

Annual Report - 2021-2022

About Off The Record

Off The Record (OTR) supports young people aged 11 to 24, who live, study or work in Richmond Borough, by providing counselling, information and a sexual health clinic. Our aim is to provide a place where all young people feel welcome when they are in need of support. The services are free and confidential, always so important to young people.

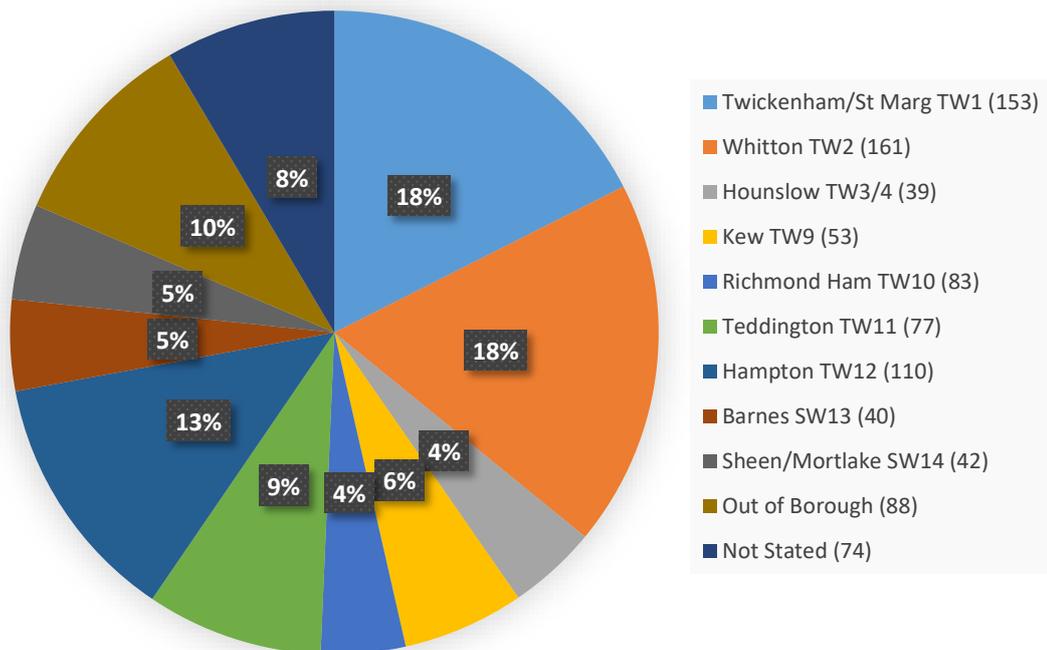
OTR is a relaxed and non-clinical centre with counselling rooms and a small waiting area with leaflets and information. The wellbeing of young people is at the heart of our work, and our services support them to develop resilience and make informed life choices.

We are compliant with the NHSE *Data Protection & Security Toolkit* through annual assessment against the National Data Guardian's ten data security standards. The sexual health clinic is staffed by specialist NHS nurses.

Extent of Service 2021-2022

	<p>920 young people came to us for help for the first time and we delivered 3506 sessions</p>
	<p>41% Healthcare referrals Vital service directly supporting statutory healthcare agencies</p>

Geographical Area - 2021-22 (new clients)



Many young people who come to us are desperately seeking help and are often reluctant to talk to parents or to visit statutory services. They bring a wide variety of issues, and as we have no cut-off threshold everyone can come here for early help when problems are just developing, and this helps prevent a lot of suffering further down the line.

As with many other local organisations, our services have had to respond to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. As an essential service in supporting vulnerable young people's emotional health and wellbeing, Off The Record successfully adapted its delivery and support systems within guidelines on safety, to ensure support continues to be available through a variety of means.



Given some of the continued anxieties about Covid 19, a number of our counsellors were reluctant to return to face-to-face work when we began to resume our counselling services at Off The Record from July 2020, and our satellite centres were slow to re-open. So in addition to the online counselling we recruited new counsellors to expand our face-to-face session capacity to meet demand. The 2021-2022 year saw our capacity grow from 19 weekly sessions at OTR in April to 43 by the end of the financial year. A similar return to capacity took place at our satellite centres – by December '21, all but two of the centres were running face-to-face counselling, with 36 sessions available per week by the end of March. Our Online Counselling began the year with 34 sessions available per week; this has now dropped to 5 per week. The drop-in sexual health clinic continued to run, but with an upper age limit of 18. Our counselling drop-in service saw a gradual increase in numbers during the year; we continue to promote our crisis counselling through outreach work.

2021-22 Highlights

● Facts and Statistics:

We saw **920** NEW young people, and **246** REPEAT clients from previous years.

191 new (+ **112** repeat) young people accessed **1,171** counselling sessions at OTR

142 new (+ **31** repeat) clients accessed **1,533** counselling sessions through our satellites, and Skylarks

521 new (+ **68** repeat) clients accessed **623** information or crisis support sessions

66 new young people accessed **179** sexual health sessions, (**35** repeat)

We attended school assemblies and held 3 meetings with our Young People's Advisory Group

We also supported **160** parents and carers of young people

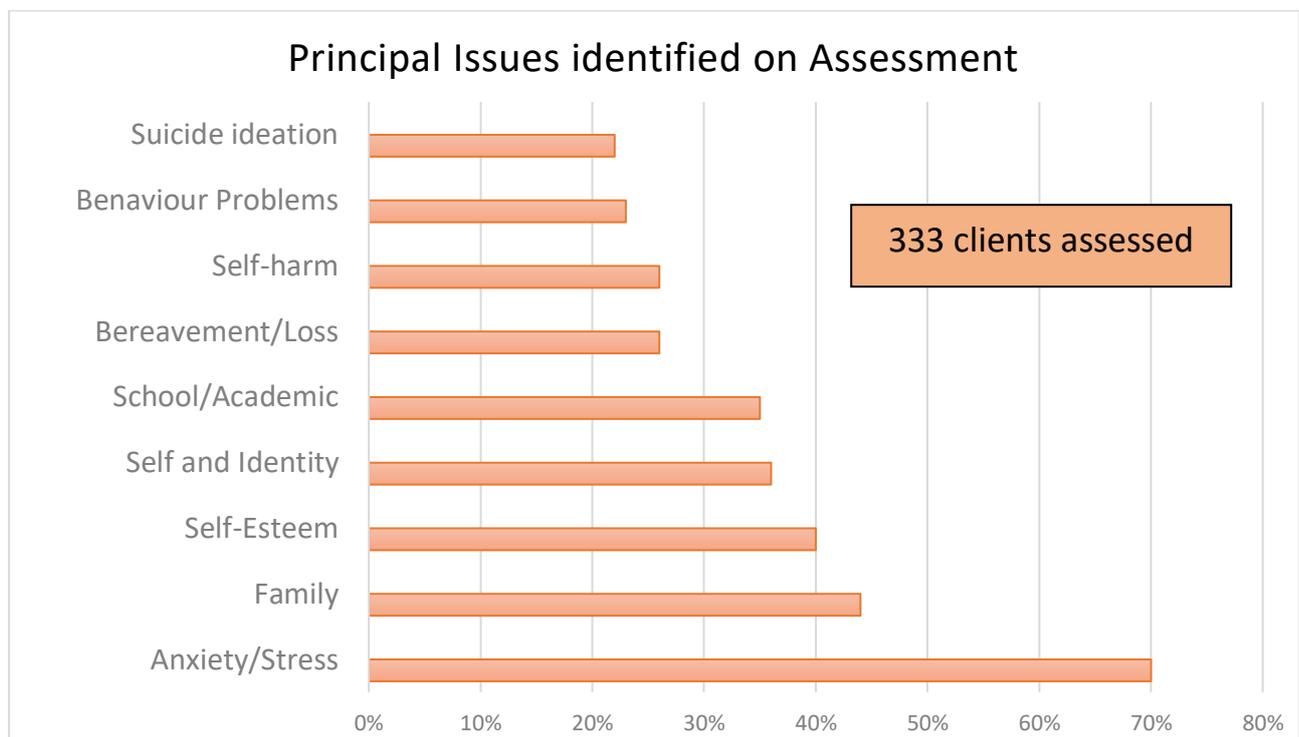
That's a massive 3,666 sessions in total, with 1,326 different young people.

Overall we delivered 3,506 sessions during the year (this is 419 more than the previous year) supporting 1,166 different young people (133 more than last year), as well as 160 sessions to parents and carers of young people.

- **Online counselling:** our whole counselling service moved online in April 2020 when we went into lockdown, so we were able to continue offering ongoing counselling sessions throughout the pandemic. Most counselling was by zoom but we also offered phone and occasionally text and email sessions in order to support young people in challenging situations. Now that most of our counselling has returned to face-to-face services again we have retained some online counselling to support those who struggle to attend in person. Online counselling is not a popular option with most of our young clients so our offer is proportional to demand.

- **Satellites Services:** we are currently running 12 satellite services in 9 different area hubs, providing 36 counselling sessions per week. These are small counselling hubs across the borough, covering Hampton, Hampton Hill, Whitton, Teddington, Richmond and Barnes, enabling young people to access counselling close to home
- **Skylarks Charity:** we are also working in partnership with Skylarks Charity to provide 6 weekly sessions of counselling support to young people with disabilities and additional needs
- **Crisis Interventions:** We continued to run 6 bookable one-off sessions per week either online or face-to-face which provided immediate support to over 150 young people in crisis
- **Young People’s Advisory Group (YPAG):** YPAG provides a vital first-hand experience of the issues affecting young people in our Borough. Members of the group met with us and talked about their experience of the pandemic, and also with Munira Wilson, MP to answer her questions on young people’s mental health and what support was needed for them, especially during the pandemic.
- **Community Fundraising:** Although our own fundraising activities were severely cut back this year we were very fortunate to receive over £25,000 through the generous donations of various local groups and individuals, and we were able to secure gift aid to boost this by another £6,250.

Need for our Service



Whilst the chart above shows the principal issues identified at assessment stage, young people come to us with very wide-ranging issues, and many more emerge when they start their course of regular counselling sessions.

**Self-harm remains the most frequently identified issue during counselling:
41% based on ending forms with 277 clients**
but three further issues also featured highly as follows:

- **31% of clients had parents who were separated / divorced / new family**
- **30% of clients suffered panic attacks – a rise on the previous year**
- **29% of clients lived with a single parent**

22% presented this year with anger issues, and a smaller but significant number suffered from emetophobia. This year a number of young people also presented with depersonalisation, derealisation and dissociation disorders, stating that they didn't feel real or able to connect with the world around them - we feel that these issues are directly related to the challenging circumstances of lockdown. Issues around gender continue to increase each year.

Our Impact

I understand myself better	94%
I feel more able to overcome life's challenges	86%
My relationships with others have improved	76%
I feel more positive about the future	91%
Counselling has definitely helped me	97%

based on 69
feedback
questionnaires

Service Feedback

Client Counselling feedback – what helped

I am still waiting for help from the NHS. The counselling with you has been vital (age 16)

It is the first time I have seen a counsellor who I felt genuinely cared to hear my story and talk about it (23)

Everybody was helpful and kind (17)

My counsellor never made me feel bad about my thoughts/feelings (16)

This really helped me when someone upset me and when I was worried about my new school or anything else (11)

It helped me understand my issues better and find where they started (14)

It helped me with a lot of tough issues and traumas I had never felt able to discuss before (23)

A lot of things I worked through with (my counsellor) were linked to my anxiety. She helped me trust myself more/love myself. She taught me how to not worry about what other people think and the best mindsets to help in the future. I've also learned how to be more kind to myself (16)

Young people's feedback on their relationship with their counsellor was extremely positive
The percentage who agree with the statements is shown below:

My counsellor is supportive	100%
I feel listened to and understood	100%
I feel safe to talk about anything I want to	100%
My views and worries are taken seriously	100%

Case History (disguised)

Jane, 18 years

White, British

Self-referred

Brief history:

Jane was feeling incredibly anxious. Her plans to go to university had been delayed owing to circumstances out of her control. Then her revised plan to take a gap year and travel were postponed indefinitely due to the COVID pandemic. She presented with low mood, missing friends and social interaction and also really angry that her life has been put on 'pause'.

How the counselling helped:

- The counselling was online as the country was still in lockdown owing to covid
- Allowing Jane space to express everything going round in her head allowed her to explore the huge emotional impact the current situation was having. It also gave her a much-needed chance to release the pressure of the endless thinking/trying to make things okay when she couldn't
- It felt really important for her to feel understood and 'heard', particularly with regards to her past experience of friendships. They spent time reflecting on her experiences and anxieties and discussed ways of staying connected despite all the restrictions.
- Jane felt the enormous loss of a planned future and had to process her feeling and disappointment before coming to terms with the situation. She used the weekly space to vent her anger and frustration, which she found invaluable
- Sometimes Jane found it hard to start so they used postcards and discussed what images she was drawn to and why. By having a confidential space and a relationship she trusted, to express her private thoughts and feelings, she allowed herself to reflect more, and understand herself better.

Outcomes of therapy:

- The counsellor found a connection with Jane through her music and sense of humour. This encouraged some light-hearted conversations on shared hobbies and experience, and supported more positive thinking and attitudes
- In time, she was able to feel more positive which led to her finding new things to occupy herself during a very difficult time
- They also spoke about Jane's future plans and she embraced the opportunity to discuss her academic thoughts – this created a real excitement for her in opening up future possibilities
- The pandemic became something that was not only manageable, rather than intolerable, but that she could see as bringing new insights and opportunities into her life.

Parent feedback

Parent 1: “When we came for X’s first session I got an immediate sense of the culture and tone of the place that just made me feel really comfortable straightaway, it felt the right place to be and it was everything that I was hoping for. We feel so grateful that there is a place like OTR to go to.”

Parent 2: “I just wanted to let you know how grateful we were for our daughter’s counselling sessions! We really think that these sessions have made a difference. I never asked her about her meetings and she told me very little, but I have noticed changes in her behaviour and she has certainly changed visibly (basically back to where she was). If there is anything that we should be mindful of also in terms of following up, please let us know. Thank you so much for the work you’re doing! It really couldn’t be more important and especially for growing girls having to make sense of this world and their place in it.

Parent 3: “My son has just recently completed a course of counselling sessions at the ETNA centre. I just wanted to thank you very much for all the support he has received and the sessions have really helped him get through a tough time for him. He is now able to talk to us more openly, reflect upon his thoughts and has strategies to help him cope. I just wanted to say thank you for all the help the charity has given him.”

Chair’s Report: 2021-2022



The value of the work of Off the Record Twickenham (OTR) is reflected in the feedback from the young people who came through our doors last year:

“My counsellor never made me feel bad about my thoughts/feelings”
(age 16)

“It helped me understand my nervousness” (15)

“I loved that they didn’t know much about me so it felt really private”
(12)

It is thirty years since the doors of 2, Church Street, Twickenham were first open to young people and OTR continues to remain the only free and confidential counselling, and walk-in information and sexual health service to those aged 11-24 living, working or studying in the borough of Richmond. Providing a safe space where young people can be listened to and not judged has been our core aim.

It is shocking to understand that our local young people are numbered as being amongst the highest in London for self-harming and demonstrating risky behaviours. As we emerged from the upheavals

caused by the pandemic lockdowns, anxiety and stress continue to be key issues, but we have seen a rise in the numbers of young people with a range of complex support needs.

As Covid 19 continued to cast a long shadow over us, the Board's first objective was to ensure that our systems and delivery model were able to respond to the needs of young people through the crisis and beyond. 2021-22 saw a gradual return to our previous service model. Our capacity at Church Street grew from 19 weekly sessions in April to 43 by the end of the financial year. A similar return to capacity took place at our satellite centres - by December 2021 all but two of the centres were running face to face counselling, with 36 sessions available per week by the end of March. Our Online Counselling has now dropped to 5 sessions per week from 34 in April 2021. Our counselling drop-in service saw a gradual increase in numbers during the year; we continue to promote our crisis counselling through outreach work.

None of these developments would have been possible without the enthusiasm and hard work of our Manager, Deborah Kerpner, and her dedicated team of counsellors and amazing office staff who have supported OTR through these challenging times.

Our second objective was to have the necessary resources to deliver an expanded counselling service including staffing structure to support delivery. At the start of the year, a number of counsellors were reluctant to return to face-to-face work, so we began to advertise and actively develop our relationships with the training colleges. Trustees monitor the recruitment need as part of standing agenda reports to Board Meetings. The Board delegated responsibility for HR issues to a new Committee during the year. We also built up our administrative capacity to 36 hours p.w. to help us respond to the continued pressure on our waiting lists. We delivered 3,506 sessions during the year – this is 419 more than the previous year - supporting 1,166 different young people – a significant rise from 1,033 in the previous year - as well as 160 parents and carers of young people. This includes all young visitors to OTR including those attending the drop-in service and the sexual health clinic.

Our third objective was to ensure that the range of funding streams were sufficiently diverse, successful and adequate for our new service model. OTR's Business Committee met six times during the year to advise and make recommendations to the Board on all areas of financial management and reporting; fundraising strategy and oversight; risk management; IT infrastructure; the establishment and compliance with business policies, and procurement and service provider oversight.

Our fourth objective was to review our communication tools, website and literature to ensure they remain relevant and support our key aims. With a greater level of administrative capacity within the staff team, we have been able to give regular attention to our communications, across all media, to support young people, and to engage the wider community in awareness of our work.

Our fifth objective was to establish a regular review and modification of facilities to ensure that all working practices were safe and accessible for all stakeholders. As part of our ongoing attention to government guidance on providing a safe environment during the pandemic, we worked with our landlord to commission and install a ventilation system to circulate fresh air through our main counselling offices in Church Street (supported by one of our generous donors). OTR regularly reviews and reflects on its practice to be fully compliant with the data protection standards of the NHS Digital Toolkit, on which we are assessed annually.

I would like to thank all members of the Trustee Board for their efforts in the last year. A special thanks to Phil Checkland who is retiring as a Trustee. Phil has been an invaluable member of the Board especially with his contributions to the Business Committee and the review of our IT systems.

Even more thanks are due to our Funders, without which our young people could not be supported. They include Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands Charity, The Barnes Fund, One Richmond, Global Make Some Noise, the Masonic Charitable Foundation and NHS SW London CCG. We were especially delighted to receive funds again from local residents through donations to the Richmond Voluntary Fund.

Young people are particularly keen to support our work: pupils from two schools led fundraising campaigns on our behalf. Students from the Richmond Music Trust performed at our first Summer Concert which was held at St Mary's Church in September 2021. This was a wonderful end to a very successful Summer Fair, where OTR Friends were able to show their prowess once again at running raffle and tombola stalls.

We were also delighted to receive donations from so many individuals and local schools who took on challenges or ran events to raise funds for us. This included the Three Peaks challenge and the London Marathon, while one local surgery held a clothing sale. We also have many generous donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Finally, although I am standing down from the Board at our AGM, I will continue to be involved in running fundraising activities through the Friends of Off the Record. It has been a real privilege to be part of a charity that positively affects so many young lives. I am sure with our Board, Staff team and counsellors, Off the Record will continue to do so for many years to come.

Sarah Simpson MBE

Chair of Trustees

Extract from OTR's Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies			14,260	14,260	23,621
Charitable activities		163,519	44,321	207,840	252,090
Investments		-	387	387	647
Donated Services & Facilities		12,000	-	12,000	11,884
Total Income	2	175,519	58,968	234,487	288,242
Resources Expended					
Charitable expenditure	3	204,742	51,259	256,001	199,850
Fundraising costs	4	-	866	866	-
Total Expenditure		204,742	52,125	256,867	199,850
Net Income		(29,223)	6,843	(22,380)	88,392
Total funds brought forward		96,361	177,974	274,335	185,943
Total funds carried forward		67,138	184,817	251,955	274,335

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Acknowledgments

THANKS to everyone for so generously supporting our work:

Funders in the year:

Hampton Fund
Richmond Parish Lands Charity
One Richmond
The Barnes Fund
Global's Make Some Noise
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Richmond Voluntary Fund (and residents for the donations!)
NHS SW London CCG
St Mary's Twickenham Parochial Church Council

Fundraising appeals/events on our behalf:

- Orleans Park School – mufti day event
- Twickenham School
- Cross Deep Surgery
- Radnor House School - £3.7k raised
- Michael Wilson – ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon (split the proceeds with National Ankylosing Spondyloarthritis Society)
- Hanna Williams – ran the London Marathon (over £4k raised)
- In memory of Tarun Ray
- Eel Pie Records – Record Fair

We are extremely grateful to local organisations who have provided accommodation for our satellite services at a charitable rate:

The Greenwood Centre
ETNA
Essex House Surgery
The Orange Tree Clinic
Whitton Youth Club

And all those who have given donations or time, including friends, clients, parents and volunteer counsellors.



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