



2020/21 IMPACT REPORT

A lifeline when someone disappears

**missing
people**

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419)
and in Scotland (SC047419)

INTRODUCTION

Written with the support of Owen's family

In March 2020, the world faced the unimaginable as a global pandemic spread across the world resulting in a lockdown which invoked a new sense of fear and anxiety in many. However, for Stella Harding, this period was the most difficult and painful of her life. Not only due to the uncertainties surrounding Covid-19 but because this was the last time she saw her son, Owen, before he disappeared without a trace.

"My son Owen went missing from Saltdean, near Brighton on 26th March 2020. Owen was 16 at the time. Owen was a kind, bright, adventurous, and active young man. He was well liked and had so many friends from school and college and beyond. He enjoyed travelling and camping outdoors, swimming and surfing in the sea and walking our dog on the south downs. He was a keen and talented artist and had just completed his NPLQ Pool Lifeguard qualification.

"And then Lockdown hit us. It was extremely hard on him and all of the young people. All of his plans and hopes were abruptly taken away from him. He really wanted to visit his girlfriend, but in those really tricky times of course he couldn't, and that made him very sad.

"On the evening of 26th March, around Sunset, he went for a walk, and he never came back.

I called the police a few hours later, as I was getting worried. And that was the beginning of this journey of having a Missing Loved One. My lovely, beautiful son Owen was missing."

Searching for a missing loved one is overwhelming under normal



OWEN WAS 16 WHEN HE WENT MISSING ON 26 MARCH 2020 FROM SALTDEAN, NEAR BRIGHTON.

"In those first few days, I was so worried and exhausted from stress, everything was just a nightmarish blur."

circumstances, but this was made even more challenging by the additional rules and regulations in place. Stella recalls, "During the first few days, we started to make appeals. Newspaper articles and TV reports were being made; searches were happening in the local area. Because of lockdown, this made it a bit harder, but we conducted searches in household groups, or being socially distant."

We are here to offer free, confidential support to anyone affected by missing, from helping to launch a publicity campaign to providing long term support to families left behind. And Stella was no different.

“In those first few days, I was so worried and exhausted from stress, everything was just a nightmarish blur, and that’s when Missing People got in touch with me. The staff at the Charity were very experienced and compassionate. They spoke to my friends and I every day, giving us help and advice about what to expect from the police, and support with our campaign to find Owen.

When someone has a loved one who is missing, they’re assigned a family support worker, who is a continual presence. They will phone up often, and check in with us, see how we’re doing, answer any questions and offer help with whatever we need. Working with the media can be quite daunting if you haven’t done it before, and Missing People guided me through the process.

I don’t know what I would have done without them.”

Despite Stella being no closer to finding answers, Missing People continue to support her as she needs. Stella explains “Missing People invited me to join a fairly new zoom group that had started in lockdown,

where other families with missing loved ones met up once a week.” The Family Social Group is facilitated by our Family Support Team and allows families from all over the UK to get together with other people who understand and share their experience.

Thanks to your support, we can continue to support family members like Stella who have been left in the excruciating limbo of not knowing what happened to their loved one. Services like our Family Social Group offer a unique type of support which is so valuable to people affected.

“ We’re all very grateful to Missing People for bringing us altogether and supporting us. I



now definitely count these people as my very good friends, and I am in total admiration of their strength and resilience, in what has been really tough times. Even though it’s been hard to meet in real life, we know we get to see each other’s faces on a screen, and I really look forward to the meetings.

Thank you, Missing People.



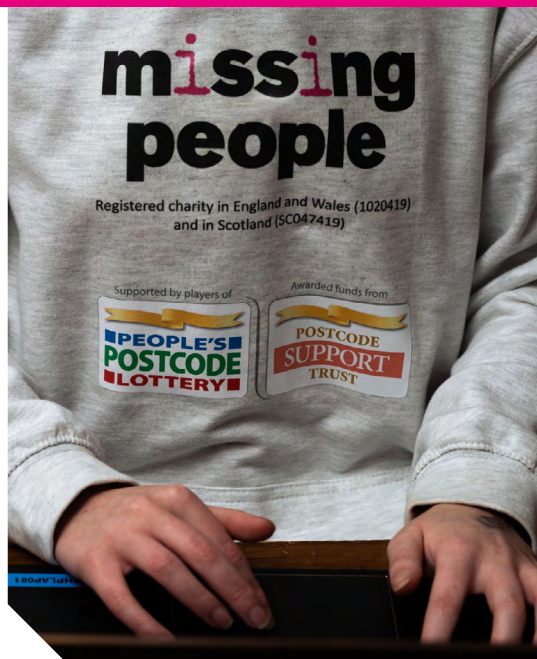
A HUGE THANK YOU TO PLAYERS OF PEOPLE'S POSTCODE LOTTERY

We want to thank each and every player of People's Postcode Lottery for their support and backing over the last year.

During tough and challenging times Missing People was able to continue to deliver all our key services and remain a lifeline for those missing or affected by missing. In 2020-21 **we directly helped 8,603 people** and this would not have been possible without players.

Thanks to the ongoing support of players, in 2020-21 we hit an incredible milestone receiving an astonishing **£800,000 through Postcode Support Trust!**

Thanks to the support of players, this funding will help ensure we continue to provide vital support to people in crisis and their families. A poignant moment in the Missing People calendar that highlights this is our Family Day where people affected by missing can come together with others who understand for workshops, support and to share their experiences. Due to the pandemic, our Family Day in 2020 was taken online and was only made possible thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery, who were the title event supporters.



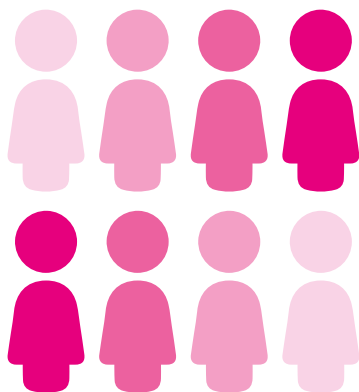
Equally, our Mental Health winter campaign, supported by the amazing players of People's Postcode Lottery, provided mental health guides to help people take care of their mental wellbeing this winter. It received national interest, with our CEO, Jo Youle, being interviewed on BBC news. Overall, the campaign was reported on by **198 regional press outlets across the UK** with a reach of almost 800K! Download the guides **here**.

“ A massive thank you to players of People's Postcode Lottery for helping make a difference to people affected by missing, you are all amazing! – Jo Youle, CEO ”

WE HELPED

4,099

**CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE**

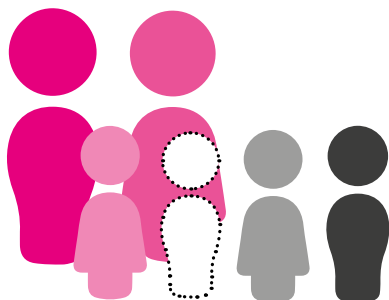


2,747

ADULTS

1,757

FAMILIES



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

“ *Thank you for your help. I am... more likely to be able to keep myself at home and safe tonight*

– A child who had been thinking about going missing ”

We helped
4,099
children and young people

- ▶ **1,456** were supported by our Helpline (phone, text, and email).
- ▶ **703** were supported via our Online Chat service.
- ▶ **204** children were helped through our ‘Is This OK?’ project.
- ▶ **33** children in Hertfordshire received intensive support.
- ▶ **36** young people at risk of or experiencing criminal exploitation were helped through our dedicated SafeCall service.
- ▶ **1,666** children got in touch after receiving a TextSafe® message, offering our support when they were reported missing to the police.



ADULTS

“ I just needed to tell someone how much pain I was in... Thank you for your patience, sensitivity and care – An adult supported by the helpline ”

We helped

2,747

adults in crisis

- ▶ **2,079** adults were supported through our Helpline (phone, text or email).
- ▶ **252** were supported through our Online Chat service: most of these were young adults between the ages of 18 and 25.
- ▶ **416** adults got in touch after receiving a TextSafe® message, offering our support when they were reported missing to the police.



FAMILIES

We helped

1,757

families with a missing loved one

- ▶ More than **1,682** families benefitted from our family support services.
- ▶ **75** family members whose young missing person was at risk of criminal exploitation were supported by 'SafeCall', our exploitation specialist service.

“ Having a family support worker be there for me constantly throughout this painful journey is how I have managed to cope. – A family member supported by our Family Support team ”

“ It has been a slow, tentative journey of rebuilding trust and reconnecting. I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to have my brother back in my life. – A family member whose loved one was found through the Lost Contact Tracing Service ”

SUPPORTING PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH MISSING PERSONS



- ▶ We delivered our first Covid-secure online conference to **100** multi-agency professionals in Cambridge, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- ▶ We trained **128** professionals virtually on issues related to missing, including the delivery of Return Home Interviews and Prevention Interviews.

“ Really interesting and informative. The day was great, the speakers were brilliant, especially the hosts. [It] was the best training I had been on in a long time. ”

“ Very thought provoking and a great way to network. I will take the learning back to the rest of the team and it will be extremely valuable in the difficult climate. ”

89% OF ATTENDEES RATED THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THE CONFERENCE AS 'VERY GOOD' OR 'EXCELLENT'.

OUR HELPLINE



In 2020-21, our award-winning Helpline was there, for free and in confidence for anyone affected by missing: children or adults thinking about going missing, currently away, or having come back from being missing; family members, and the public with sightings or information about a disappearance.

We provide emotional and practical support, listening to what people are experiencing and trying to help people to stay safe.

Many people accessing Helpline support want to talk about what is going on for them with someone who won't judge them and will be able to listen and provide emotional support.

For others, they might want to pass a message home to their families or the police. We can also set up a 3-way call, staying on the phone with someone while we contact their family or someone else who can help them, including social workers or the police.



THE HELPLINE IN NUMBERS

- ▶ Over **3,500** adults and children were supported after contacting the Helpline in 2020-21.
- ▶ **2,079** adults were helped:
- ▶ Nearly **1,400** contacted the Helpline by phone.
- ▶ **756** contacted the Helpline by email or text.
- ▶ **1,456** children and young people were helped:
- ▶ **441** contacted the Helpline by phone.
- ▶ Over **1,000** contacted the Helpline by email or text.



This year, our Helpline was there for people experiencing isolation due to Covid and a lack of face-to-face support, and for those struggling with mental health and suicidal feelings linked to the pandemic.

Missing People is one of a select few Helpline providers using a 116 prefix – assigned by Ofcom to recognise the fact that we help the wellbeing of people who are in great difficulty.

If you have been affected, contact the Helpline on **116 000** or visit **www.missingpeople.org.uk** for more information.

“ I wanted to say thank you. Last week I almost took my life. You helped, along with the ambulance and police [services]. I have since been contacted by many helpful organisations. I’m working on it, it’s not easy but I’m trying. Thank you. – A message from an adult who had got in touch while missing after receiving a TextSafe message ”

CASE STUDY

Lisa* called the Helpline after being reported missing. She had left because she felt at breaking point and just needed to ‘escape’ after the stress of the previous few months. Her child had been in hospital for a number of months, and Lisa was finding the stress, financial strain, and difficulty in caring for her other child too much to cope with. In addition, Covid restrictions in the hospital made it extremely difficult to visit. She also said she desperately needed counselling but that the waiting list was over a year. We listened to Lisa, supporting her to talk through what was happening, and signposted her to an organisation that supports parents of children in hospital.

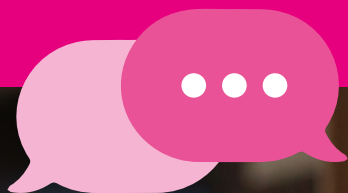
* Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.



116 000
free • confidential

**A LIFELINE
WHEN
SOMEONE
DISAPPEARS**

ONLINE CHAT



Our 1-2-1 chat service was available every day between 2.30pm and 9.30pm for children and young people thinking about running away or currently missing. It is completely confidential and anonymous.

Children and young people can chat online to a specially trained team, getting emotional support and advice about how to stay safe. We can also support the young person to pass a message home or contact people who will be able to help them, including homeless services, local authorities, mental health services and the police.



ONLINE CHAT IN NUMBERS

- **703** children and young people were supported through Online Chat.

Even though Online Chat is primarily aimed at children and young people, some adults have come to the service for support. The majority are young adults under the age of 25.

- **252** adults were supported through Online Chat.

“ [The person I spoke to] was very helpful and helped me calm down and grow the confidence to speak to my mum. I’m still quite scared and apprehensive but I feel a lot more calm. – A young person using the service ”



CASE STUDY

Sam*, a teenager, contacted Missing People during the first national lockdown, after feeling that running away was her only way out. Sam shared that she is autistic and was struggling with her mental health, including feelings of self-harm and suicide. The rising pressures and stresses of being at home with two parents, one of whom is quick to anger and both who struggle to understand her feelings and situation had become too much. Sam explained that she wanted to run away but was concerned if leaving the house would lead to being fined or even arrested due to new Police guidelines. We acknowledged Sam's feelings and explored her situation further, ultimately signposting her to local and national services that would be able to offer her further support. Sam said at the end of the chat that the person she spoke to "was very helpful, kind and listened well... Who knows what I would have done without you today."

" I'm feeling much better. Talking to you helped me with my emotions. – A young person using the chat service "

65%

(206 of 317 giving feedback) said that Online Chat helped them feel more able to make safe decisions about what was going on for them

63%

(59 of 93) said that the chat had helped them

" Thank you, you made me feel better. I will catch you later if I feel worse. – A young person using the chat service "

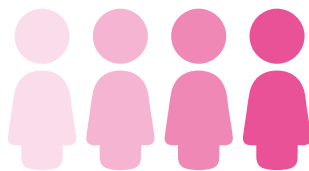
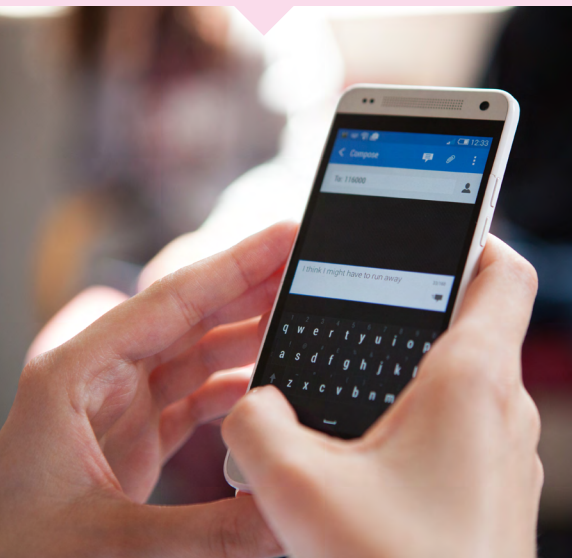
" Thank you so much for your time and answers. The information you've given me is a good starting point for me to consider my options. – A young person using the chat service "

* Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.



TextSafe® is a way children and adults who are missing can be contacted with an offer of help and support.

In partnership with the police, we send a text message to let the person know they have been reported missing, and that they can contact us if they need any help or to talk to someone.



IN 2020-21:

We sent TextSafe® messages to:

- **20,958** missing children and young people.
- **10,475** missing adults.

Missing People, in partnership with the Samaritans, can send out a Suicide Risk TextSafe® message to people who have gone missing in a situation suggesting they may take their own life. The message lets them know that they have been reported missing and that the Samaritans will phone them to make sure they are OK and to provide support that they need.

- In 2020-21 we sent **1,264** SRTS messages to people at high risk of suicide.

CASE STUDY

Raheem*, a 13-year-old missing child, got in touch with Missing People after receiving a TextSafe® message. He had run away and said that he wanted to die. He gradually opened up, telling us that he had been walking for hours and no longer knew where he was. With the team's support, he eventually agreed to call 999 so that the police could pinpoint his location. He later texted to confirm that he was safe and with the police.

* Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Family and friends of missing loved ones can get support from Missing People in a range of ways, including:

- Our dedicated Helpline: families can contact us whenever they need support and advice, from emotional support and practical help to referring to specialist sources of support.
- Family support workers: families with a long-term missing loved one often have a dedicated family support worker who will be able to help them in the longer term.
- We do publicity, including working with families on media opportunities.
- We have an online support community for families and friends of missing people which enables those with a missing loved one to share information to get to know and support each other.
- We have weekly online video meetings facilitated by trained staff. This provides a space where families can be supported by their peers, as well as creative and wellbeing sessions like yoga and creative writing.
- Our Family Advisory Group meets around once a month virtually. The group has been involved in co-creating material for the new website, developing guidance materials, and the planning of events including Family Day. They also provide advice and guidance to teams across the charity.



Having a missing loved one is incredibly difficult. Family and friends need to live with the uncertainty of not knowing what has happened to their loved one, and the ambiguity of that loss is often impossible for those who have not experienced it to understand.



► **1,682** families were supported through our family support work in 2020-21.

“ Before connecting with other families, you feel that you are the only one who knew about this experience ”

SafeCall

SafeCall, a service funded by the Home Office, is a dedicated, confidential, non-judgemental phone support service for young people at risk of or currently experiencing exploitation; including through going missing, and their parents and carers.

People can access support in a number of ways:

- **Emotional support:** people affected by gangs and exploitation can be supported to share what they are experiencing, talking to someone who understands the challenges of the issues and who can provide emotional support .
- **Practical support and advocacy:** navigating the range of challenges that come with exploitation is extremely difficult. SafeCall can provide practical advice about these challenges, as well as advocating for the young person or their families with other professionals involved in their lives.

We also provide a monthly online ‘Safe and Social’ support group, bringing families together for peer support.

“ You’re so nice and kind. I love talking to you, thanks for always listening and not judging me – A young person supported through SafeCall ”



SAFECALL IN NUMBERS

- We directly supported **80** families and young people through SafeCall and took positive actions to help a further 31 people.

“ It’s so good to have you on my side. You have given me hope. – A parent supported through SafeCall ”

CASE STUDY

Ashley* initially signed up for Missing People’s Safe and Social Support Group, before being directly supported by the SafeCall team. Her 15-year-old son Dan* was being exploited through county lines and had been taken into local authority care against his family’s wishes following a long-term missing episode during which Dan had been stabbed. When Ashley contacted SafeCall, Dan had been in the care of the local authority for nearly a year and was living hours away from his family. Ashley has been supported by the SafeCall team over a 3-month-period. Dan is now in the middle of a multi-agency plan with the aim that he will start to visit home and ultimately move out of local authority care and back home. SafeCall will continue to support Ashley for as long as she needs.

Is This OK?

Alongside NSPCC Childline and the Office of the Children's Commissioner, we run Is This OK? (ITOK), a chatbot aiming to reach children and young people at risk of or experiencing exploitation.

Children and young people can:

- Access information about services and organisations and receive support and advice for a range of issues relating to exploitation and abuse through ITOK's dedicated website and chatbot
- Access online chat, where they can talk to a trained call advisor about their concerns and worries

Following a pilot in 2019-20, BBC Children in Need and The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists' Charity funded a second phase of the project from May 2020, which took learnings from the pilot to develop a more sustainable model. This went live in May 2021. The service continued to provide support during 2020-21:

- ▶ **194** children and young people accessed advice on the support pages through the ITOK chatbot.
- ▶ **36** young people were supported through the online chat function of ITOK.

IS THIS OK?



INTENSIVE SUPPORT AND RETURN HOME INTERVIEW SERVICE

The most vulnerable young people at risk of going missing, and those that return, can access one-to-one intensive support with Missing People, including support sessions and return home interviews.

The young people are helped with what is happening in their lives, including emotional support, advocacy, and working on coping strategies and how to stay safe. Our team also works together with parents, carers and other professionals involved in the young people's lives to make sure they are safe and supported.

“ I have someone I can talk to and trust that listens to me.

– Young person receiving intensive support

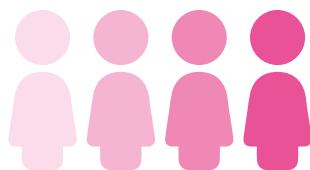
”



“ We had been in some very bad situations with no way out. [Missing People] helped de-escalate the situations... [They] also gave my daughter some strategies in dealing with difficult situations, and advice to us as a family in how to deal with problems – Parent of young person on intensive support ”

CASE STUDY

Abby* was living at home with her parents when the first Covid lockdown was announced. Prior to the lockdown, she had a high number of missing episodes, was regularly being arrested, was often missing from school, and at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. Through 12 Return Home Interviews and 41 one-to-one sessions, both face-to-face and over the phone and video calls, Missing People took time to build trust and rapport with Abby and promote her trust in other professionals who she had previously withdrawn from. We secured a positive space with her in which the case worker was able to engage Abby in individual behavioural work and Family Therapy. Since schools re-opened, Abby has moved to a new school and has been attending on a reduced timetable, has no periods of missing, and was referred to Young Minds for on-going support. Her parents have provided positive feedback about the progress that had been made with their daughter.



IN 2020-21:

- ▶ **33** young people were supported through intensive one-to-one support.
 - ▶ We completed **302** one-to-one sessions with the young people as well as 112 Return Home Interviews.
- ▶ **84%** of the young people we supported had a reduction in missing episodes in the six months after one-to-one support ended, including almost one in four who did not go missing at all.



* Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

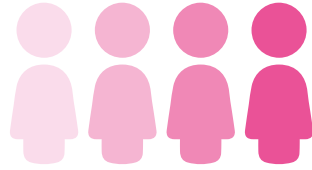
SEARCHING FOR MISSING PEOPLE



When someone goes missing, Missing People has a range of ways to alert communities and the missing person themselves.

We can make public appeals for people reported missing to the police on our website, social media, and across a network of businesses, media and advertising partners. We also engage people and agencies who may be working with people reported missing, such as homeless shelters, to ask if they have seen them. There are also a number of options where public facing appeals might not be in the best interests of the missing person, including our covert briefing network.

Publicity appeals can be a vital tool in missing person investigations: they can aid in the search by generating sightings from members of the public; they can help to raise awareness amongst the public who may know information useful to the investigation; and they can be helpful to the family of the missing person as they know people are looking for their loved one.



IN 2020-21:

- ▶ **685** children and young people we searched for were found safe and well.
- ▶ **775** adults we searched for were found safe and well.



“ Thank you so very much. I am very grateful for Missing People. – Feedback from a mother on publicity marking her son’s first missing anniversary ”

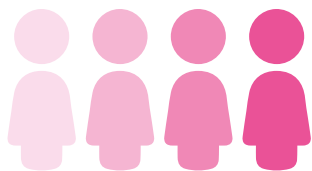
“ That is amazing. Thanks for your continued support. – Sister of a missing person’s response to our publicity ”

LOST CONTACT

Our Lost Contact Tracing Service, made possible thanks to LexisNexis Risk Solutions, can help people to reconnect with a relative where they have lost touch and there is not an open police missing investigation.



“ I received timely, personalised, well-informed and empathetic care from Missing People. Especially from my case worker (who remained consistent throughout my case); they were remarkable. ”



IN 2020-21:

- Of the **200** cases we took on in 2020-21, we found more than 50% of the people we looked for.

CASE STUDY

When **Lucy*** got in touch with the Lost Contact team, she had not been in touch with her mum, Eleanor* for 11 years. It took a few months, but we managed to trace her. Eleanor was very emotional when she called in. She shared that she had a terminal diagnosis— she had resigned herself to never seeing her daughter again. Initially we passed messages between Lucy and her mum. Their words unknowingly echoed each other's, as they described their fears of not knowing what to say after all these years. That they might cause more pain to one another. And then they spoke, and Lucy described afterwards, how they could not stop, and repeatedly spoke over each other in their enthusiasm to talk. Almost two decades of missing conversation. It is hard to know how long Lucy and Eleanor may have left together, but through reconnecting, they have the chance to change their story and at the very least, create a happier ending.

POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS



Our policy and campaigns team advocates for better support for those affected by missing, working with parliamentarians, policy makers, the police and other professionals to affect strategic and practical change in the response to missing people.

In April 2020, shortly after the national lockdown was introduced, the team developed a series of guidance for professionals working with children and adults who are at risk of going missing to ensure continued safeguarding during the pandemic.

In November 2020, we published 'The multi-agency response for adults missing from health and care settings – A national framework for England'. This was developed with a task and finish group, commissioned by the APPG for Missing Children and Adults, which included members from health, social care and police governing bodies. The framework outlines a good practice approach for responding to and supporting adults who go missing.

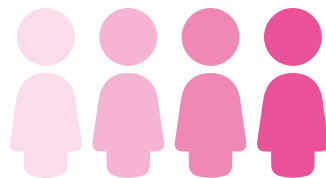
In March 2021, we supported an APPG (The All-Party Parliamentary Group) meeting to consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on missing children and adults. The presentations and discussions focused on mental health and exploitation, how both were affected by the first year of the pandemic and the impact this had on missing people. The event was attended by representatives from over 19 police forces, 31 local authorities, care providers, Ofsted, UK Missing Persons Unit and a range of others.

RESEARCH

Missing People's research team conducts original research to better understand the experiences of those affected by missing.

We use the findings from research to feed into our service delivery and our policy and campaigns work, aiming to improve the understanding and response to those affected by missing.

In 2020-21 the research team worked to understand the impact on those affected by missing of Covid, the lockdowns, and other measures introduced in response to the pandemic. We consulted with people who had been missing and family members to understand how the pandemic was affecting them and the impact of Missing People's support.



IN 2020-21:

- ▶ **67%** (56 of 84) of people who had been missing or thought about going missing said that Covid-19, the lockdown and other related measures had affected their mental health for the worse.
- ▶ We have been continuing our research into the harms experienced by adults who have been missing, due to be published in 2021-22.

“ My mental health has taken a bad decline. The services are overstretched and I feel forgotten about.

– Survey response from a previously missing person whose mental health had been negatively affected by the pandemic



CONSULTANCY WORK

Missing People provides expert consultancy to help local professionals tackle challenges with responding to missing adults, children and their families.

This includes bespoke consultancy and training, conferences, multi-agency workshops and e-learning packages. We work with police, local authority leads, frontline local authority practitioners, health, education and the voluntary sector.

Between October 2020 and March 2021, we were funded to work in partnership with Hampshire Constabulary to build on their existing policies, procedures, and response to missing children and young people. This work focused on improving the accuracy and quality of Safe and Well Checks (Prevention Interviews) delivered by the police for children and young people. Our work included a review of 120 Safe and Well Check reports and a comprehensive audit of local police policies, protocols, and current policing practice.

We conducted extensive shadowing and interview sessions with front-line officers for reflection and feedback on local delivery and produced a final recommendations report with our findings. We used our recommendations to shape online training for 100 police officers which covered best practice, recording, and identifying risk, and enhancing communication with young people.

“ Hampshire Constabulary worked with Missing People to review the effectiveness of its response to missing children in terms of the initial risk and subsequent return to their perceived place of safety. The results contributed significantly to driving a change in culture in terms of how children and young people should be treated and improving our response to missing incidents as a result.

– Detective Inspector
Lee Colvin, Hampshire
Constabulary



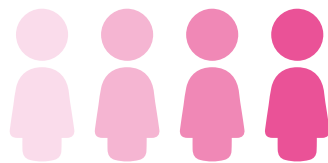
OUR WORK IN SCOTLAND

Following work in three areas the previous year, we were funded by the Scottish Government in 2020-21 to support multi-agency professionals who work with missing adults, children and families in three further local areas across Scotland – Renfrewshire, North Lanarkshire and Moray.

Our work ensured that local partnership arrangements and practice reflected the National Missing Persons Framework, and that it built upon existing good practice around the response and support delivered to missing people and their families.

Our work has included:

- Mapping and reviewing local policy and protocols for missing adults and children
- Developing bespoke recommendations for the improvement and identification of good practice locally
- Journey mapping workshops with professionals to clarify local roles and responsibilities
- Delivering Return Discussion training to professionals across Scotland
- Delivering a national 'Missing and Good Practice' conference in 2020



Professionals receiving our support in 2020-21 have said:

“ You have been instrumental in getting us to focus on work related to missing people and maintain momentum [...] Missing People has been a unifying resource that has provided a structure and framework for local discussions; it's unlikely that we would have become so collaborative so quickly and consistently had it not been for involvement in the project. The result will, I hope, be the development of improved practice around missing people, including work around prevention. We now have a clear direction of travel and a much better understanding of achievable outcomes. ”

We have been funded from 2021-22 to deliver support to a further 5 local areas across Scotland.



IMPACTING COMMUNITIES



With support from our partners People's Postcode Lottery and Royal Mail Group, we ran a winter campaign focused on mental health and the impact of the pandemic. As part of the campaign, our services team created two free guides with their best tips for taking care of mental wellbeing.

More than **5,000**
guides were downloaded
during the campaign

Following consultation with families of missing people, this year we partnered with Paddy Power, filling the south stand at Motherwell FC's ground with blank silhouettes to fill the empty seats, highlighting the issue of adults going missing:

- ▶ **1,190** silhouettes filled the stands.
- ▶ Posters of individual missing adults featured in **650** Paddy Power stores in the locations closest to where people had gone missing.
- ▶ Information about our support services was shared across each store and in wider communications.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers support people through the helpline, are central to sharing publicity appeals and making sure events take place. Volunteers make a real difference to people who have gone missing by devoting their time, assisting with events and offering support and expertise. Volunteers of all ages, experiences and interests work across the organisation and play a central role in embodying the charity's vision.



This year across the charity

12
volunteers spent
752
hours volunteering
with Missing People.

Due to the pandemic and stay at home order, most volunteering was paused to ensure the safety of our volunteers and staff. However, several of our volunteer roles were able to be adapted to be carried out from home so that volunteers could continue to support us with vital work for the charity. This included training our established Helpline Volunteers to provide vulnerable young people and adults support via our online 1|2|1 Chat Service, building on their support

skills developed from taking calls on our Helpline.

Next year, we will be reintroducing volunteers back to frontline services roles in our office and plan to build on the success of our remote volunteering programme by continuing to grow and develop volunteer roles both in the office as well as remotely. This would widen the awareness of the charity's work and mean we could support more people affected by missing.



DIGITAL PROJECTS

In 2020-21 we launched our new website to better serve people affected by missing across the UK. The new site offers an improved online experience for people in crisis, and those who wish to support the charity. It also includes a new peer to peer space for families who have a missing loved one. We are also building a new 'integrated case management system', which will for the first time completely harmonise all of our various support services onto one cloud-based platform. This will ensure faster and safer collaboration between teams, and give our in-the-field colleagues the ability to complete their work remotely and collaboratively with the young people we are supporting.

OUR CHALLENGES

2020-21 was an extremely difficult time for people and charities across the UK due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, beginning with the first national lockdown which started less than 10 days before the financial year.

DESPITE A CHALLENGING TIME, WE ARE VERY PROUD OF THE SUPPORT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE TO MISSING CHILDREN, MISSING ADULTS AND FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND.

.....

We realised in March 2020 that our services were needed more than ever – with families of missing people feeling isolated from their support networks and unable to search for their loved ones, and with missing people at greater risk than ever, because most safe places had had to close their doors.

Throughout the year, our frontline teams provided the utmost support and care around the clock, from home.


It was a monumental effort. We also found new ways to provide support for people affected by missing on digital platforms, such as our weekly online support groups for families.

We benefited from emergency Covid funds from government, from longstanding funders and

supporters of the charity, but like many charities, we were impacted financially by the pandemic. We will continue to operate like this for some time to come with many of our usual ways to raise money not possible.

We know we were not alone in facing this. Sadly, like others, we had to think very deeply about how to make sure we could ensure Missing People is around for years to come. We had already made

cost savings across the charity at the end of 2019-20, and we came to the difficult decision that we needed to make changes in our frontline team. These changes mainly came into effect at the end of 2020-21, with some being implemented during 2021-22.



**WE REALISED IN
MARCH 2020 THAT
OUR SERVICES
WERE NEEDED
MORE THAN EVER**

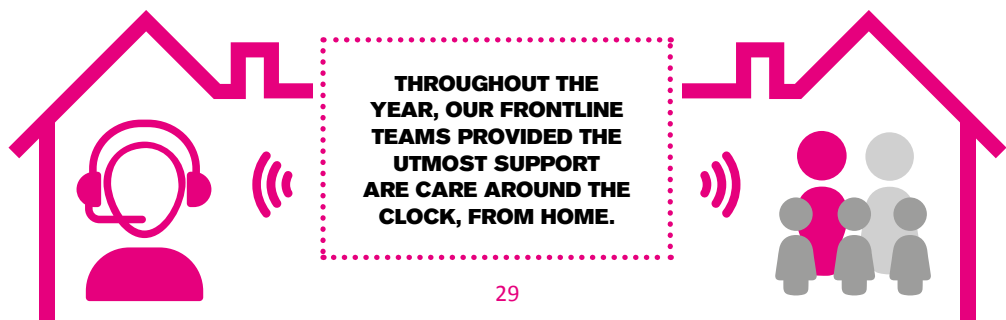


Whilst we have needed to scale back in some areas, we have continued to prioritise the following:

- A crisis response for anyone who is missing, from morning until night every day of the week – 9am until 11pm – focussed on when support is needed the most.
- Intensive support for families of missing people with a new focus on peer to peer and digital support.
- Our digital development so we can continue to find new and innovative ways to help people across the UK, supported by our new website and online platforms.

- Supporting the police with appeals for missing people where we think we can have the greatest effect when someone is missing after 48 hours.
- Amplifying the voices of missing people and families and campaigning with them to improve the responses to people affected by missing.
- We will continue to focus relentlessly on raising the funds needed for now and for the future.

We look forward with a smaller but confident team at the charity on an almighty mission to be a lifeline when someone disappears.



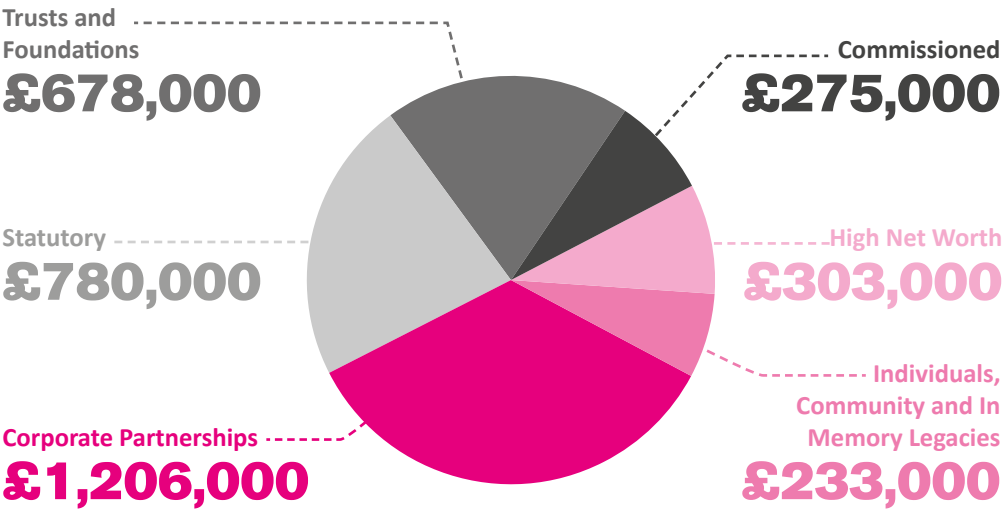
FINANCIAL INFO AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME DETAIL

Missing People raised £3.5m in 2020-21. We achieved a small surplus of £257,000. On average we generate £5 - £6 for every £1 invested in fundraising. We continue to make long term investment in sustainable and diverse income sources. Missing People is a paying member of the Fundraising Regulator and raises funds in accordance with our Ethical Policy and

Fundraising Promise. We have guidelines in place to ensure we take extra care with supporters who may be vulnerable. This year we were delighted to welcome significant new supporters and several new major donors. They joined long-term supporters including players of People's Postcode Lottery. We couldn't continue to be a lifeline without their help.

Income: £3.5m



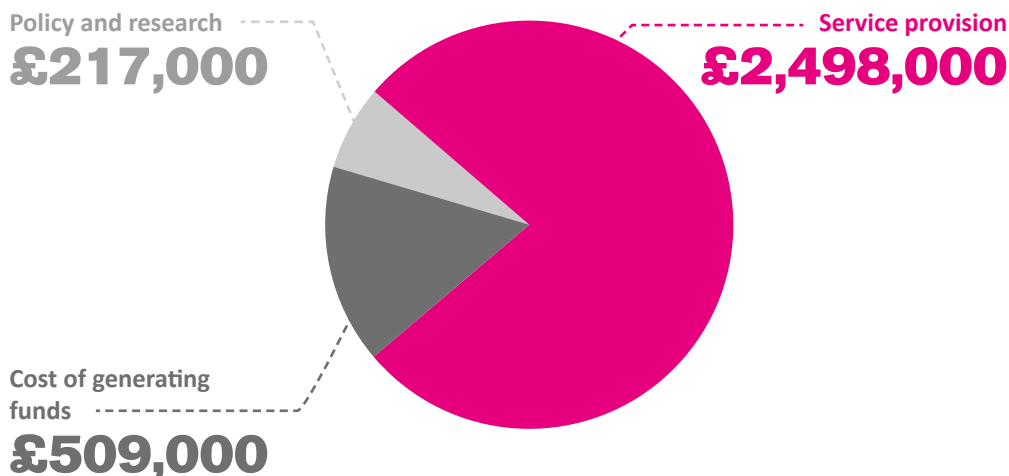
EXPENDITURE DETAIL

Our total expenditure showed a decrease of 15 per cent in 2019-20, as the savings plan enacted in late 2019-20 had full year impact. The charity also saw a reduction in travel and office costs as a result of the pandemic regulations, while fundraising costs were less as various events and activities could not take place. We are grateful to our volunteers and our pro bono supporters who have again contributed significantly to the charity's activities. We would also like to thank the out-of-home media owners and many other print and digital partners for advertising space, and Kapow for free text (SMS) messages. We are so grateful

to the charity's solicitors, Clifford Chance, for their ongoing services provided on a pro bono basis, as well as office space provided by Waitrose.

Our free reserves policy is to hold no less than three and no more than six months' current operating costs. This is to safeguard against fluctuations that may arise in funding, and to maximize the amount available for Missing People's charitable activities in the current economic climate. At the end of the year, the level of free reserves was £1.3 million, a little more than five months' worth of current operating costs out of unrestricted funds.

Expenditure: £3.2m



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS FOR BEING A LIFELINE:

Trustees

Justin McLaren
(Chair)
Jane Harwood
(Vice-Chair)
Paul Boughton
(Treasurer)
Caryl Agard OBE
Radha Chakraborty
Rachel Eyre
Sarah Godwin
Andy McKay MBE
Sam Waterfall

A FINANCIAL LIFELINE:

Richard Lockwood

Leading Lights

Adrok Ltd
James Baldock
Paul Boughton
Paul & Selina Burdell
Sam Burdell
Richard Burston
Katja Butler
Richard Davies
Monica Dolan

John Drury
Henry Gardener
(YPB)
Jane Harwood
Phil Hodgkinson
Karen Horton-Palmstrom
Nic Humphries
Rose Leigh
Poppy Ludwig
Ben Koerner
Alice Lucas
(YPB)
Jackie MacDonald
Clive Marshall
Justin McLaren
Tom Murray
William Norris
Gavin Rankin
John Reiss
Jason Richards
Charles Roast
Rebecca de Rome
Mr & Mrs Patrick Ryan
John & Caroline Shelford
Melanie Steele
Peter & Jane Thorne
Oliver Watson

Richard Wheeler
Tom & Polly Willett
Stephen & Mandy Winyard
Matthew Wood
David & Barbara Woods
Richard & Anna Youle
Michael Young

Fundraising Board

Selina Burdell
(Chair)
Sir Trevor McDonald OBE
(Honorary Member)
Alex Bigg
Martin Inkster
Emma Jack
Giles Johnson
Poppy Ludwig
Gavin Rankin
Jason Richards
Charles Roast
Sam Waterfall
Martyn Ward
Tom Willett

Thank you

Enterprise Board

Henry Gardener (Co-Chair)
Alice Lucas (Co-Chair)
Kate Sweeney
(Board Secretary)
Kim Allain
Emma Cullingford
Ciorsdan Brown
Rebecca de Rome
Sophie England
Karen Horton-Palmstrom
Sean Pusey
Megan Savage
Ben Tubbs

Corporate partners

AS Roma
Carat
Clear Channel
Clifford Chance
Deliveroo
Engine Group
Facebook
ICAP Charity Day
JCDecaux
LexisNexis Risk Solutions

LCP Foundation
Liquidnet
London Sock Company
Millwood Servicing Limited
Norton Rose Fulbright
Paddy Power
People's Postcode Lottery
QBE Foundation
RELX Group
Royal Mail Group
Scape
Screwfix Foundation
The IPG
W Communications
We Are Here Coffee

Trusts, Foundations and Lotteries

Adint Charitable Trust
BBC Children in Need
Dulverton Trust
John Coates Charitable Trust
Marguerite Foundation
National Lottery Community Fund
Saintbury Trust
St James's Place Foundation

Swire Charitable Trust
The Worshipful Company of
Information Technologists
(WCIT) Charity
Zochonis Charitable Foundation

Statutory Funders

Adur and Worthing Councils
Hampshire Constabulary
Hertfordshire County Council
Home Office
National Crime Agency
Police and Crime Commissioner
for Cambridgeshire and
Peterborough
Scottish Government
Welsh Government

**And thank you to our many other donors,
we couldn't do it without you!**

.....

Missing People
284 Upper Richmond Road West
London
SW14 7JE
020 8392 4590

missingpeople.org.uk



info@missingpeople.org.uk



[/missingpeople.uk](https://www.facebook.com/missingpeople)



[@missingpeople](https://twitter.com/missingpeople)



[@missingpeople.uk](https://www.instagram.com/missingpeople.uk)



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



.....

Registered office at the above address.
Throughout this report we have used some stock
imagery and changed details of the stories of
missing people and their families to preserve
their anonymity.

A lifeline when someone disappears

missing people

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419)
and in Scotland (SC047419)