



THE ABINGDON BRIDGE (TAB)

2024-2025 Impact Summary

*Rooted in community.
Growing connection
and resilience.*



Registered charity number:
1160080

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Our Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision



Strong local community connection where young people act with purpose, belong with confidence, and commit to giving back.



Our Mission



To support young people aged 13–25 across the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire to build resilience, strengthen their sense of belonging, and take positive action in their lives and communities — through early help, trusted relationships, and inclusive, community-rooted support.

- Charitable objects**
1. To promote the benefits of the inhabitants of Abingdon and the surrounding area (hereinafter called the area of benefit) who are between the ages of 13 and 25 without distinction of sex, or of political, religious or other opinions by associating the local authorities, voluntary organisations and the local inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and provide facilities and support in the interest of social welfare and with the object of improving conditions of life of the said inhabitants
 2. To establish or secure the establishment of support centres and to maintain and manage the same (whether alone or in cooperation with any local authority or any other person or body)

Our Values



(Framed around Act, Belong, Commit)

Act
We support young people to take confident, practical steps towards their wellbeing, independence, and future. We help them build on their strengths and develop the skills and confidence to move forward with purpose.

Belong
We create inclusive spaces where young people feel seen, heard, and part of something bigger — recognising the value each that person brings to their community.

Commit
We build trust, remain responsive, and act with integrity— with young people, staff, partners, and funders. We're committed to long-term relationships, ethical practice, robust safeguarding, and transparent governance — building a culture rooted in trust, safety, and accountability.

These values don't just shape how we work with young people — they guide how we engage with our funders, partners, and wider community.

Foreword

Our chair

As I come to the end of my first year as Chair, I feel incredibly proud to have been part of an organisation that is making such a meaningful difference—especially in the lives of young people facing mental health challenges.

Time and again, I hear stories that remind me why our work matters. Stories of young people who, through TAB’s support, have found hope, resilience, and a renewed sense of self. Our reputation in the community is built not just on the services we provide, but on the compassion, dedication, and respect with which the incredible team deliver them.

What fills me with great pride is seeing how deeply our staff care. They don’t just do their jobs—they go above and beyond to ensure every young person feels seen, heard, and supported. Their commitment to mental health, to early intervention, and to creating safe spaces for young people to thrive is nothing short of inspiring.

None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity and dedication of our funders, volunteers, and supporters. Your belief in our mission and your continued support—whether through funding, time, or advocacy—has enabled us to reach more young people, expand our services, and deepen our impact in the community. To each of you who has played a part in helping us deliver vital mental health support: thank you. Your contribution truly changes lives.

Luke Mattam
Chair of TAB Trustees

Our CEO

It’s an absolute privilege to serve as CEO of this amazing charity. I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to the incredible young people and families who place their trust in us. We never take that for granted. While many may come to us with similar challenges, we see, value, and honour the uniqueness of every individual we support. You are at the heart of everything we do.

I also want to extend my deep gratitude to our outstanding Board of Trustees. Your unwavering dedication and support continue to inspire me every day. And to our truly exceptional staff team—thank you. Your passion, skill, and boundless compassion humble me. You are a remarkable group of people, and it’s an honour to work alongside you.

To everyone who supports our work—whether through donations, partnerships, advocacy, or simply keeping us in your thoughts and prayers—thank you. Your belief in our mission is what makes our impact possible.

I hope you enjoy reading about the incredible achievements we’ve made together over the past year.

With gratitude,
Gary Hibbins
Chief Executive Officer

Youth Ambassador

This past year has honestly changed me. Being part of the community work gave me confidence I didn’t know I had. I feel proud of everything we’ve done and even prouder of the person I’ve become. I’m excited to keep going—supporting other young people and helping them see that they can make a difference too.

Tyla
Youth Ambassador

The need: why our work matters

Young people today are growing up in a world that is certainly different — and perhaps more complex — than it was in previous generations. While challenges around school, relationships, and global events have always existed, the scale, speed, and intensity of these pressures have significantly evolved.

From the constant presence of social media and academic expectations to global uncertainty and shifts in traditional family structures, many young people feel overwhelmed and disconnected. Added to this are the increasing pressures on families — with the rising cost of living and both parents often working, time, energy, and emotional availability at home can be stretched thin.

There is also growing confusion around mental health: *What’s normal? What’s not? What’s healthy? When is it time to seek support?* With community ties often less visible or consistent, many young people are unsure where they truly belong or who they can turn to.

And often, the signs aren’t obvious. Mental and emotional struggles don’t always look like sadness or distress. Many young people become skilled at masking their pain — smiling on the outside while feeling overwhelmed within. Others may express their inner turmoil through more visible behaviours: acting out, withdrawing, taking risks, refusing school, or struggling to connect.

It’s like an iceberg — what you see on the surface is only a fraction of what’s really going on underneath.



Based on our assessment data, young people coming to TAB are dealing with a wide range of serious and often hidden challenges:

- ▀ **4 out of 5** are experiencing anxiety or stress
- ▀ **1 in 7** are having panic attacks
- ▀ **1 in 3** are feeling depressed
- ▀ **3 in 10** are struggling with low self-esteem
- ▀ **Over 1 in 5** are self-harming
- ▀ **Over 1 in 6** are being bullied
- ▀ **1 in 7** have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- ▀ **1 in 14** are living with an eating disorder
- ▀ **Over 2 in 5** cite family relationships as a source of distress
- ▀ **3 in 10** have actively thought about or attempted suicide

These numbers are not just statistics — they reflect real stories, real pain, and a deep need for understanding, connection, and care.

Our approach: how we meet the need



Our response: meeting the need with purpose and presence

At TAB, we don't offer quick fixes — we build trusted, professional relationships that create space for real change. Every programme we run is rooted in connection, expertise, and the belief that every young person deserves to be seen, supported, and empowered.

Our team of highly skilled counsellors, youth workers, and mentors respond to both visible and hidden needs — from early signs of stress to moments of crisis. Whether it's a safe conversation, a powerful group session, or a consistent presence in the community, our work starts with connection.

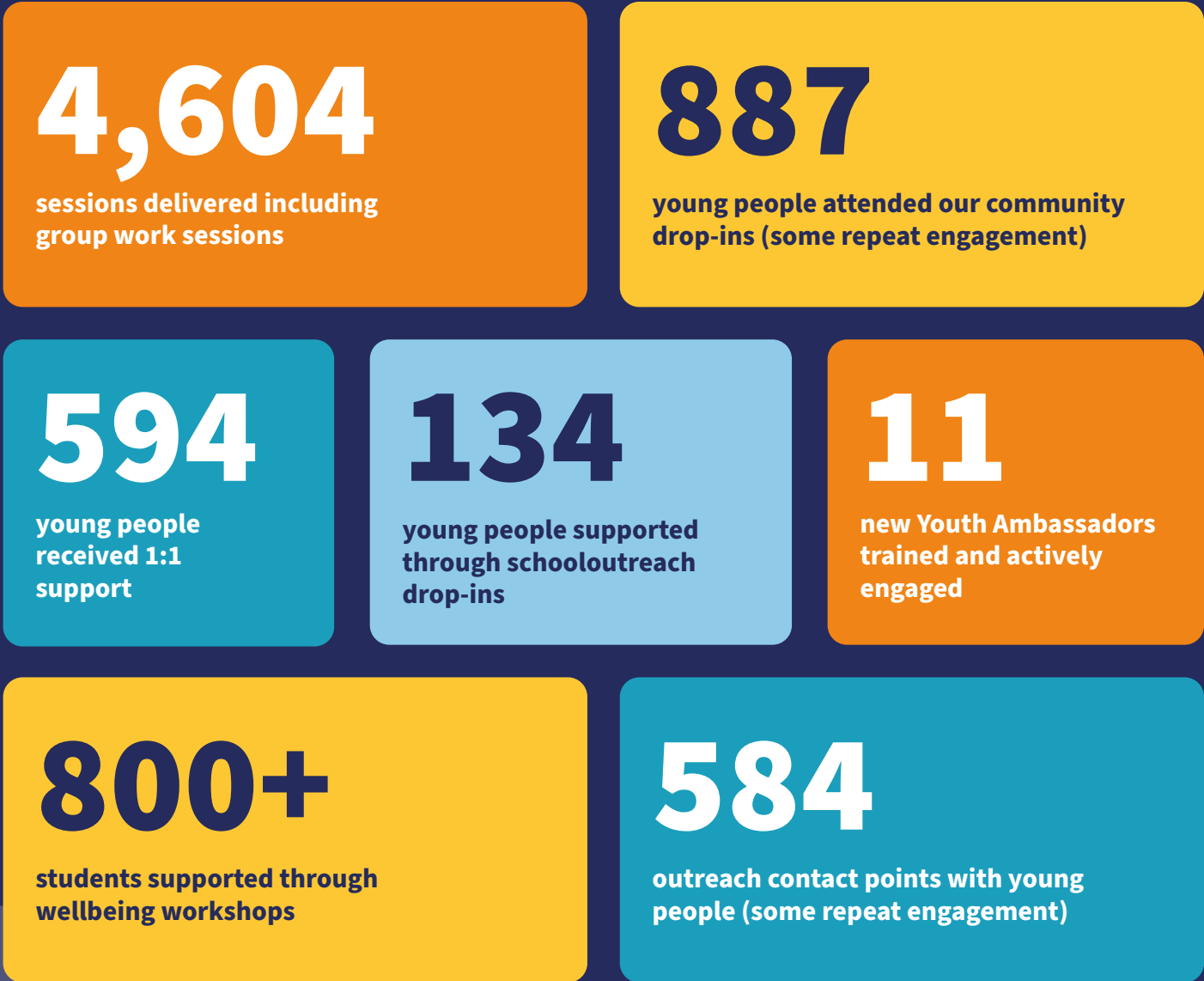
We offer a flexible, layered model of support — combining open-access options with targeted, tailored interventions:

- **1-to-1 Support**
 - **Counselling** — therapeutic support from qualified professionals
 - **Mentoring & Coaching** — Skilled professionals helping young people set goals, build confidence, and navigate life challenges
- **Group & Educational Programmes**
 - **Psychoeducational Group Work** — safe spaces to learn, be curious and explore
 - **Educational Workshops** — in schools and the community, raising awareness, building skills and facilitating prevention
- **Community-Based Outreach**
 - **Community Drop-Ins** — open, informal spaces to connect
 - **Outreach Initiatives** — taking support to where young people are within the community
- **Wellbeing & Peer Leadership**
 - **Gym & Wellness Programmes** — combining physical activity with emotional support
 - **Youth Ambassador Programme** — empowering young people to lead, shape, and advocate for youth voice

— Lasting change doesn't happen in isolation, but through ongoing connection and care.

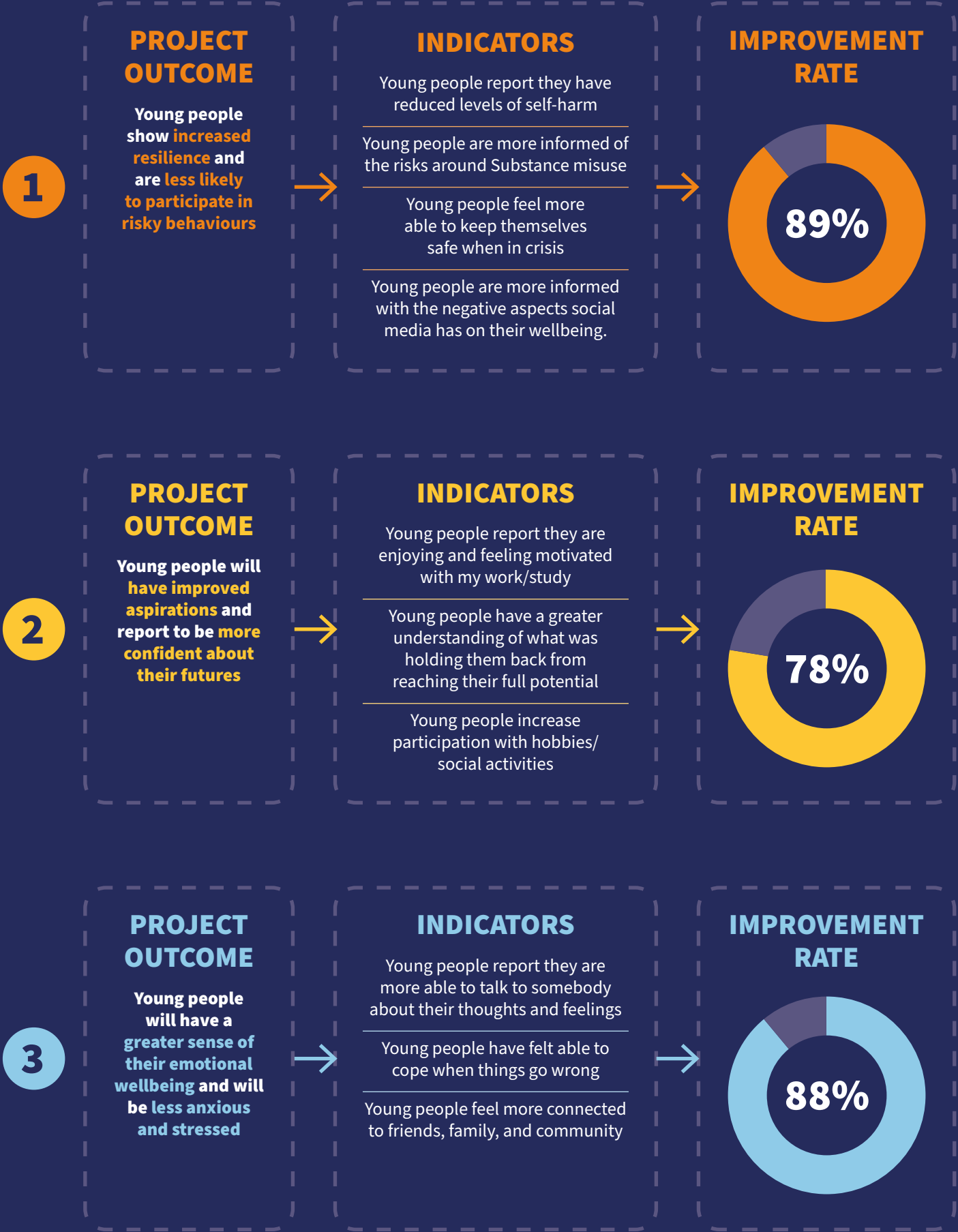


Impact & outcomes at a glance

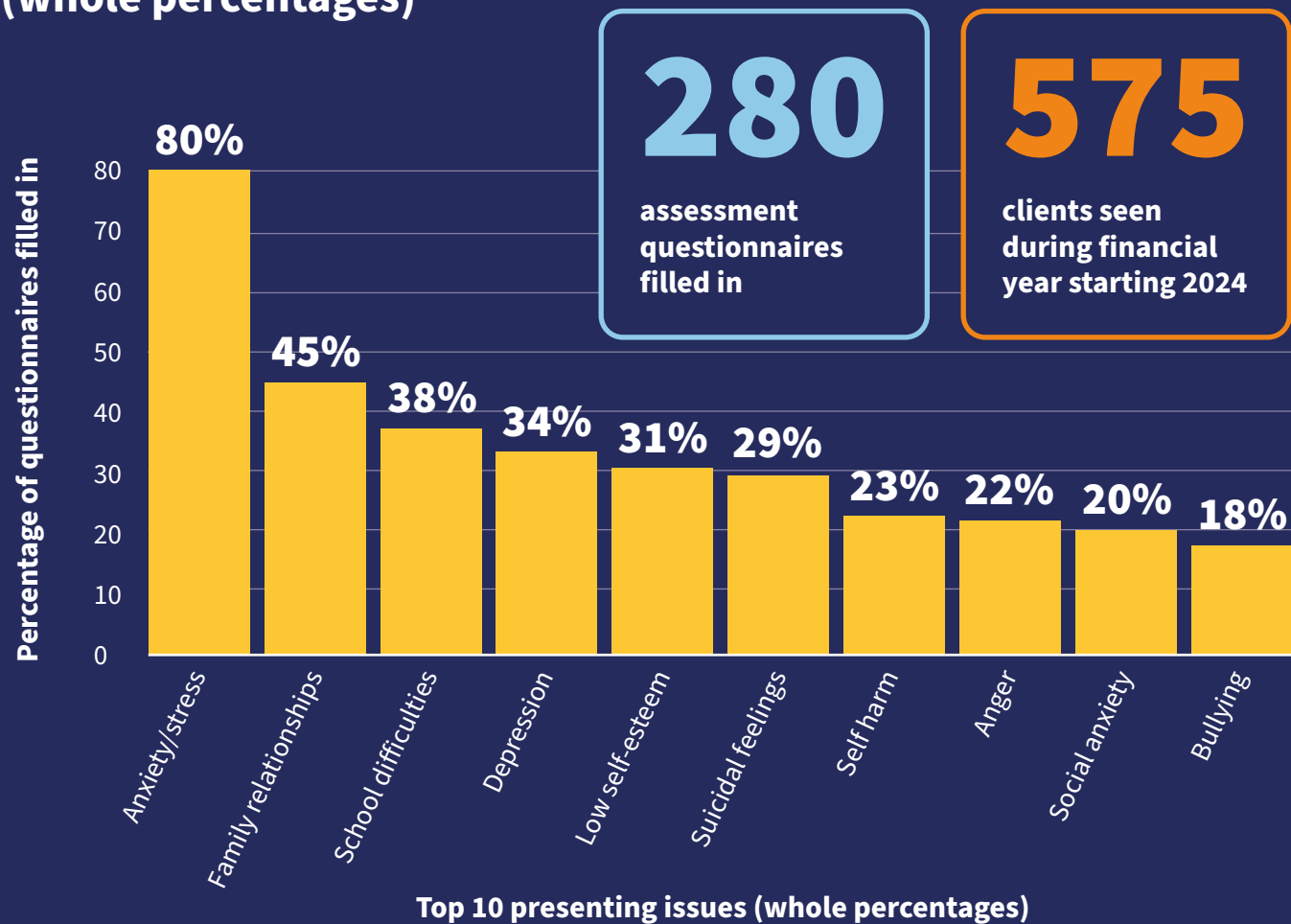


“I have a really supportive family, but I was still struggling with intrusive thoughts that didn’t make sense to me. I didn’t know how to explain what was going on in my head — I just knew I needed help making sense of it all. TAB gave me a space where I could talk without feeling judged, and finally start to understand what I was going through.”

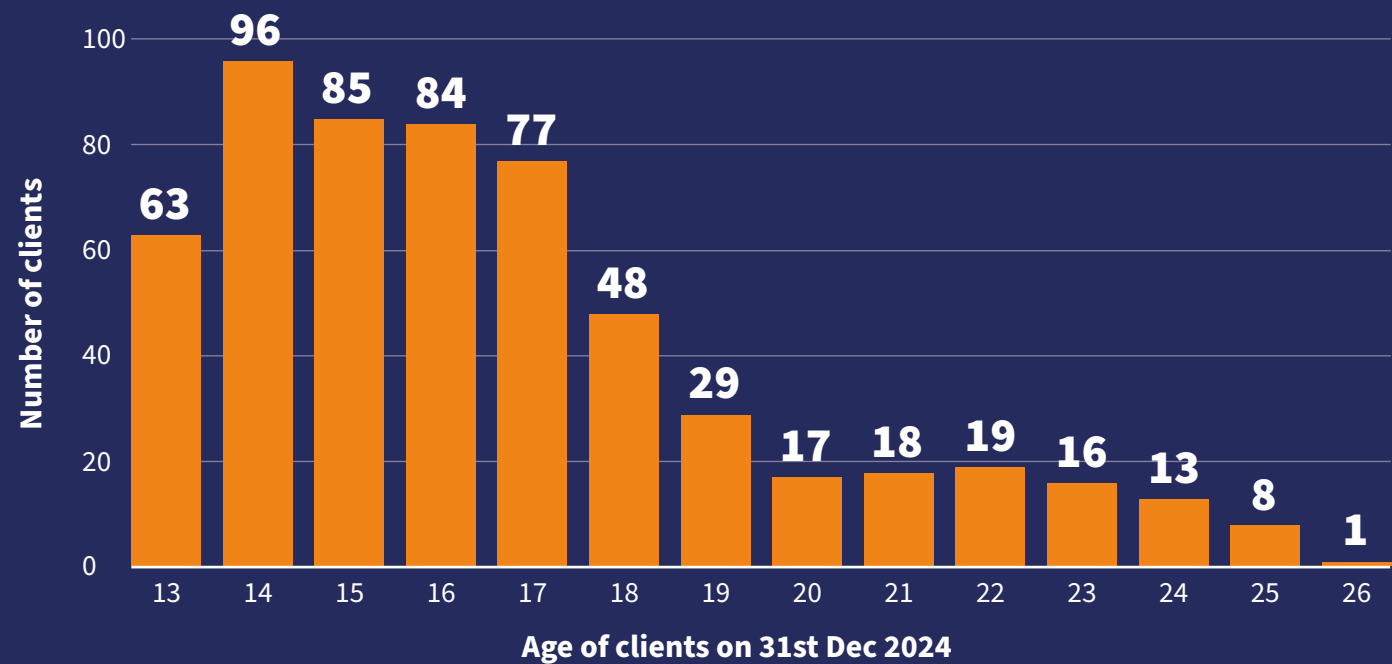
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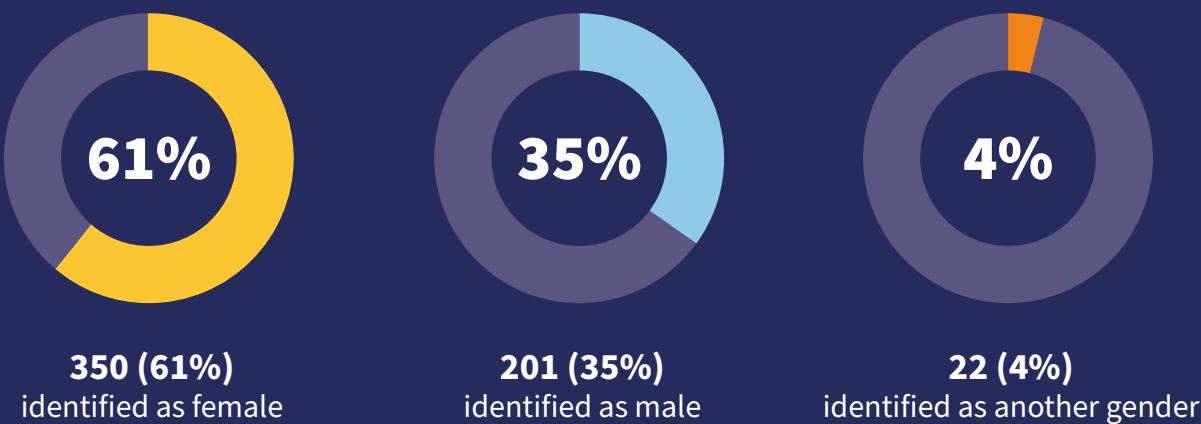
Top 10 presenting issues (whole percentages)¹



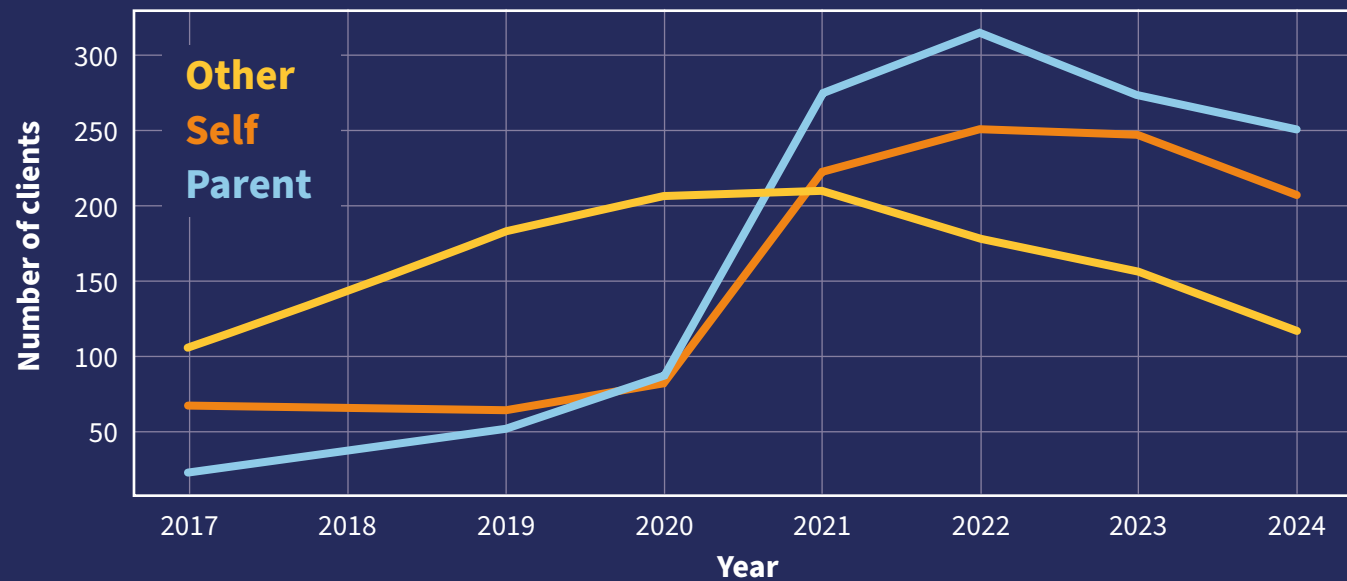
Age of clients on 31st Dec 2024 575 clients seen during financial year starting 2024 of which 1 missing data



In total, we supported 575 young people (where gender data was collected) through 1-to-1 support:³



Top referral method of clients (number of clients) Year comparison financial years starting 2017–2024²



¹ We have a strong track record of delivering and measuring impact. Using the VIEWS (Substance) system, we track outcomes through pre and post assessments — only data from young people who completed both are included. We also gather feedback via post-session surveys. This data helps us understand what’s working, improve our services, and ensure accountability. Regular staff and trustee meetings include impact reviews, and our new occupancy tracker helps monitor efficiency and value for money.

² We saw a clear increase in referrals during COVID. Many young people and families are signposted to us by other organisations — including GPs, CAMHS, and schools.

³ This data reflects only our 1-to-1 support and does not include participation in workshops or outreach activities.



“Being a youth ambassador has change the way I think, the way I feel and the way I act. I feel like I am a part of something special.”

JJ, 16

“I wanted to give back after all the support I received. Helping others feels like the right thing to do.”

BILLY, YOUTH AMBASSADOR

Our Youth Ambassadors

Community focus = sense of belonging

Youth Ambassadors actively engage in community events and activities, from organising community events to leading awareness campaigns, social action projects and community care. Their efforts not only support those in need but also inspire their peers to take action all while getting a lot back.

Youth Ambassador focus for the year ahead

Over the next 12 months, our Youth Ambassadors will play an active role in shaping both our work and the wider community by:

- Taking part in regular focus groups to share insights and help shape TAB policies, services, and strategic direction
- Advising local Town Councils on youth needs, emerging issues, and youth-informed strategies
- Supporting the planning and delivery of community outreach and drop-in sessions
- Promoting positive mental health through peer-led conversations and events
- Taking part in training to strengthen their ability to support peers around mental fitness and emotional wellbeing
- Acting as a bridge between young people and decision-makers — ensuring youth voice stays central to everything we do



Spotlight story: Summer’s journey through art and leadership

Finding purpose through creativity and connection

At just 16, Summer joined our programme amid personal battles with anxiety and depression. After two rounds of counselling, she was still searching for something more — something that could offer her meaning, connection, and a safe space to grow. She found it in our Young Women’s Art Group, a therapeutic community designed to support young women aged 18–25 who have experienced significant mental health challenges, including hospitalisation, self-harm, and eating disorders.

“Summer has grown into a leader— not just by title, but through her actions. The younger people look up to her, and she’s become someone they feel safe turning to. She brings warmth, honesty, and a deep understanding that no amount of training alone can teach.”

TRAINEE YOUTH WORKER, TAB

In the safety of this space, Summer began to heal. She built relationships with others who understood her struggles, many of whom—like her—had received late diagnoses of autism or ADHD while with us. The group offered more than just creative expression; it was a lifeline to understanding, belonging, and rebuilding self-worth.

From healing to leadership

In early 2024, following a personal setback, Summer bravely decided she needed something bigger than her own recovery—a purpose that connected her to her community. She pitched the idea of organising a bingo and quiz event to bring together young people and older members of the local community. With the support of her peers from the therapy group, her youth ambassador mentors, and staff, she brought the event to life.

“Organising this event made me realise how much I’ve grown. It was scary at first, but I ended up loving every minute. Seeing people smiling, connecting across generations—it reminded me why this work matters.”

SUMMER, YOUTH AMBASSADOR AND EVENT HOST

A celebration of confidence and connection

The event drew over 75 senior community members, brought together by games, laughter, and shared stories. It wasn’t just an event—it was a celebration of youth leadership, healing, and intergenerational connection. Community volunteers, including former service users, came to help, and the sense of unity was palpable.

Since then, Summer’s confidence has flourished. She has become an active presence in our drop-in sessions, where she co-facilitates alongside support staff and trainee youth workers. Her role includes welcoming new attendees, helping them feel comfortable, and offering peer insight rooted in lived experience. She’s also started participating in outreach work, joining staff on the streets reaching more and more young people who really need young leaders to support them through their journeys.





Looking ahead

Introducing Bridge 18–25

We are expanding our mental health and wellbeing support to meet the growing needs of young adults aged 18–25 — a group facing significant pressures and increasing levels of distress, including suicide risk. These challenges are often overlooked and under-supported locally.

‘**Bridge 18–25**’ is a new programme focused on providing accessible, preventative, and responsive mental health support tailored to this age group. The aim is to reduce crisis points, increase awareness, and create opportunities for young adults to feel supported, connected, and understood.

The programme will include:

- A community-wide awareness campaign
- Additional counselling provision specifically for 18–25s
- Targeted wellbeing workshops and talks in sports clubs and community settings
- Peer connection groups and inclusive community events

Follow us on social media for updates and opportunities to get involved.



Our Strategic Aims & Priorities (2025–2028)

1. Strengthen upstream support

Work proactively to identify and respond to emerging needs / issues — providing support before a crisis is reached. Through prevention-focused, relationship-led interventions, we’ll help young people build resilience, confidence, and a sense of agency earlier in their journey. This is about addressing root causes and strengthening foundations.

2. Deepen local connection and belonging

Design and deliver place-based projects that build inclusion, connection, and belonging. By working in partnership with local organisations, schools, and communities, we’ll create trusted spaces where young people feel rooted, valued, and have the confidence to give back and inspire

3. Champion Youth Voice, lived experience and Participation

Actively involve young people in shaping our work — from service design to community leadership. We’ll invest in meaningful participation pathways that ensure their experiences and insights inform everything we do, amplifying their voice in decision-making spaces.

4. Invest in our team and organisational wellbeing

Create a supportive culture and strong structure that helps our staff and volunteers grow, thrive, and stay well. As Richard Branson puts it, “Train people well enough so they can leave. Treat them well enough so they don’t want to.” We’ll nurture a team that is equipped, valued, and proud to be part of TAB.

5. Secure and sustain long-term impact

Strengthen our governance, data, learning, and financial health to ensure we’re fit for the future. This includes building diverse funding streams, delivering balanced budgets, and strengthen our evidence base — all with the aim of sustaining high-quality impact for the long term.

How we’ll get there

For each of our strategic aims, we’ve developed a set of clear KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and measurable outputs that outline how we will turn ambition into action. These indicators will help us track progress, stay accountable, and ensure we are delivering meaningful, tangible outcomes for the young people and communities we serve.

How you can help – a call for support

TAB receives no statutory funding — **every penny we raise goes directly to supporting local young people.**



JustGiving™

£70

covers one 1-to-1 counselling session

£840

funds a full 12-session counselling programme for one young person

£200

runs a full drop-in or outreach session

£1,000

trains and supports one Youth Ambassador for a year

Ways to make a difference

- **Make a one-off donation**
Every gift, large or small, truly counts
- **Give monthly**
Fully fund one young person’s support over a year
- **Sponsor a drop-in, outreach session, or Youth Ambassador**
- **Businesses can adopt TAB as your Charity of the Year**
We’ll help you build a calendar of fundraising and awareness events
- **Partner with us**
We’re seeking trusts and foundations to help sustain our work long term

It’s not just about money

If you have skills, time, or expertise you think TAB could benefit from — **we’d love to hear from you.** From volunteering and creative support to professional guidance, your input could make a big difference.

And perhaps most importantly — **please help spread the word.**

Raising awareness of our work across the community helps more young people find the support they need.



For more information on our finances and accounts visit the Charity Commission website by scanning the QR code.



This page provides comprehensive information about the charity’s activities, income and expenditure, trustees, and more.

Voices of support



“The Abingdon Bridge is a fantastic organisation to work closely with. We direct a huge number of young people and families to TAB when the support we offer in CAMHS isn’t quite right for them. It has an amazing reputation in the community and among families.

I’m sure that TAB sees some young people who are waiting for other psychological therapies from CAMHS, and they offer them support prior to receiving our input. I’m very keen to work more closely with them in the coming year, and we are really lucky to have such a resource in Oxfordshire.”

**VICKY NORMAN, HEAD OF SERVICE
OXFORDSHIRE CAMHS & EATING DISORDERS
OXFORD HEALTH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**



“I am delighted to be able to continue supporting TAB. The great team in based in Abingdon are integral partners in our work to support young people, reduce crime and keep people safe.

Over recent years I have seen the relationship with TAB deepen as the relationship is not just the small amount of financial support we’re able to provide but the incredibly strong operational links with Thames Valley Police.”

**MATTHEW BARBER, POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY**



“Thanks to National Lottery players, our funding supports children and young people to develop and thrive into later life. It’s so important that young people receive the help they need to navigate the trickiest life transitions and choices. The tailored wellbeing support The Abingdon Bridge provides is a great example of how to help young people build resilience and take on life’s challenges. Thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers at The Abingdon Bridge, I’m delighted to see their work going from strength to strength.”

**HELEN BUSHELL, HEAD OF REGIONAL
FUNDING FOR LONDON, THE SOUTH
EAST AND EAST OF ENGLAND AT THE
NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND**



“BBC Children in Need has been supporting The Abingdon Bridge through grant-funding for a number of years. In that time, the organisation has grown and diversified its range of services and interventions to support disadvantaged young people in the Abingdon area who come to them with mental health and other challenges, which can impact on their relationships, self-belief and aspirations for a positive future.

It’s been a privilege as their Regional Impact Officer at BBC Children in Need to have supported their growth and development, particularly in their approach to monitoring and impact reporting. I’ve watched them shape and enhance their approach to participation with

and by young people across their organisation, with a focus on listening to and hearing their voices. This is evidenced through many of their young beneficiaries wanting to ‘give back’ to TAB and the wider community. They are generous with their time and knowledge to partners and funders through sharing their insight into current and emerging challenges faced by young people across the UK, and have spoken to staff across BBC Children in Need as well as contributing their knowledge and experience through story-telling and case studies”

**PAM BACON, IMPACT OFFICER –
SOUTH EAST BBC – CHILDREN IN NEED**



“The Abingdon Bridge is a fabulous example of place-based support for young people in Oxfordshire. Their work in Abindgon offers safe spaces, trusted adults, skills development, and therapeutic support to over 1000 young people each year. They form a significant part of the wider ecosystem of the youth sector in Oxfordshire that delivers informal and non-formal learning and education, supporting young people to transition into adulthood with broader aspirations and the confidence and skills to thrive. Well done to all of the staff, volunteers and wider supporters who work tirelessly each day to ensure that no young person in Abingdon is left behind.”

**JODIE LLOYD-JONES, CEO
OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH**

A vote of thanks

To our national funders, local businesses, charitable trusts, and individual donors — **thank you.**

Your generosity is the reason The Abingdon Bridge can continue to walk alongside young people in our community, offering the support, care, and connection they so deeply need.

Over two-thirds of our funding comes from individuals and small trusts. That means quite simply: without you, this work wouldn't be possible.

Thanks to your support, TAB is now working at an annual turnover of £500,000 — enabling us to reach more young people than ever before. But there is still so much more to do. As we look ahead, we hope you will continue standing with us — helping to sustain and grow this vital work over the next few years.

In this document, we haven't listed individual funders or trusts by name — but please know: we see you, we appreciate you, and we will be writing to thank you personally.

From all of us at TAB — staff, trustees, and young people — **thank you for believing in what we do, and in who we serve.**

Our National Funders:





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