

Samaritans Quarterly Report for Boston Big Local – December 2023

Annual Branch Meeting

The branch had its Annual Branch Meeting in the Voluntary Centre on November 11th. Not only is this a great opportunity to meet and socialize with fellow volunteers but also to hear about the health and achievements of the branch over the past 12 months. It's an opportunity for volunteers to have their say in the running of the branch and vote for their Treasurer and Secretary.

This year we were fortunate to have a very entertaining and charismatic guest speaker, Satveer Nijjar, who has done talks for Samaritans around the country for several years by giving a focus and better understanding of self-harm.



Satveer with our Interim Branch Director, Mat Shepherd from Derby branch.

Satveer has had a passion for reducing stigma around mental health since she herself became affected and set up 'Attention Seekers?' in response to the demand for training on the topic of self-harm. She delivers her CPD training on behalf of councils, individual organisations, conferences, and schools. The latter is especially well received not only by staff but by parents and students as she shares her personal story to help improve working practice or inspire others. Self-harm is frequently raised by our younger callers, and it was an excellent opportunity for us to benefit from Satveer's knowledge and experience.

"Through training delivery and speaking openly about my experiences - myths have been broken, understanding improved, confidence built to enable people to better support and understand those who self-harm"

— Satveer Nijjar

Outreach Training

As is usual at this time of year, attentions turn to Christmas and our callers remind us that it can be a distressing time for them especially as they feel the need to be strong and keep their anxieties from family or friends. We have distributed our usual awareness raising 'coffee/drinks mats' around many hospitality establishments in the town as we know this subtle messaging encourages people to ring us.





Samaritans of Boston, Spalding & Skegness Area

@SamsBostonUK



Thank you to Cafe Du Paris and The Greenhouse Coffee shops for using our coasters over this Christmas period.

This time of year is not a joy for everybody, so highlighting that [@samaritans](#) are here for those who need emotional support over this festive period is much appreciated.



We will have a stall again on Saturday January 13th in Pescod Square when we raise awareness as part of our annual Samaritans Brew Monday initiative.

Volunteers

We have a new cohort of 7 volunteers who begin their in-person training in the Voluntary Centre in January. Sadly, several volunteers have left within the last 4 months as various life circumstances have made it impossible for them to continue.

We maintain a core of 30 volunteers, though running the branch as a self-governing arm of Samaritans Central Charity can make demands on volunteers to take on additional roles to fulfil the requirements of the charity. Fortunately, we have strength amongst our recruitment, training and fundraising teams and feel confident that the branch has a healthy future.

A new Branch Director

The branch undertook a new Branch Director Selection Process during November, and we are delighted to welcome Sarah into the role. Sarah succeeds our Interim Branch Director Mat, from the Derby branch who has done a sterling job in leading and supporting us throughout 2023.



Sarah has already begun her handover period with Mat and will formally take up the role at the beginning of March.

.... and a thank you and Happy New Year to Boston Big Local...

for your ongoing support in helping us both raise our profile in the local area for the people of Boston and to continue to deliver our service to those in need of emotional support.

