 for the year, with the exception of £2,312 paid to the Central Charity this year under the New Branch Contribution Framework, relating to the prior year.

Reserves policy

The Charity seeks to maintain its reserves at the equivalent of no less than six months' normal running costs. This reserves policy is in line with prior years and the Trustees consider that this policy is still appropriate.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees maintain a regular review of the principal risks facing the branch, and are satisfied that appropriate mitigations are in place for each. The table below sets out the risks the Trustees consider most significant to the charity's ability to deliver its charitable purpose, together with the steps taken to manage them.

Risk: Volunteer recruitment and training

Key mitigation	Evidence this year
Structured recruitment process, Core Training and a widened co-mentoring approach	Reflected in a record 510 applications this year, with the Samaritans Training School and a widened co-mentoring approach helping us convert more of that interest into trained volunteers

Risk: Volunteer wellbeing and retention

Key mitigation	Evidence this year
Our Volunteer Support team, mentors, shift leaders and day leaders, with access to the national Safeguarding Helpline, providing ongoing emotional and practical support	Demonstrated this year through new shift patterns - including a Friday night shift - and improvements to our volunteer environment, alongside the ongoing role of shift and day leaders in recognising and supporting volunteers' wellbeing

Risk: Financial sustainability

Key mitigation	Evidence this year
Income investment, fundraising and financial monitoring	Demonstrated by the branch's continued financial recovery, with strengthened financial reporting enabling confident investment decisions such as the £20,000 refurbishment programme

Risk: Property and infrastructure

Key mitigation	Evidence this year
Planned maintenance, long-term capital planning, and proactive engagement with our landlord to secure long-term certainty over our tenure	Tested this year when ageing front doors, identified as a security risk, were replaced as part of the branch's refurbishment programme, and a full overhaul of the heating system - investments made alongside our ongoing work to secure long-term certainty over our premises

Risk: Leadership / governance succession

Key mitigation

Succession planning and leadership development

Evidence this year

Demonstrated this year by a smooth transition following the Director handover in June 2025, and by the Trustees' ongoing succession planning as part of the BDP.

Risk: Information governance and cyber security

Key mitigation

Cyber security provided by the Central Charity, with mandatory branch-level information governance training

Evidence this year

Reinforced through mandatory "Keeping Data Safe" e-learning, now enforced on a two-yearly refresh cycle across the branch

Risk: Safeguarding and operational risk

Key mitigation

Samaritans policies, governance oversight and quality assurance

Evidence this year

Tested this year through the branch's response to two safeguarding incidents at HMP Belmarsh

Risk: Reputational risk

Key mitigation

Strong governance, quality standards and communications oversight

Evidence this year

Evidenced by the Central Charity's Independent Quality Review, which judged the branch's operations "excellent"

Financial governance

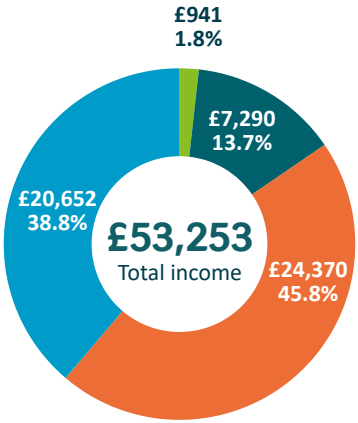
The Trustees maintain oversight of the branch's finances through regular financial reporting, monthly review of income and expenditure, and formal approval of significant spending. This year, strengthened financial reporting gave the Trustees the confidence to approve up to £20,000 for the refurbishment of the branch, new secure front doors, and an overhaul of the heating system - each approved against our reserves policy and current financial position.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

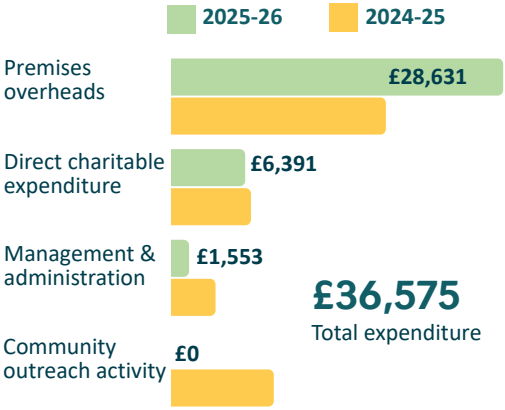
The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law. The Trustees have elected to prepare accounts on the receipts and payments basis, as permitted by section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 for charities with gross income under £250,000. In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to: select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently; make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed; and prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the charity will continue in operation.

Accounts

Income:



Expenditure:



	Notes	2025-26	2024-25
Bank interest		941	633
Donations		7,290	21,947
Funds raised		24,370	20,209
Grants	1	20,652	22,039
Total		**53,253**	**64,824**

	Notes	2025-26	2024-25
Premises overheads	2	28,631	18,517
Direct charitable expenditure	3	6,391	6,891
Management & administration	4	1,553	3,835
Community outreach activity		0	8,859
Total		**36,575**	**38,148**

Surplus: £16,678 for FY 2025-26 vs. £26,680 for FY 2024-25

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
Cash balance brought forward from previous year	51,057	25,377
Surplus for the year	16,678	26,680
Carried forward to next year	67,734	51,057

Fixed Assets

Leasehold improvements brought forward	73,713
Depreciation charge for the year	5,670
Carried forward	68,043

In 2009, the Branch acquired a 30-year lease for 1-5 Angus Street London SE14 6LU from the London Borough of Lewisham for a peppercorn rent. Refurbishment work started in November 2008 and the Branch moved in and started operating there in April 2009. Funds spent on the refurbishment of the building have been shown as a capitalised asset. The depreciation for the refurbishment is deducted annually on a straight line basis.

Notes to the Accounts

Note 1: Grants	**20,652**
Listener scheme branch grant payment	2,752
Bequest from former volunteer, Caroline Adie	10,000
Screwfix grant (restricted for refurbishment of the branch)	5,000
The Big Give match funding campaign	2,500
The Charities Trust	400
Note 2: Premises Overheads Total	**28,631**
Insurance and bank charges	1,349
Housekeeping	802
Premises Overheads	2,114
Rates	629
Repairs and maintenance	21,325
Utilities	2,412

Note 3: Direct Charitable Expenditure	**6,391**
Branch contribution to Central Charity	2,312
Telephone and internet	216
Prison expenses	413
Volunteers' travel expenses	1,819
Fundraising expenses	513
Other Expenditure	1,118
Note 4: Management and administration	**1,553**
IT software and stationery	1,553

Note 5: Payment to Trustees

No payments have been made to Trustees except to reimburse purchases made for the Charity or expenses in the usual course of volunteering.

Note 6: Reserves

The Charity seeks to maintain its reserves at the equivalent of no less than six months' normal running costs.

Approval

Approval of Financial Statements and Accounts

Approved David Waugh - Director, 1 August 2026
Approved Chloe Vaughan - Treasurer, 1 August 2026

Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts Report to the Trustees/Members of Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans on accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026, set out on pages 17-24.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2026.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- The accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Carolyn Holbrook

Carolyn Holbrook of 5 Croftside, Bures, Suffolk, CO8 5LL
Independent Examiner
30 August 2026

9. Thank you

Everything in this report - every call answered, every volunteer trained, every improvement to our branch - was made possible by the generosity of those named below.

With thanks to:

Caroline Adie, family & friends; Lewisham Borough Council; Louise Eldridge; National Lottery Community Fund; National Rail; Radiohead & their management; Screwfix Foundation; The Big Give Christmas Challenge; The Blackheath Choir; The Monday Charitable Trust; Transport for London; Wickes - and many donors who prefer to remain anonymous

A special thank you too, to all the listening and support volunteers at LGS Samaritans Branch - supporting our fundraising campaigns, outreach activities, prison visits, volunteer training and experience, branch housekeeping, administration and leadership. But most importantly, supporting our callers.

Because of everyone named here - and many more - someone is there to answer today.

Scan to donate

Ways to support our branch

Donate directly via our website:

Make a one-off or regular donation through our website

Fundraise for us

Choose us as your charity for a sponsored challenge or fundraising event

Give as you Live www.giveasyoulive.org

Raise funds for us at no extra cost when you shop online through Give as you Live

Hire our meeting rooms

Hire a room for a meeting, course, or small conference. All proceeds support our work

We're here to listen

Call free day or night on

116 123

Web
samaritans.org/lgs

SAMARITANS

Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark Samaritans is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales (1167963). Our registered office is located at 1-5 Angus Street, New Cross, London SE14 6LU.