

# SOAR SOCIAL ACCOUNTS 2024-25

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# WELCOME TO SOAR'S

## 2024/25 SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

We are proud to present this year's Social Accounts - a reflection of the shared commitment and compassion that defines our work. Every story, figure, and milestone shared here represents the lives impacted and communities strengthened thanks to the dedicated support of our funders, volunteers, partners, and staff.

Notably this year, we've made our buildings greener with a full switch to LED lighting, thanks to Sheffield City Council (SCC) and Groundwork UK grants. Our partnership with Chilypep has allowed us to deliver a major extension and refurbishment of 11 Southey Hill which is now operating as a vibrant hub for young people.

We've secured new contracts and grant funding. Of particular note is the family support work we are doing with Sheffield Children's Hospital in partnership with Darnall Wellbeing (DWB), Manor & Castle Development Trust (MCDT) and Zest. This led to a staff restructure and the formalisation of our Families Team.

As a key partner in the transformative work of the This is Us programme, we've helped ensure that local people have a say on the project's priorities. We now manage its small and medium grants, and will report back on the impact of these funds next year.

Looking ahead, we are energised to build on the progress of this past year. With your continued support, we will deepen our impact, amplify unheard voices, and build a more just and inclusive future for the people of North Sheffield.

Thank you for being part of this journey. With gratitude,  
**Megan Ohri** – Partnership Manager



**Megan Ohri**

"I am incredibly proud to be a Trustee of SOAR Community. SOAR do deep and difficult work in our communities, giving residents support in some of the most difficult times in their lives. This report gives a snapshot – people helped into work; reduced visits to doctors; community groups supported. SOAR's work is vital and deserves all of our support."

**Mark Rusling**  
Board of Trustees

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*\*all client names have been changed to protect identity*

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# WELFARE SUPPORT

SOAR Welfare Coaches support local individuals with a range of issues, including benefits, housing, money management & debt guidance, and older-people support & advice. This work is funded by SCC People Keeping Well, Homewards and Multiply.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- We've had a new Housing Welfare Coach join the team - supporting local people with housing and tenancy issues, one of the most common reasons for referral into our service.
- We delivered 8 free money management courses through Multiply, empowering 47 local individuals to learn and understand more about bills and day-to-day numeracy.
- We have expanded the team to include another Housing specialist, as part of the Homewards Sheffield Innovative Housing Project (IHP), aimed at preventing homelessness.

**603**

new  
individuals  
supported

**£968,112**

income  
maximised\*

*"Thank you for your expertise and patience which meant it was dealt with swiftly and efficiently. We are lucky in this area to be able to get help from SOAR."*

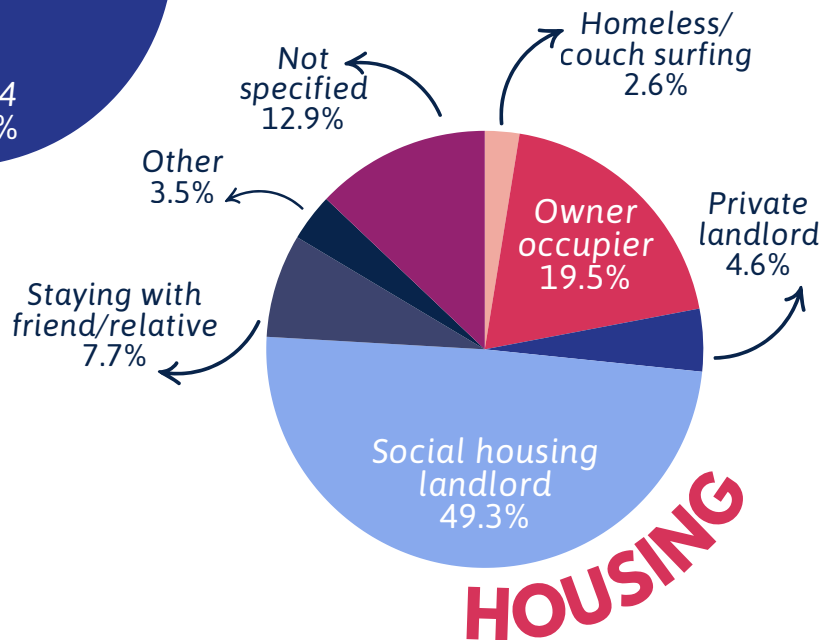
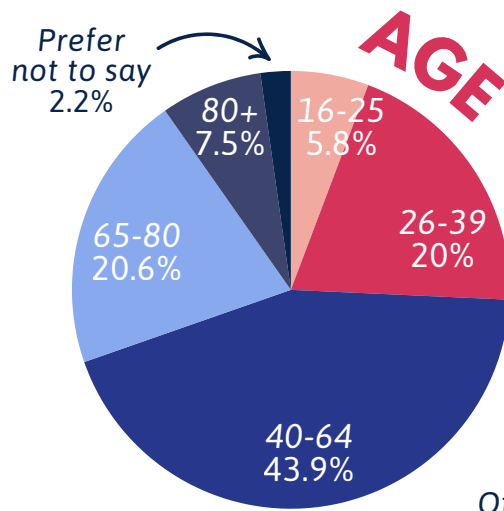
- Referrals for individuals needing Welfare & Benefits or Housing advice is consistently high, and people's situations are often complex and require more lengthy, in-depth support.

## CHALLENGES

*\*on benefits and grants*

SOAR COMMUNITY / 2024-25

# WHO WE'RE SUPPORTING



## ROBERTA'S STORY

Roberta\* was referred by Sanctuary Housing as her tenancy (and health) was at risk due to extreme hoarding. The fire brigade had done a safe & well check, and then SOAR's Welfare Coach, Debbie, visited Roberta's house. They spoke about the reasons behind the hoarding and historical mental health issues, and Debbie encouraged Roberta to go to the GP and discuss medication for depression. She made a referral to Sheffield Mind Magpies who have offered art therapy. Sanctuary Housing have agreed that as long as progress is being made, they will stave off legal proceedings, and Debbie is keeping them up to date with the hope of pulling together an Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting (MDT) to develop an action plan. Debbie is continuing to support Roberta.

"Thank you so much."



# FAMILIES SUPPORT

Our newly established Families Team works directly with families across the north of Sheffield, offering tailored support around housing, finances, parenting, and wellbeing. The team help families build resilience, strengthen community connections, and access the right services at the right time.

**86**

families  
received  
tailored  
support

**57%**

Family Coach  
referrals from  
Primary Care  
Networks

*"(Jodie) pushes me to believe in myself and makes me feel heard, wanted and makes me believe I can do anything I set my mind to. If it wasn't for Jodie I wouldn't be as confident as I am today, she's given me another chance at life."*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- We launched a partnership with Sheffield Children's Hospital, Zest, DWB, and MCDT, linking families regularly attending the hospital with our Family Coaches in the community.
- Outreach in schools and local communities has led to increased referrals, so we can support more local families in need.
- We are growing and securing the long-term sustainability of our Mindful Mamas outreach project, to allow us to continue its positive work.

## CASE STUDY

The Jones\* family fled Barnsley after harassment and property damage, and got in touch with our team. We liaised with Sheffield City Council to help secure housing and financial assistance through Personal Independence Payment (PIP). School and nursery places were arranged for the children. With additional support from SOAR's Welfare Coach, they successfully appealed an unsuitable housing offer. They have accessed Confidence in the Community sessions and the Mindful Mamas Group. As a result, they have experienced improved mental health, greater stability, and increased confidence in daily life.

# SOCIAL CAFES



SOAR's Peer Support Workers run a range of Social Cafés to support local people into new activities, meeting new people, and building confidence. They are funded by People Keeping Well, Synergy Sheffield Mental Health Alliance, South Yorkshire Community Foundation and Sanctuary Housing.

## HIGHLIGHTS

79

sessions

1,251

attendances

*"I find it calming, helpful and friendly, everyone is calm and I can talk if I want and also not if I don't want to."*

- We gained funding through South Yorkshire Community Foundation to further expand and develop our Men's Social Café in Burngreave.
- Working in collaboration with and learning from Compassionate Sheffield, we have delivered Grief Circles in Parson Cross, meaning we can better acknowledge and support people dealing with bereavements.

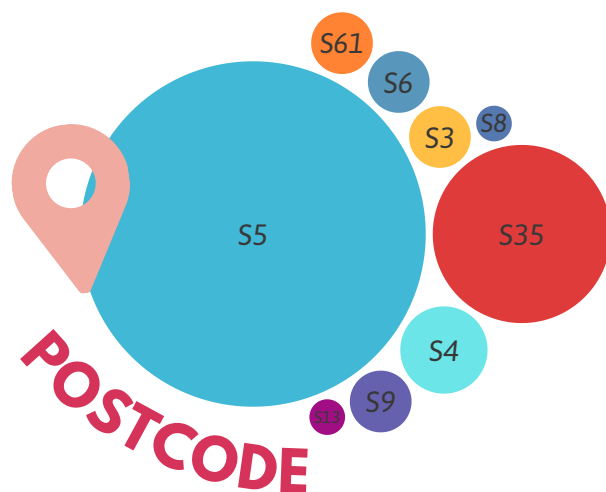
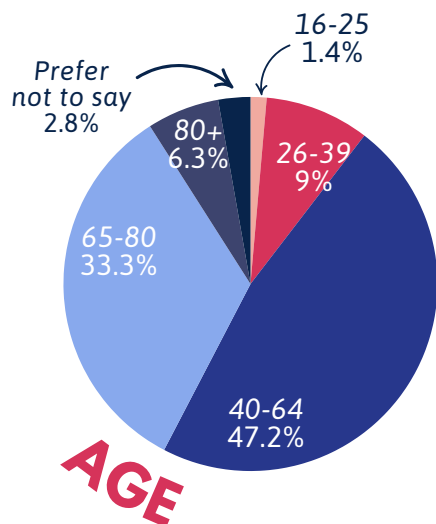


- We will increase the number of men attending our Men's Social Café, through linking in with SOAR's other groups, so we can expand our reach and engage those who might otherwise be missed.
- Balancing development and delivery can be a challenge, so recruiting more new dedicated volunteers should increase staff capacity.

## GOALS



# WHO WE'RE SUPPORTING



"I want to thank you Helen, for everything you do for us in this group. I really appreciate it and would be lost without you all."



"It makes me realise I'm not alone."

"I really enjoyed it, it was fantastic and I'm going to go to every one."

# EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

SOAR's Employment Team help identify employment opportunities for local individuals, supporting them into employment, determining goals, helping to address barriers to work, and building confidence. In 2024/25 this work was funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

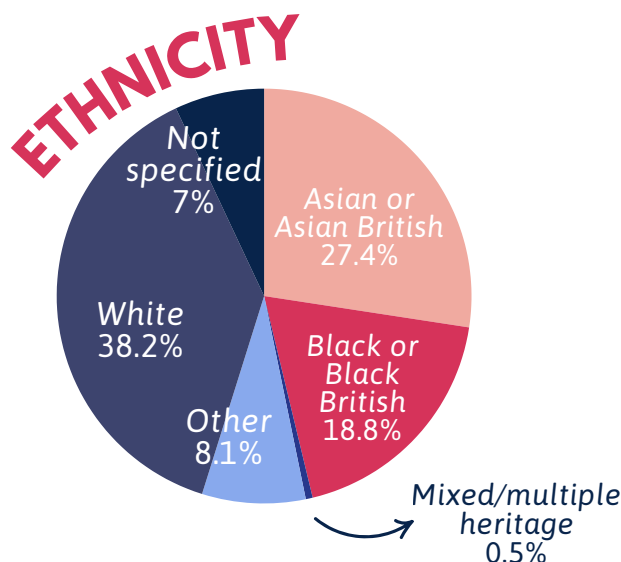
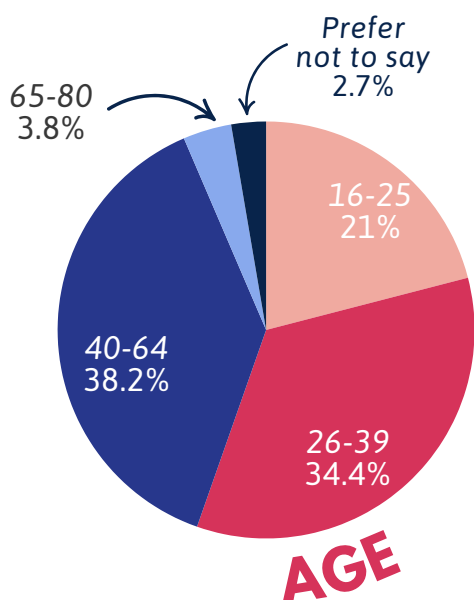
39

job outcomes

## HIGHLIGHTS

- This year we've expanded our Employment Team, with each Employment Coach having a different expertise so we can better support the people who come to us.
- We have seen positive and exciting job outcomes this year, and have seen the people we've worked with grow in confidence.
- Our outreach sessions across the north of Sheffield have been a success, and mean more people can easily reach us for support and advice.

"The SOAR team has helped me loads, checking on me and giving me the support I need, including going out of their way to find out things for me."



## WHO WE'RE SUPPORTING



# ROSE'S STORY

Rose\* came to SOAR's Employment Team through a referral from the Firth Park Foodbank. Having waited over 22 years for the right to remain, she finally had the right to work and was eager to gain some training and start working as soon as she could!

Her Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card was delayed in its arrival, but while we waited, we were able to support Rose in creating a CV and conducting practice interviews. We helped Rose build her confidence and identify the career pathway she wanted to go down, which was care and working as a support worker.

Due to a lack of UK experience, Rose was struggling to see how she could get into the field, but we were able to refer her to care sector routeways run by the council, and she has now completed her training and is waiting for a work placement with an employer that has a vacancy she will have the opportunity to fill.

Working with Rose, we have really been able to build her confidence and show her the possibilities that she has access to.

*"The support has been excellent; I have felt very supported and have learned a lot, giving my confidence a boost. I am feeling better within myself."*

# WELLBEING SUPPORT

SOAR's Wellbeing Coaches engage with local people on a 1-1 basis and in groups, offering practical support to improve people's health & wellbeing. Our Wellbeing Coaches are funded through:

PEOPLE KEEPING WELL  
**PKW**  
IN THEIR COMMUNITY



## HIGHLIGHTS

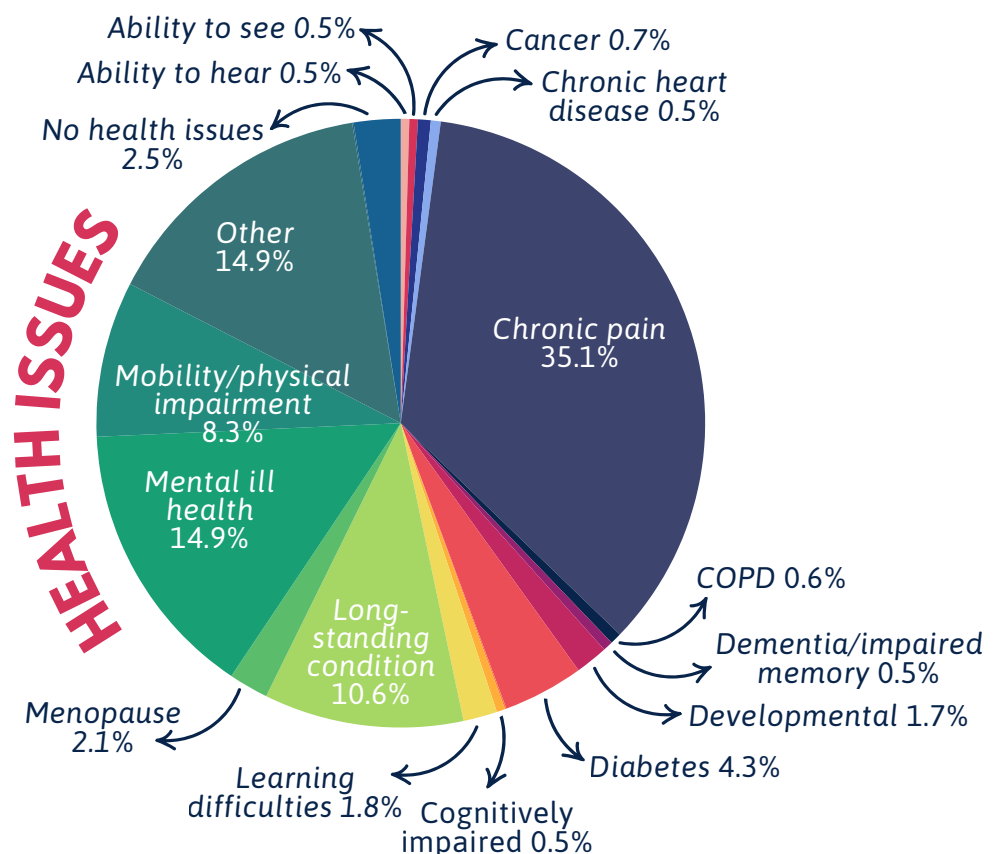
- Our Chronic Pain groups in Burngreave, in partnership with Foundry Primary Care Network (PCN), have taken off, and we have also been delivering both 1-1 and group sessions alongside SAPA5 PCN across Southey and Longley areas.
- We are excited to have a new Green Prescribing Wellbeing Coach, focusing on nature connection, gardening groups and outdoor walks in our local green spaces.
- We are proud that our Menopause work is raising awareness across the city!

**807**

individuals supported

**173**

group sessions



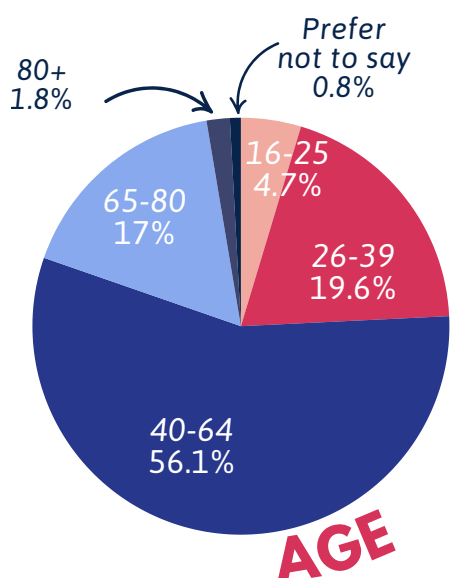


# CHALLENGES

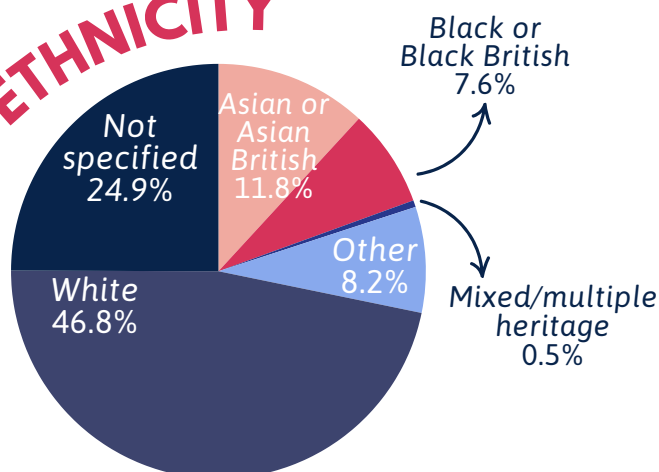
- It can be difficult to move people on to new groups when they are lacking in confidence, so we are working on developing these pathways to feel more accessible.
- Some groups are lower in numbers due to access to local buildings and awareness of the Wellbeing Coach offer. We will review each location, and hold regular wellbeing engagement stalls to ensure people know we are here.

*"I found the session really informative, relaxing and helpful to accept changes but also gained a load of new resources. Lovely atmosphere and a lot of support."*

## WHO WE'RE SUPPORTING



## ETHNICITY



*"I felt so uplifted by just speaking to you yesterday and can't wait to see what will happen when I start coming to my appointments."*

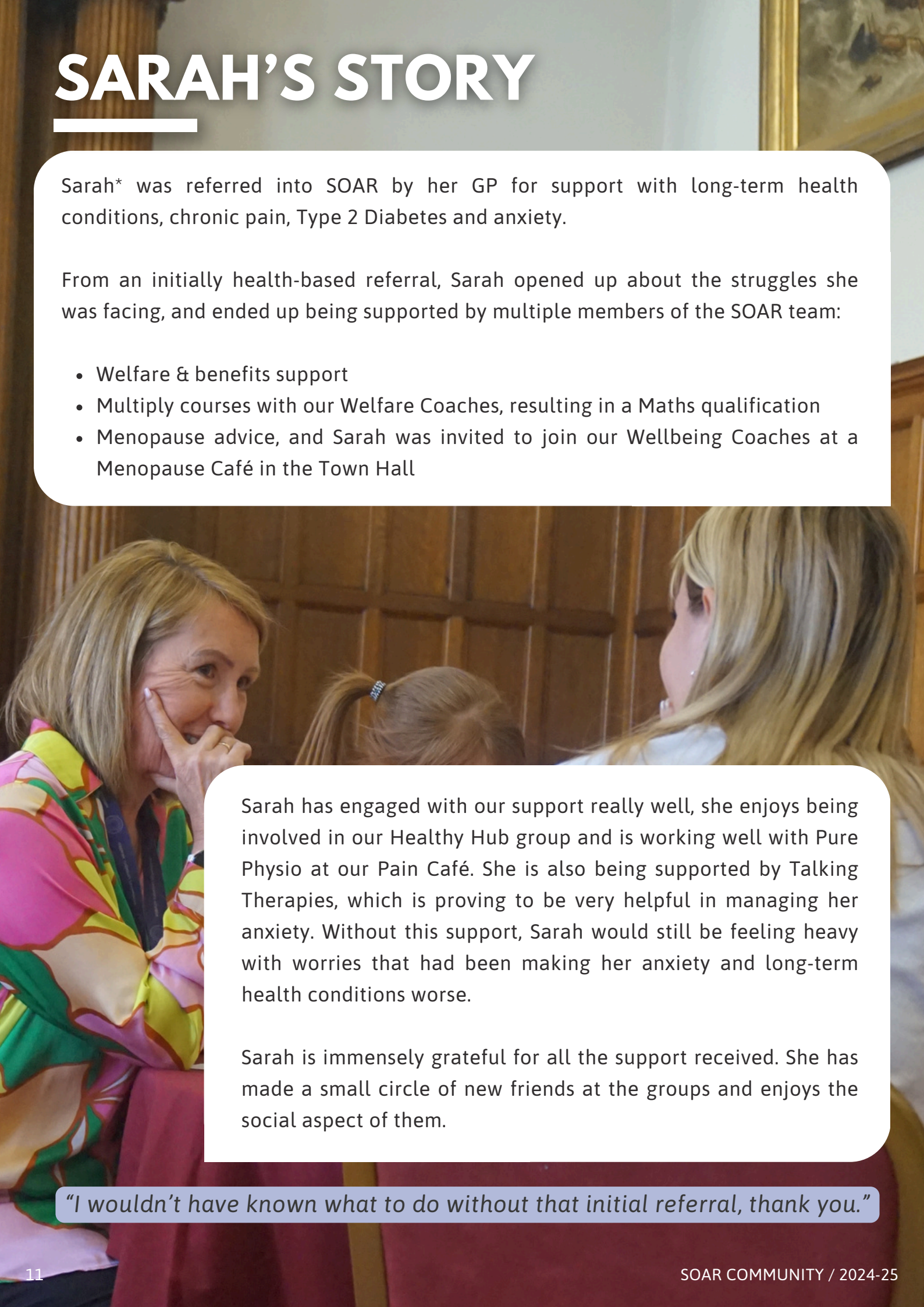


# SARAH'S STORY

Sarah\* was referred into SOAR by her GP for support with long-term health conditions, chronic pain, Type 2 Diabetes and anxiety.

From an initially health-based referral, Sarah opened up about the struggles she was facing, and ended up being supported by multiple members of the SOAR team:

- Welfare & benefits support
- Multiply courses with our Welfare Coaches, resulting in a Maths qualification
- Menopause advice, and Sarah was invited to join our Wellbeing Coaches at a Menopause Café in the Town Hall



Sarah has engaged with our support really well, she enjoys being involved in our Healthy Hub group and is working well with Pure Physio at our Pain Café. She is also being supported by Talking Therapies, which is proving to be very helpful in managing her anxiety. Without this support, Sarah would still be feeling heavy with worries that had been making her anxiety and long-term health conditions worse.

Sarah is immensely grateful for all the support received. She has made a small circle of new friends at the groups and enjoys the social aspect of them.

*"I wouldn't have known what to do without that initial referral, thank you."*



# LINK WORKERS



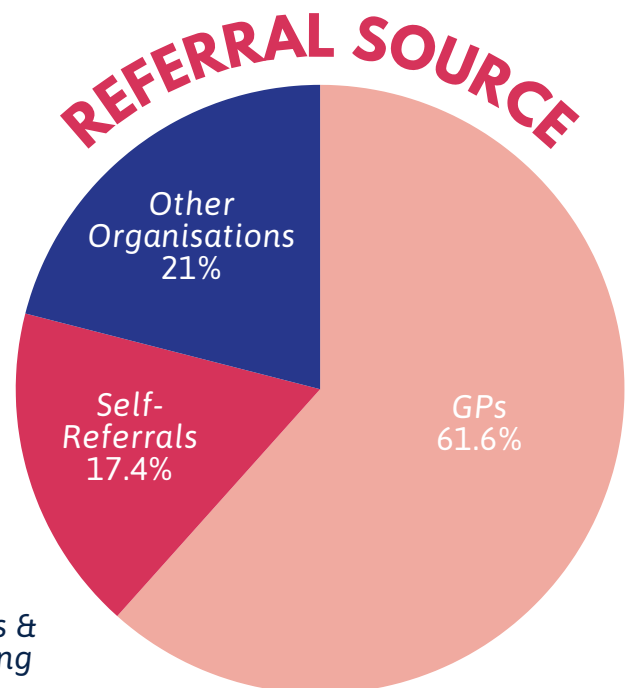
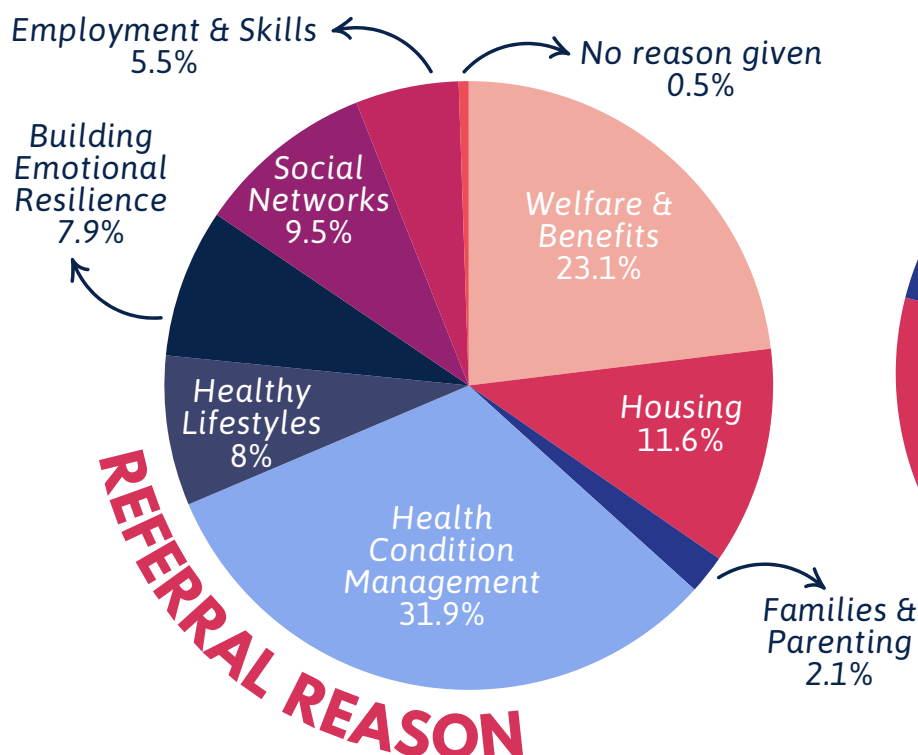
Our Link Workers work within the Network North and SAPA5 PCNs, enabling local people to access a range of services that positively impact on their wellbeing. This role leads individuals into both external partners' services as well as all of SOAR's services.

**1,693**  
inbound referrals

*"Thank you for your phone call today. Thank you also for all of the referrals you have made since, and all of the support and understanding."*

## KEY TRENDS

- The most common referral reason across Network North and SAPA5 this year has been Welfare & Benefits, with Housing a close second.
- Increased referrals means continued demand for social prescribing support.
- Our Link Worker team have been working closely with our Wellbeing Coaches as well as the wider PCN teams, enhancing our ability to provide wraparound support for our local communities.
- We are moving to being based predominantly within GP practices to increase visibility and engagement.



- Increased demand and complexity of referrals is a constant challenge, however we continue to work hard to decrease waiting times and offer the best support we can.
- Maintaining a clear social prescribing offer in light of PCNs employing more additional roles, such as Care Coordinators, can often be difficult.
- Our Link Worker contract with Foundry PCN ended in July 2024, which means we can no longer offer the same level of support to people living in those areas. We continue to work with Foundry PCN through our chronic pain work.

**665**  
people

**referred out to other local organisations for signposting or specialist support, such as:**

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Shelter
- Talking Therapies
- Compassionate Sheffield
- No Panic Sheffield
- Local foodbanks

**1,004**  
people

**supported within SOAR, by our specialist services:**

- Welfare Coaches
- Wellbeing Coaches
- Peer Support Team
- Employment Coaches
- Link Workers

*"Many thanks, I really appreciate your help, you've done more for me in one phone call than anyone else has in a year."*



# DEMENTIA

Our Dementia Peer Support Workers and our sub-contracted partners across North East Sheffield support local people living with dementia, and their carer(s) or family, ensuring they remain supported and connected within their community.

## Our Dementia service community partners are:

- Dementia? Welcome!
- Firvale Community
- Parson Cross Forum
- SACMHA
- Wincobank
- Chapeltown Methodist Church



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Thanks to an increase in funding we will be recruiting a dedicated Link Worker for Dementia referrals and catch-up calls. This will free up the Peer Support Worker to facilitate our groups and 1-1 support.
- We have worked hard to grow and develop our Carers Groups in High Green and Firth Park. These are safe spaces for carers to talk while knowing their loved ones are cared for just next door.
- We will be working with SAPA5 PCN in their development of an integrated Dementia pathway.
- Our work with Age UK's Dementia Advice Service (DAS) has meant a sustained increase in referrals.

924

individuals

3,533

attendances

229

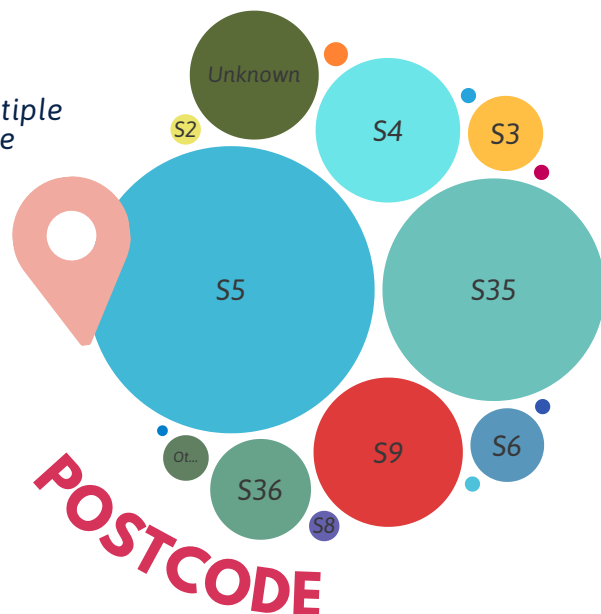
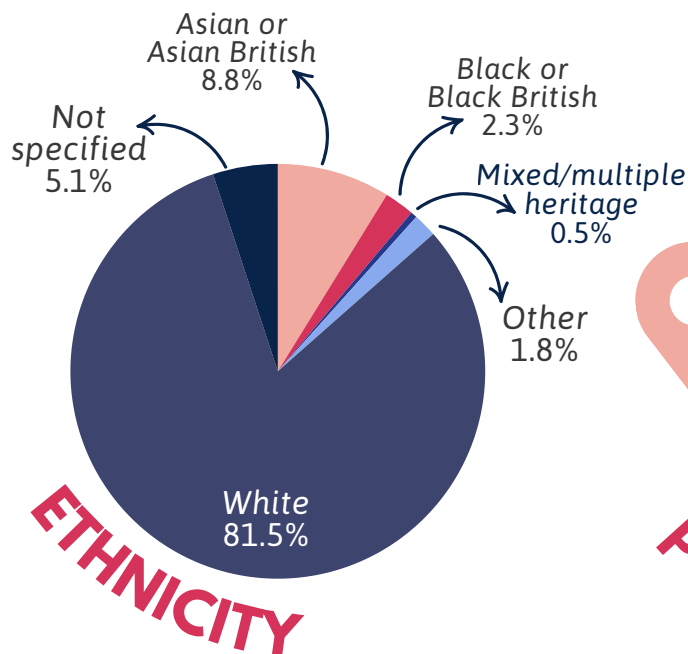
sessions

*"I found it really informative to be able to talk to those living with dementia that were able to describe how life doesn't stop and some things just need adapting."*

*"I am so lonely but your calls make me feel better."*

*"It's a lifeline."*

# WHO WE'RE SUPPORTING



\*Dementia data from all partners and SOAR

"We work very closely with the dementia services with SOAR. Communication is brilliant – prompt, clear and responsive. We often see each other at community events and it is always a pleasure as all staff are friendly, approachable and very knowledgeable. Great teamwork."

**Nicola Stirling - Age UK Dementia Advice Coordinator**

## JEAN & BEN'S STORY

We received a referral from Age UK's Dementia Advice Service for Jean\* and Ben\*. SOAR's Dementia Peer Support Worker, Lyndsey, conducted a home visit and found them both extremely anxious and not knowing where to turn after Jean's diagnosis of vascular dementia. Ben was overwhelmed with how best to help his wife - they discussed putting some practical things in place, contacting a GP for help, and making a referral for a hearing test as Jean's hearing is deteriorating. After the home visit, Jean and Ben were overjoyed to find out Lyndsey would return to follow up and offer more support. Ben said "Thank you for coming and offering support to us. We felt like there was a big black hole, now I see much more light".





# VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer  
Programme  
Lead

funded by:

PEOPLE KEEPING WELL  
**PKW**  
IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Our Volunteer Programme Lead manages our volunteering offers, increases capacity, and allows for enhanced volunteer induction and training processes, volunteer recognition, and embedding best practice amongst staff.

**50**  
volunteers

**3,250**  
volunteer  
hours

*"I love it, it's brilliant. I wake up and think 'It's library day!'"*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Having a dedicated role in our organisation means volunteers are well supported to interact with the local communities.
- Volunteers have been able to attend a range of training, from first aid to safeguarding to food hygiene.
- Our volunteers have helped offer additional advice sessions on employment and training courses, and helped with projects, social groups and centres, such as Burngreave Library.
- Since starting with us many of our volunteers have moved on to the jobs they were hoping for.
- We have seen volunteers grow in confidence and discover new strengths.
- We have made our volunteering process more inclusive, ensuring everyone has equal opportunities to get involved.

*"A large portion of my renewed self-esteem and confidence is due to the impact of everyone I have worked with at Burngreave library."*

**Former Library Assistant Volunteer, now in an employed position in a library**



# COMMUNITIES

SOAR's Communities Team works with local and citywide community organisations, offering a range of services from capacity-building for smaller grassroots organisations, linking up local partners through networking events, coordinating SOAR's volunteering offer, managing multiple small grant programmes, and leading on the Sheffield Healthy Holidays (HAF) offer in the north of the city.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- We have worked with a range of local groups and grassroots organisations; supporting 30+ existing groups, helping set up 10+ new ones, and helping groups secure over £100,000 in funding.
- Seeing communities and grassroots organisations become empowered is always a highlight!
- We have revised the process and criteria for our PKW-funded Let's Build Health Grants to ensure they are more equitable across the areas we cover, thanks to additional funding through the This is Us programme.
- Working with 28 local partners, we coordinated another year of HAF activities.
- We've extended Burngreave Library's opening hours and made more links with local schools to increase who visits us.

**£227,911**

subcontracted  
to HAF partners

**28**

HAF partners

**7,671**

HAF places

**£17,675**

LBHG small  
grants  
distributed

**£49,869**

This Is Us (ICB)  
small grants  
distributed

*Through The University of Sheffield's 100 Hours Internship, we worked with a student to redesign Burngreave Library, making it more accessible and better suited for the community to use the space.*







### The Communities Team work across:

- Southey
- Shiregreen & Brightside
- Burngreave
- Page Hall
- Firth Park
- Chapelgreen

# ST SAVIOUR'S STORY

The team at St Saviour's Community Project in High Green have been working hard for many years to provide food provision for their local community. Annie, SOAR's Community Development Worker, has been working with St Saviour's to assist them in transitioning from a food bank to a community pantry.

The aim of this project is to provide a more sustainable long-term solution to food insecurity by moving from emergency provision to membership-based and longer-term access to food at a very reduced price. Members will be able to have more choice in the food they receive and control over what is available.

Annie has been assisting the group by facilitating regular meetings, helping them produce goals and action points, connecting them with other services in the area and helping with general volunteer management. Thanks to everyone's hard work they completed the transition and officially became a community pantry in June 2025!





# CENTRES

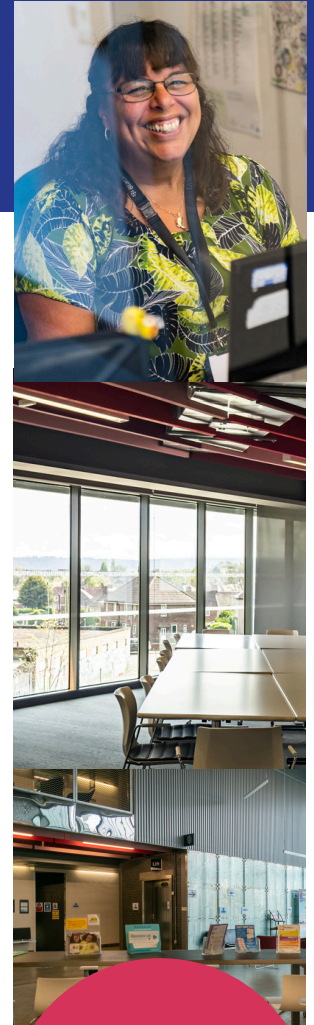
SOAR's Centres Team work hard to ensure our Centres are safe and welcoming for all visitors and tenants. The team works closely with the wider SOAR teams providing facilities support, assistance and important Health & Safety information and guidance.

*"...we have really felt a part of something exciting and community focused. Great wide open office space... we love it here!"*

**NHS Health Visitor Team, SOAR Works Tenant**

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Thanks to the Youth Investment Fund, a brand-new youth hub has been created at Southey Hill, creating a vibrant centre for young people.
- Our new Business Development Manager at Longley 4G has brought fresh ideas and projects to the centre, supporting the work and capacity of the team.
- We have rolled out a fair pricing policy across our sites.
- Thanks to grant funding, we've invested in LED lighting across all our sites, supporting our environmental goals.



**95%**  
tenant  
occupancy  
rate



**Smokefree  
Sheffield**

*We have designated all of our sites a fully smokefree environment!*

We are streamlining our room booking process and have created an online booking system named Vera.

[www.bookwithvera.org.uk](http://www.bookwithvera.org.uk)



*"As someone supporting a young trans person in my family, it is fantastic and reassuring to know that there are organisations out there who want to help make life easier for everyone."*

**SOAR Works Tenant, referring to the rollout of gender-neutral toilets in two of our sites**



# FUTURE PLANS

**This year we are excited to work towards better integrated teams and a smoother journey through our support services, through:**

- The strengthening citywide collaboration across Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to share expertise and provide a more joined-up support system for people in our community.
- Continuing to increase the number of volunteers & embed them within our Social Cafés.
- Maintaining close working between all of our SOAR teams, providing wraparound support that goes beyond employment into wellbeing and welfare advice.
- Transforming our Firth Park offices into a space where teams can collaborate and meet with the community.

**We will build on our service provision by launching new support groups and expanding existing ones, through partnerships and extended hours, including:**

- Setting up a new LGBTQ+ support group, providing members of our community with a safe space to get together and chat.
- Boosting attendance at our chronic pain groups with new activities, like swimming sessions for women.
- Increasing accessibility and awareness by offering evening Menopause sessions.
- Widening our nature-based activities by working with local community gardens.

**Our commitment to the sustainability of our organisation means investing in our infrastructure, gaining long-term funding for our teams and focusing on training and personal development, such as:**

- Focusing on ways we can make our buildings greener and more energy efficient.
- Gaining longer-term funding to provide our Employment Team with more stability and security in their roles.
- Building on our staff and volunteer focus groups, to discuss and enhance inductions, training and best practice.
- Developing staff, enhancing their professional skills with external training in topics such as Learning Disabilities, Parkinson's and more.

**We are excited to continue empowering local people in their communities:**

- We are working towards co-producing service specifications to ensure the Link Worker and wider social prescribing model meets the needs of local people and PCNs.
- We are looking forward to honing in on localised community partnerships, focusing on local issues, and improving engagement with local residents.
- We will work with more young people, empowering them to become more involved with their communities.



# SOAR AT A GLANCE

## OUR STAFF

### BAME PERCENTAGE

SOAR TEAM

**26%**

SOAR MANAGERS

**33%**

SOAR BOARD

**32%**

### BAME PAY GAP



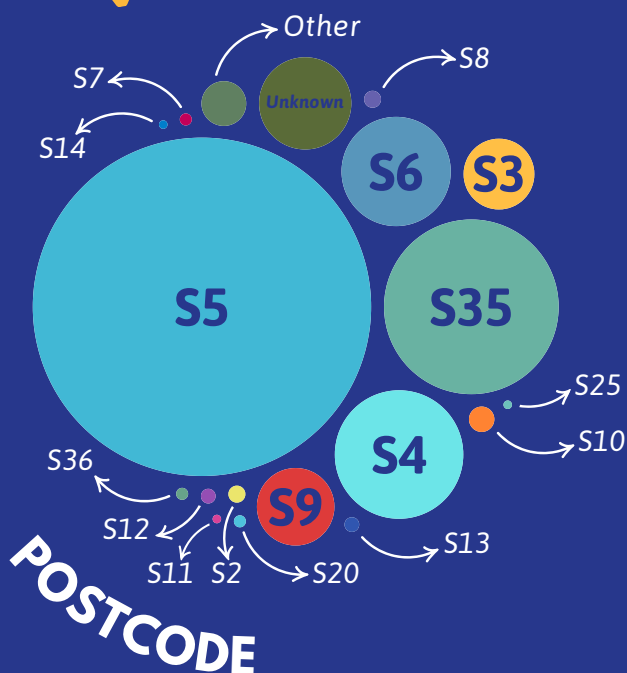
BAME avg hourly rate

**£0.63**

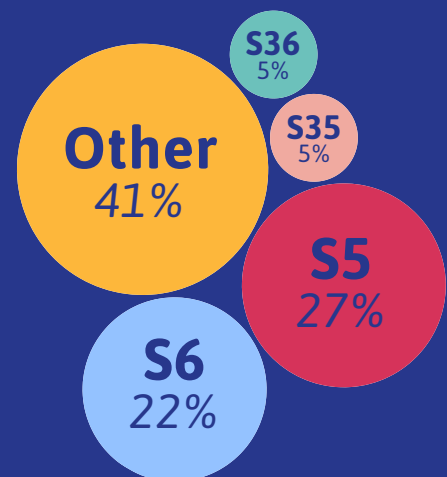


Non-BAME avg hourly rate

### CLIENT LOCATIONS



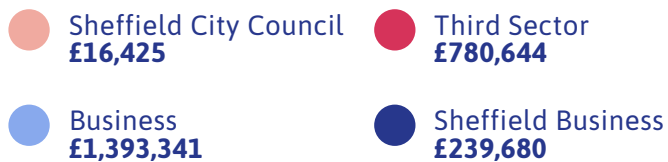
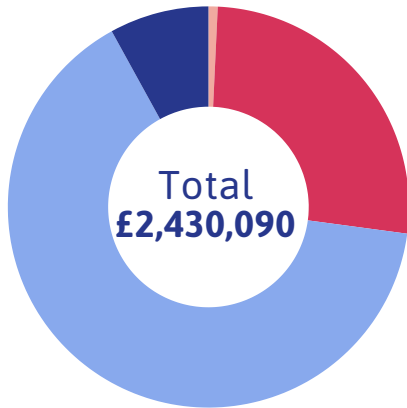
### STAFF FROM LOCAL AREA



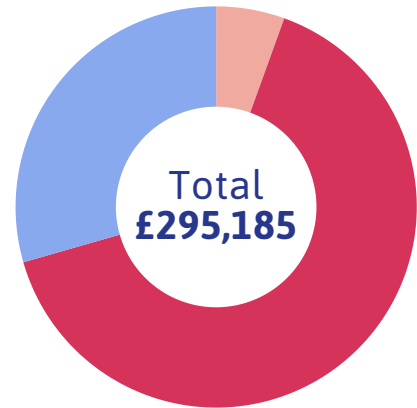
(Local area covers S4, S5, S6, S35 & S36 postcodes)

# FINANCE

## LOCAL INVESTMENTS



## TAX EXPENDITURE



## CAPITAL REFURBISHMENTS



Invested in the creation of a new Youth Hub in Southey Hill

## SALARY PENSIONS



£72,266.48

Contributed towards staff pensions

## STAFF TRAINING



Cost of 1,409 hours of staff training



## MANY THANKS TO ALL SOAR STAFF SERVING WITHIN THE REPORTING PERIOD:

Hanna Al-Murisi  
Yusef Al-Murisi  
Hiba Amin-Uddin  
Jane Archer  
Sofeena Aslam  
Margaret Barker  
David Beck  
Julie Bramall  
Daniel Clayton  
Emily Cordon  
Lyndsey Crossland  
Andrew Devine  
Sally Dickinson  
Razia Din  
Dominique Dowde  
Keeley Fairfax  
Annie Grant  
Debbie Grayson  
Ellie Guy  
Helen Harper  
Eleanor Harrison  
Lynn Hird  
Beverly Hodgson  
Mariam Hussain  
Anna Jennings

Amy Kinsella Ford  
Tash Kistnen  
Deb Mather  
Avanda Miller  
Naheen Mohammed  
Julie Moore  
Patrick Moran  
Janine Morrall  
Rebecca Moss  
Megan Ohri  
Akínsèyè Òké  
Julian Outram  
Carl Perlstrom  
Ryan Pollard  
Sophie Richards  
Penny Ritchie  
Barbara Russell  
Marilyn Scarrott  
Haseena Slack  
Jodie Smith  
Laura Snape  
Viktoria Sokoliuk  
Ellen Summers  
Matt Tagg  
Helen Taylor

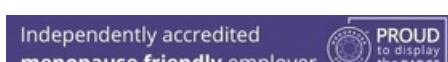
Alex Thomson  
Susan Vinall  
Annie Vohra  
Helen Warren  
Paul Webb  
Ellie-Rose Webster  
Guy Weston  
Nicola White  
Sally Whittaker  
Michaela Wild  
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