

NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2023

Here is our newsletter  
to keep you up-to-date  
with all things  
DrugFAM.



Spring  
2023

## Volunteers

During the period we said thank you and goodbye to four volunteers: Charlotte Price, who facilitated one of our Support Groups, and Tammy McKenzie, Jack Cottam and Billy Wakeley, who took Helpline calls.

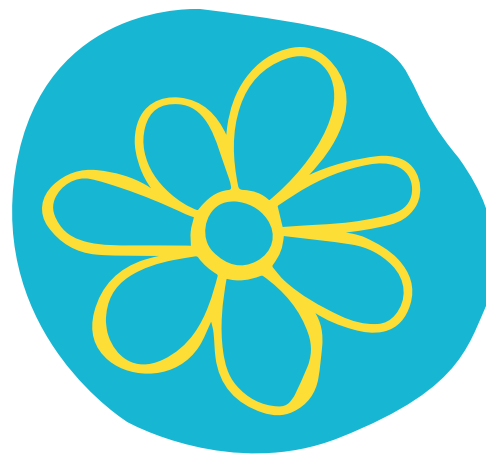
We also welcomed nine new volunteers: Kelly Wilson, Marianna Montes, Marie Ferry, Amy Thorburn, Beth Horsley, Cecily Mattock, Chloe Collingwood, Hetty Cane and Lauren Mann. We are delighted to welcome them to the DrugFAM team.

Currently we have 25 Helpline volunteers (with 7 in training) and 15 Support Group volunteers (with four waiting to be trained).

Family Support Worker, Louise Neary, is now delivering Helpline training with Gill. Four new affected client case studies are being prepared, two recorded bereaved client interviews are being replaced and one new role play ('How Not to Take a Call') has been introduced.

We are very grateful for the dedication and commitment of our volunteers and couldn't do what we do without them.

If you know anyone who might be interested, willing and able to volunteer with DrugFAM please ask them to contact us or complete the [online form](#).



## Operations

Our new online Helpline rota system, Three Rings, continues to work well, allowing volunteers and staff to indicate their availability for shifts that need filling. We had excellent coverage over the Christmas and New Year period, which can be a particularly difficult time.

In March we will be changing over from our current BT Helpline phone system to a new tried and tested system, used by many well-known charities and companies, called Call Handling. Thank you to Vodafone for providing 25 free SIM cards, each with 40GB data a month for six months, plus unlimited calls and texts, which will ensure those without Wi-Fi can still take calls.

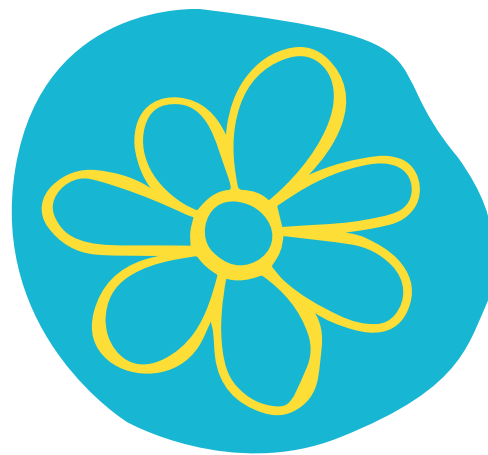
Once the new Helpline system is up and running, we'll be changing over from our current CRM to one that is more intuitive, easier to update and linked with the phone system.

## Bereavement Support

Last November we were delighted to welcome Joe Wright to the Bereavement Support Team one day a week.

On 8 October 2022 we held our 14th Annual National Bereavement Conference, for the first time both online and in person. Thank you to the staff, volunteers and excellent speakers involved in the day. The feedback from attendees was excellent and we have already started planning for this year's hybrid event to take place on Saturday 7 October at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Gerrards Cross.

On 4 December we held our Winter Quarterly Bereavement Group attended by 21 clients. Our next Quarterly Bereavement Meeting will be held Sunday 26 March. People who are bereaved through a drug or alcohol related death are often surprised by how severe and long lasting their grieving is. This can be disorientating, very painful and worrying. The first part of the session will therefore be a short presentation to explain all bereavements and to explain some of the characteristics of these bereavements, as well as practical ideas for coping with grieving. The second part of the session provides an opportunity to share or listen. in small groups, to others who are bereaved. If you would like to join this meeting, please contact [elizabeth@drugfam.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth@drugfam.co.uk)



## Operations

In January and February Elizabeth gave two presentations to pupils in Years 9 and 11 at Gillotts School in Henley on Thames. The presentations help pupils understand the impact of drugs on both the user and their family and friends.

## Advocacy & Networking

**GambleAware**<sup>®</sup> On 7 December 2022 Paul attended the GambleAware 10th Annual Conference, the theme of which was 'Taking action to tackle gambling harms as a public health issue'. GambleAware is an independent, grant-making charity commissioning prevention and treatment services across England, Scotland and Wales in partnership with expert organisations and agencies, including the NHS. Speakers included Chris Whitty (Chief Medical Officer for England), Professor Henrietta Bowden-Jones OBE (National Clinical Advisor on Gambling Harms), Paul Scully MP (Minister for Gambling) and representatives of Gamban, Betknowmore and members of the Gambling Lived Experience Network.

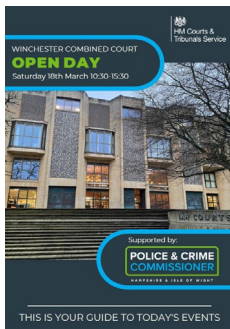
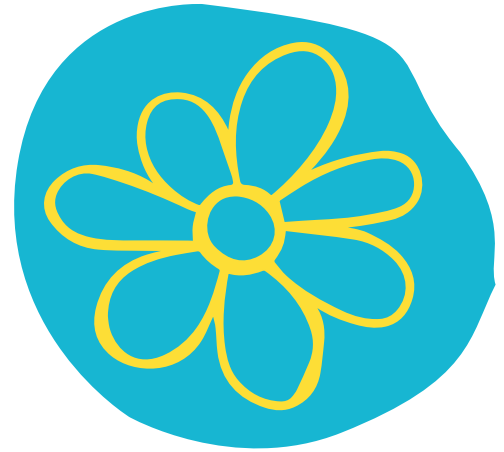
On 12 December 2022 Elizabeth and Paul participated in a House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) stakeholder engagement event in order to help shape their views as they progress on their [drugs inquiry](#). We spoke with the Committee about the work we do, and also about changes we would like to see in in this area to improve outcomes for those struggling with a loved one's addiction. Amongst others, they met Dame Diana Johnson ([www.dianajohnson.co.uk](http://www.dianajohnson.co.uk)) Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, who was very interested in DrugFAM's work, as was Carolyn Harris, MP for Swansea.



In February 2023 Chris and Paul met with the Head of Services of West Midlands based charity 'No Excuse for Abuse - no is no' ([www.noisno.org.uk](http://www.noisno.org.uk)) who will be signposting us to their clients struggling with a loved one's harmful use of alcohol, drugs and gambling.



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On Saturday 18 March Elizabeth and Sheila Allen represented DrugFAM at the Winchester Combined Court Open Day. They had a dedicated DrugFAM stall for anyone seeking our support. The event was organised by DrugFAM friend, former Reading Crown Court Judge HHJ Angela Morris, Recorder of Winchester Crown Court

Spring 2023

## Partnerships



ALCOHOL  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE

In December 2022 Paul met with the Policy & Communications Officer at Alcohol Health Alliance to discuss DrugFAM becoming a member. The AHA is a coalition of more than 50 non-governmental organisations which work together to promote evidence-based policies to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

In January, following our agreement to work with The Ripple Pond to support people in the Armed Forces affected or bereaved, Elizabeth and Paul were interviewed by their Service Delivery and Development Officer Jade Wigham. You can watch the video [here](#).



In February, following the previous training session on mental ill health provided by the Charity, Rethink, Chris and Paul met up with Rethink's Advice & Information Service Manager to explore a closer working relationship and share ideas on best practice to support clients.

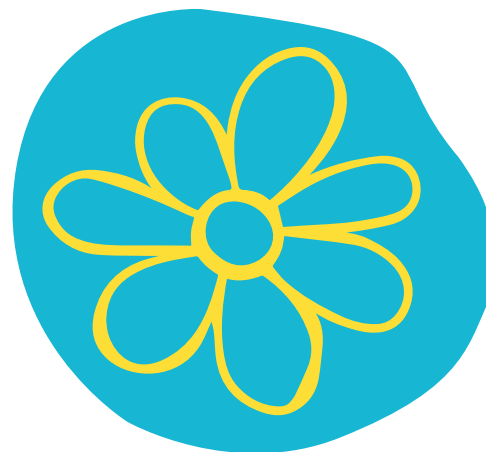
Paul recently participated in a Samaritan's hosted Support After Suicide Partnership Roundtable discussing how best to reach out to and support Gypsy, Roma and Travelling Communities.



Support  
After Suicide  
Partnership



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On 15 February Elizabeth and Paul attended NACOA's (National Association of Children of Alcoholics) Stafford Ward Memorial Lecture at Portcullis House. It was a moving and inspirational event with guest speakers including Vicky Pattison (TV star, author, podcaster and subject of 'Vicky Pattison: Alcohol, Dad and Me' on All 4), Jonathan Ashworth MP (Shadow Secretary for the Department of Work and Pensions), Calum Best, Camilla Tominey (Editor of The Daily Telegraph) Hannah Thomas (Dorking Wanderers), Jaz Rai OBE (founder and CEO of the Sikh Recovery Network) and Hilary Henriques MBE (co-founder and chief executive of Nacoa UK).



## alcohol & families alliance

In February, we supported a collective call for funding for children of alcohol dependent parents to be reinstated by signing a letter to the Chancellor from members of the Alcohol and Families Alliance.

## Client Feedback

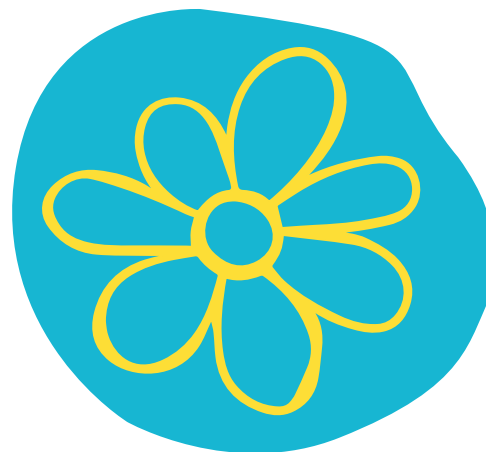
We would like to thank everyone who replied to our anonymous Client Satisfaction Questionnaires. It has been very interesting, motivating and educational reading the answers, especially the open text answers that contain feedback and comments. There were some very constructive suggestions which we have been addressing. We plan to send out some more Client Satisfaction Questionnaires during 2023 but we will make sure that no one person is sent a questionnaire more than once!

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## National Lottery Grant

Our recently awarded Reaching Communities grant of £183,147 for 'DrugFAM Expansion' will cover the three-year period from 1 Jan 2023 to 31 Dec 2025. It will enable us to recruit a Marketing and Communications Manager as well as investing in more employee training, volunteer training, customer management software, monitoring, evaluation and collaborative work.



## Corporate Fundraising

This year we are hoping to develop partnerships with companies and businesses to generate income from donations and sponsorship, recruit new volunteers and raise awareness of who we are and what we do.

We have begun work to research and identify companies and business in the UK to engage.

Please let us know if you would be willing to introduce us to people you know who have a business or work for a company so we can explore such opportunities.



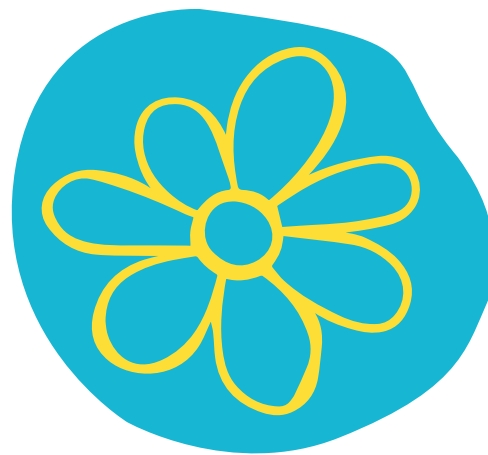
## DrugFAM Fundraising Events

### Art Auction Reception

Our event at Remenham Court went very well. An art auction took place, with wine and canapes. Sir Anthony, Elizabeth and Heather Harper spoke a few words. The venue was lovely and would suit an outdoor evening event very well. The overall surplus from the event was just over £1,000. We met new people and re-connected with former friends and supporters. There was also significant newspaper coverage in The Henley Standard with numerous photos.



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## Coronation Ball

Tickets are now on sale for the first DrugFAM ball in five years. The Coronation Ball will take place from 7.00pm to 1.00am on Saturday 24 June 2023 at Penn House in Buckinghamshire, kindly hosted by the Earl and Countess Howe. The evening includes welcome drinks, a three-course meal and entertainment, as well as a few

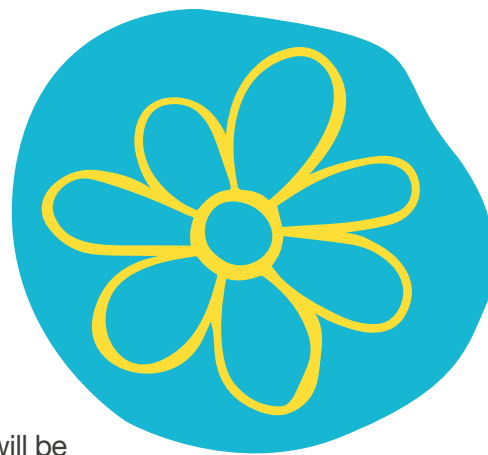
words from some of our supporters, including Russell Brand. Dress code is Black Tie. Tickets are £125 each. Tables for 8 to 12 can be bought and we are encouraging people to club together to book a whole table rather than buy one or two tickets. If you would like to come to the Ball, but cannot put a table together, please contact [drugfamball2023@gmail.com](mailto:drugfamball2023@gmail.com) and we'll be happy to help. To book your table, go to our dedicated website at [www.drugfamcoronationball.co.uk](http://www.drugfamcoronationball.co.uk). Please share with family, friends and colleagues who may be interested in attending.



## Fundraising for DrugFAM

On 11 March, Denise and Bo will be doing a 12 hour walk to raise awareness and funds for DrugFAM. We wish them all the best for this challenge and hope that the weather is kind. Here is a link to Denise's Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/dandbwalk>

On 3 April Elizabeth's grandson, Louis Turner, will be taking part in the Bournemouth 10km and, if that isn't enough, the Corsham 10km run on the 23 April. Louis has set up a Just Giving page for collecting donations for DrugFAM. Here is a link <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/louisturner>



David Christopher and Louise Russell will be doing the North Coast 500 Challenge this coming May. Over the course of 23 days, they will walk and camp along a 516-mile stretch of the North Coast carrying all their food and equipment unaided. This challenge is in memory of a son/stepson who died by suicide in December 2021 and a daughter, who was a victim of domestic abuse leading to alcoholism, who died from septicaemia in October 2021. They hope to raise lots of money for five fantastic charities, of which DrugFAM is one. If you feel inspired to find out more (and donate!) please see: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/drugfam-northcoast500>



On 8 July DrugFAM volunteer, Elisa, will be taking part in the 100km ultramarathon called 'Race to The Stones' to raise money for DrugFAM. This is a beautiful race in the rolling hills of Wiltshire that ends at the historic Avebury Stones. We wish Elisa well for her training and best of luck for the day. Elisa is collecting donations via a Just Giving page – here is a link: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/elisa-harris8>

On 10 September DrugFAM Helpline Volunteer, Victoria Patterson, will be running the Great North Run, the largest half marathon in the world. Her aim is to raise £1,000 for DrugFAM. Donations can be made at: <https://greatnorthrun2023.enthuse.com/pf/runvicgreatnorthrun2023>.

If anyone would like to walk/jog/run/cycle or do anything else to raise money for DrugFAM, please feel free to get in touch with us at the office address. There are various ways we can support you.

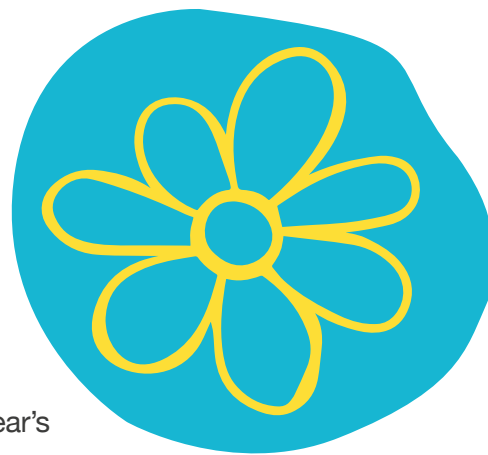
## Thank you

Thank you to Jerry and Penelope Harrall, who lost their son and brother Royston early last year, for raising more than £14,000 to cover the costs of training our Bereavement Support Team. Last October Penelope ran her first London marathon and Jerry ran the 49 miles of the Peddar's Way in Norfolk. These funds will be used to train the Bereavement Support team to deliver an outcome evaluated evidence-based approach to supporting our clients bereaved from the loss of a loved one in addiction. Thank you to Daryl Skeggs and her son, Scott, for fundraising in memory of Jason.



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Both braved swimming in the icy coastal waters off Friars Cliff, Dorset, on New Year's Day 2023 to raise £1,132 for DrugFAM.

Thank you to Louise-Thompson-Yates who, on 14 October, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in memory of her late brother, Andrew, to raise awareness and funds for DrugFAM. Her challenge raised £1,888. We are very grateful to Louise for supporting DrugFAM in this fantastic way.

Thank you to Amelia for raising £578 for DrugFAM to celebrate the birthday on 24th January of her late son, Samuel. Our Bereavement Support Worker Gill has been supporting Amelia for almost two years. Our thoughts are with Amelia and all those who knew Samuel.

We would like to extend our thanks to everyone else who fundraised for DrugFAM over the last six months. We try to make an individual mention of everyone and every event in our newsletters, but it's not always possible to gather in the information and necessary permissions in time. What you have done is inspirational and attracts much-needed funds for DrugFAM so that we can continue to provide ongoing and reliable support to whoever contacts us.

We always love hearing about your achievements and seeing the photos, which are great for inspiring others. There are hundreds of events all over the UK to take part in for fundraising. For information, DrugFAM is a listed charity with The Great North Run and Ultra Challenge both of which organise challenges all over the UK throughout 2023.

## Finances

Financially, we had a good year in 2022. We finished the year with a healthy surplus of income thanks mainly to our grant from The National Lottery, a lot of individual fundraising (like above), some very generous donations and strict control over costs. This puts DrugFAM in a good position to continue delivering consistent and reliable support throughout 2023 and beyond.

We'd like to thank the wonderful Marc Huws and Simon Wilson at the creative design agency Design Directions ([www.designdirections.co.uk](http://www.designdirections.co.uk)) for their ongoing pro bono support with the design and production of all our digital and print materials.



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**Are you affected by a family member or friend harmfully using alcohol, drugs or gambling?**

**We understand, and we can help.**

We provide free, confidential, non-judgemental support by telephone, email, video or in person and can also provide you with the opportunity to meet others experiencing the same challenges as you.



If you'd like to find out more or reach out for support call:

**0300 888 3853** or go to:

**[www.drugfam.co.uk/contact](http://www.drugfam.co.uk/contact)**

**We look forward to hearing from you.**