

# THE BEER HARRIS MEMORIAL TRUST



THE MAYTREE RESPITE CENTRE  
FEEDBACK REPORT  
FEBRUARY 2020



**REPORTING PERIOD: 01/09/19 - 31/01/20**

**CHARITY NUMBER: 1087668**

### **MAYTREE'S IMPACT: OVERVIEW**

The Beer Harris Memorial Trust has generously previously supported The Maytree Respite Centre, for which we are extremely grateful. It is therefore with thanks that we offer this feedback report providing some information regarding Maytree's outcomes from a 5 month period, from September 1, 2019 to January 31, 2020.

Between the period of September 1, 2019 to January 31, 2020, Maytree supported 717 people with suicidal thoughts and feelings, by phone or e-mail. The number of people who stayed at the Maytree house was 70.

Before embarking on the 5-day house stay, we assess and grade guests level of suicidality (high, medium or low), then upon exit we repeat the exercise and again 3 weeks after the stay. Pre-stay, 97% of our guests reported that their level of suicidality was high or medium, upon exit that figure dropped to 41% and by the follow-up call 3 weeks later only 30% still graded themselves as high to medium. The results speak volumes for the positive impact we had on guests throughout the funding period.

It should also be noted that there are many factors that affect the scheduling of guests who come to stay with us.



The people we help can be of any gender, ethnicity, religion, be disabled, be unemployed, employed in any industry or retired. All of our beneficiaries are 18+ and in suicidal crisis, and many are also profoundly depressed or suffering from severe anxiety. Their feelings can stem from any number of issues, including bereavement, childhood traumas, relationship or familial breakdown, abuse, cultural marginalisation, health deterioration, money worries and severe isolation. As you are aware, our service is free.

Our focus must be to alleviate the suicidal crisis of our beneficiaries and establishing a foundation for guests to increase their capacity to cope once they leave Maytree. Offering meaningful immediate support must take precedence over maintaining the highest number of possible beneficiaries. For example, if a woman in suicidal crisis has a history of complex abuse and has identified plausible triggers that might affect her ability to receive support during her stay, we would need to be sensitive in the scheduling of other guests staying for the same period of time in terms of gender, and also perhaps age.

That said, our goal is to help as many beneficiaries as possible, so we are looking to find ways of increasing the number of residential guests we can help, while maintaining the credibility and individual nature of the actual support taking place.

Operationally, the structure we implemented last year with a Residential Service Manager overseeing a team of coordinators is fully embedded, and we are now seeing the fruits of our labour.



## **GUEST TESTIMONIALS THIS YEAR INCLUDE:**

*“Before my stay, I felt immensely guilty and ashamed that I was going to be wasting your time. When I left, something had changed. I had been able to share something I never thought possible. I left with the realisation that the awful things that had happened to me were the fault of others and not me. I think I am yet to realise the true impact of that; how much it means to let go of the shame I have been carrying for so long.”*

*“Thank you for being non-judgemental, for actively listening and supporting me, for your dedication, problem solving abilities, words of wisdom and advice. I found my stay at Maytree so very beneficial and I’ve learnt a lot about myself as well as a lot of things I can take forward and try to implement to get my life turned around. I know the road ahead isn’t going to be easy, but I feel much better equipped to deal with the challenges that lie ahead.”*

*“I am in awe of the work you do and just how much of a difference you make to people’s lives in a few short days. I made more progress in five days than I had in 9 months of hospital admissions and community support.”*

*“This has been one of the most life-changing experiences I’ve ever had. You are the nicest, kindest, most caring people one could have ever been blessed to come across. I’m eternally grateful for everything you have done for me. You have helped me to find myself again and given me so much to hope for in the future.”*

*“Thank you so much for spending time with me, for listening, for helping me see an alternative path when before my only options were suffering or suicide.”*



## MAYTREE INCLUSIVITY: OUR WIDE-REACHING APPROACH

A considered mix of training events, talks and forums has increased our visibility further amongst mental health professionals and within the locality. In all, we undertook just under 100 outreach activities, which involved meeting with representatives from a wide spread of community organisations including Bipolar UK, London Metropolitan Fast Forward Festival, Thrive LDN, Hanley Crouch Community Centre, Sikhforgiveness, St Mary's Hospital, The MET Police, The Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre Hampshire and The AIA Forum.

We have maintained close links with several local community groups such as the Islington Refugee Forum, whose inclusive events present an excellent opportunity to promote Maytree to marginalised and vulnerable BAMER communities. New Unity is another grass roots organisation fighting for social justice. We provided consultation on a 'mental health in the workplace' initiative that they plan to launch in the future.

Last year, we ran a series of Maytree outreach training events for mental health professionals, entitled: "Suicide Awareness and Prevention". This specialist training was well received and represents a significant step on from our previous ad hoc training offer. We have just recently tailored this training into something more three-dimensional, and versatile with a view to taking it into the corporate sector. This has already been mooted at Business Junction events/meetings, and there appears to be some appetite for it. The idea would be to offer training - totally free of charge to make it easy as accessible for companies of all sizes - to corporate organisations.

We have also continued to visit various NHS crisis teams and other services, including South Camden Crisis Team, City & Hackney Primary Care Psychotherapy Consultation Service, Highgate Mental Health Centre and Whittington Hospital A&E.



## AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Mainstream awareness of and confidence in Maytree and its unique methodology is slowly but gradually increasing.

Maytree was present at The 2019 RHS Royal Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, which took place July 1-7 2019, where prize-winning gardener Joe Francis created a showpiece garden ("Calm Amidst Chaos") to raise public awareness of mental health and suicide prevention. The garden was awarded the Silver Gilt Medal in the category of Show Gardens. The footfall at the flower show was in the region of 140,000, which is a sizeable captive audience. A great deal of media coverage was also achieved across print and TV.

We have recently launched our national campaign 'Space Between the Notes', providing free suicide awareness and prevention training for the music industry, in the lead up to World Suicide Prevention Day 2019 which is on the 10th of September. We have been meeting with staff teams from record labels and industry governing bodies at their offices to provide free training and advice.

Disability Rights Researcher, Kriti Sharma, visited Maytree in 2018 to learn more about our model. During her time at Human Rights Watch, Kriti's research has focused on human rights violations against individuals with disabilities - particularly psychosocial - worldwide. Her primary interest was in taking elements of our approach that she could embed into her work.

We received a private and confidential visit to the Maytree house from His Royal Highness Prince William, The Duke of Cambridge, and Her Royal Highness Catherine, The Duchess of Cambridge.



ITV News featured a prime-time evening news piece about Maytree on June 5, 2018 after journalist Poorna Bell visited the house and interviewed a former guest and one of our volunteers.

A photography exhibition and series of workshops around Maytree's work entitled 'I Want To Live' by renowned artist Daniel Regan opened in June 2018 in Kentish Town and has a repeat showing in Central London in November. Some of these images are used throughout this application.

Sir Trevor McDonald presented Maytree's BBC Radio 4 Appeal on September 10 2017, which was World Suicide Prevention Day, and referenced a touching story of when he met one of our former guests whose stay was so transformative, he went on to become a volunteer for Maytree.

Additionally: Maytree featured in two documentaries that were broadcast on BBC TV in 2015; we were also shortlisted for The Guardian Charity of the Year 2015; In 2014, one of our Centre Coordinators, Angela Rodriguez was nominated for and included in the Independent on Sunday's Happy List 2014: The Full List Of People Who Make Life Better For Others; and Maytree was also a finalist in the prestigious BBC Radio 4's All In The Mind 25th Anniversary Awards 2014.

## **REPLICATION**

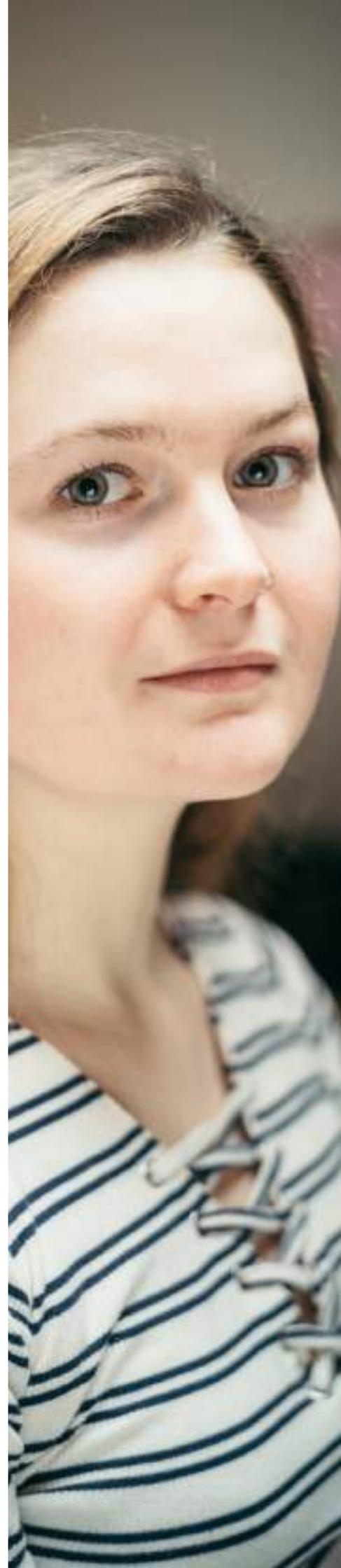
A second Maytree house in Manchester is an exciting prospect and plans are well underway. Our Chairman and Director have met with Manchester City Council and received a very positive reception. We have also met with The Mayor's office, Professor Louis Appleby the Professor of Psychiatry from University of Manchester who leads the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England, and a number of other key professionals in suicide prevention work, to discuss the need for a second Maytree location.



There is nothing directly comparable in Manchester presently; Referring specifically to Manchester, there has been a recent reorganisation of services which has created a greater openness to new developments; Louis Appleby mentioned the importance of being on a formal care pathway, but this is of less significance for Maytree as it is not being paid by a commissioning organisation, and draws its clients from a wide area covering a great many different commissioning bodies; All those spoken to confirmed that there is a good pool of potential salaried staff, although did mention that these people have a range of opportunities in local authority and NHS jobs, so Maytree's offer would need to be competitive; The voluntary sector appears to be well organised in Manchester. Manchester Community Central maintains a register of 20,000 people who have expressed interest in volunteering, and Maytree can advertise to them; There was no particular agreement as to the best location which suggests that any reasonably safe area with good transport links is as good as another.

Maytree's Director and Chairman are currently in talks with MSV Housing, who have offered to purchase a property suitable for Maytree with the plan of renting it to us for 5 years. We have a meeting in April with MSV Housing to discuss the terms and conditions of the offer. Another option is for Maytree to buy a property ourselves, and our Director has viewed a number of properties.

Contributions towards our existing running costs would provide us with a safety net, enabling us to approach replication without fear of destabilising our core operation. Additionally, any donations made to be directly earmarked for replication are welcome.



## SUMMARY

- We supported 717 individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings over the telephone, extending to over 3,000 friends and family members of those in suicidal crisis who also need support to cope. During this time, 70 actively suicidal people at high risk of self-harm benefited from a stay at Maytree. The average time spent with guests is 77 hours of befriending and over 24 hours of 1-1 support from our Coordinator team.
- Outreach successes are continuing and we can see the impact in our beneficiary numbers. This reflects the community awareness and momentum building around our approach to vulnerable people in suicidal crisis. There is justification in investing time and money into demographic-specific campaigning.
- Operationally, we have recently expanded our base of Assistant Coordinators working at Maytree by 4 new team members, and hope to soon see the benefits this growth in our core staff structure will have.
- Beyond our core programme in North London, we are rapidly moving forward towards replication in the North of England, with fundamental external audits having already taken place.





**maytree**  
**We're open to suicidal feelings**

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