

BMS WELLBEING CIC

Understanding You

MEN'S PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Year 2 Evaluation Report

September 2024 to September 2025

Funded by the National Lottery

Funder	National Lottery
Organisation	BMS Wellbeing CIC
Delivery Partner	Directions 4 Men
Venue Partner	St Mary's Magdalene, Sale West Community Urban Trust
Location	Sale, Trafford
Reporting Period	September 2024 to September 2025
Actual Participants	32 men

1. Executive Summary

BMS Wellbeing CIC continued the Men's Peer Support Group through a second year, from September 2024 to September 2025, in partnership with Directions 4 Men and St Mary's Magdalene in Sale, Trafford. The group provides a weekly space for men in the community to drop in, chat and benefit from being part of peer support sessions.

The programme committed to seeing 20 men in year 1, rising to 35 in year 3. In year 2, 32 men attended. Every outcome target was met or exceeded. 90.1% of men said they felt more connected with community and less lonely, 90% reported improved self esteem against a target of 75%, and 100% reported improved resilience against a target of 25%. 100% of participants said they had made friends through the group.

This report sets out the programme context, the outcomes achieved against targets, the voices of the men who attended, and the learning from the year.

2. Programme Overview

The Men's Peer Support Group was developed in response to a clear need for accessible, community based support for men in Sale and the wider Trafford area. Building on the pilot year, the group continued in year 2 as a weekly Monday session where men can drop in, talk and support one another in a supportive, community setting.

Sessions continued to be held at St Mary's Magdalene in Sale. Directions 4 Men provided trained facilitation. The second trained Directions 4 Men facilitator, who joined during the pilot year, took on facilitating 1 week in 2 during year 2, which shared the workload and strengthened continuity of cover. BMS Wellbeing CIC provided overall coordination, oversight and partnership leadership.

The group guidelines and structure were printed and laminated and are visible at every session. They support mutual respect, build confidence and help to induct new members.

3. Outcomes Against Targets

The following table sets out the targets committed to alongside the actual outcomes achieved in year 2.

We said we would	What we achieved
See 20 men in year 1, rising to 35 in year 3	32 men attended in year 2
90% would report reduced isolation and increased connection with community	90.1% said they felt more connected with community and less lonely
75% would report improved self esteem	90% indicated an improvement in self esteem. Average improvement was 16.8%
25% would see improved resilience	100% saw improved resilience. Average improvement was 29.5%

Across all outcome areas, the programme met or exceeded its stated targets. Participation of 32 men compares with 25 in the pilot year and is within reach of the year 3 commitment of 35. The resilience result of 100% is 4 times the target of 25%, and the self esteem result of 90% is well above the target of 75%. The result for reduced isolation and increased connection with community, at 90.1%, met its target of 90%.

The table below compares the year 2 results with those of the pilot year.

Measure	Pilot year	Year 2
Men attending	25	32
Felt less isolated and more connected with community	100%	90.1%
Improved self esteem	75%	90%
Average improvement in self esteem	18.5%	16.8%
Improved resilience	87.5%	100%
Average improvement in resilience	25.2%	29.5%

The proportion of men reporting improved resilience rose from 87.5% to 100%, and the average improvement in resilience rose from 25.2% to 29.5%. The proportion reporting improved self esteem rose from 75% to 90%, while the average improvement in self esteem was 16.8% compared with 18.5% in the pilot year. These results were achieved with a larger group of men than in the pilot year.

4. Additional Findings

Participants were asked a number of additional questions beyond the headline outcome measures. The results further demonstrate the breadth of the programme's impact.

- 100% of participants said they had made friends.
- 90.9% said they felt less low and more positive.
- 90.9% said they felt supported by the group.

The finding that 100% of participants said they had made friends repeats the result of the pilot year and shows that friendship remains a central outcome of the group. The men also reported feeling supported and more positive, which reflects the trust the group has built between its members.

5. Feedback from Participants

Feedback from the men who attended during the year speaks to friendship, trust, coping and understanding. The following is a selection of their comments.

I have learned that I have coping mechanisms which were never used before.

Close friendship is really important to me. I've made a couple of new friends as a result of coming to the Men's Group.

My friendships have improved 100% since joining the group.

We help each other, sharing advice.

You can talk to people openly in this group. It's a confidential environment. I can trust people and open up.

I have learned to understand anxiety and people better. I deal with things better.

6. Learning from the Year

The second trained Directions 4 Men facilitator has been excellent and now facilitates 1 week in 2. Having a second facilitator to help manage the group has been invaluable this year.

A cascade mechanism was introduced using a WhatsApp group, allowing the facilitator to keep the men informed between sessions.

The year also focused on encouraging the men to meet up socially away from the Monday group. This has been very beneficial to a few of the men.

The men were invited to take part in a gardening project, but this did not go well. The men receive more support by talking together in their group than by undertaking activities.

The consequences of breaking the rules of the group, for example inappropriate comments, were reviewed and improved. A procedure is now in place with warnings and individual meetings with the person concerned, to ensure it does not become a recurring issue.

7. What the Evidence Tells Us

Year 2 confirms the findings of the pilot year. The group grew from 25 men to 32 while outcomes for resilience and self esteem improved, and every participant reported making friends. The results show that a peer support model built around conversation, trust and consistency continues to work for men in Sale and the wider Trafford area.

The learning from the gardening project points in the same direction. The men gained more from talking together in their group than from taking part in activities, which supports keeping conversation and peer support at the centre of the model.

8. Partnership

The results of year 2 are a partnership achievement. BMS Wellbeing CIC provided overall coordination and oversight. Directions 4 Men provided trained facilitation, with a second trained facilitator who has been excellent and now facilitates 1 week in 2. St Mary's Magdalene and Sale West Community Urban Trust provided the community venue where the group meets.

9. Looking Ahead

Year 3 of the funding runs from September 2025 to September 2026, with a target of 35 men.

10. Acknowledgements

BMS Wellbeing CIC would like to thank the following partners for their commitment to the Men's Peer Support Group.

Directions 4 Men provided the trained facilitation at the heart of the group, including a second trained facilitator who has been an important part of running the sessions.

St Mary's Magdalene and Sale West Community Urban Trust provided the community venue that made it possible for men to walk through the door.

Everything in this report is a shared achievement.

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