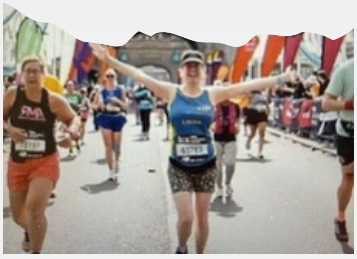
Helplines Partnership

Our Year in Review

2025 - 2026

























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Welcome from the **Chair of Trustees**

Elizabeth Rimmer



Every day, people across the UK turn to helpline charities for advice, information and support, often when they are feeling vulnerable. Helplines are there when they need them, offering a listening ear, compassion and kindness. This simple but important role is at the heart of everything our community does.

Behind every conversation, whether it's by phone, email or webchat, are helpline volunteers and employees who genuinely care about making a difference. This commitment has been more evident than ever this year. Despite a challenging environment, helplines have continued to adapt, find new solutions and ways to reach and support the people who need them.

Over the past year at Helplines Partnership (HLP), we have continued to deliver our programme of events, training and networking opportunities, while stepping up our campaigns to raise awareness of the impact of helplines. Our commitment to improving standards continues through the growth of our Helplines Standard, a quality standard for helplines.

We could not have done any of this without the commitment and dedication of the Helplines Partnership team and our members. Thank you for your support and for the incredible work you do every day to ensure that people have the help they need, when they need it.

About Helplines Partnership

Helplines Partnership is dedicated to representing, supporting and developing the helpline community. We bring together organisations providing information, advice and support by phone, email, text and online, helping them deliver the best possible service to the people who rely on them.

We champion the vital role of helplines, giving our members a collective voice and raising awareness of the difference they make every day.

01

Membership

Creating opportunities for helplines to connect, share ideas, experiences and best practice, learn from one another, build valuable relationships and strengthen our community.

02

Training

We provide expert, CPD-accredited training that gives helpline staff and volunteers the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to provide safe, effective and high-quality support.

03

Helplines Standard

Provides a recognised framework for quality and best practice, helping organisations strengthen their services and demonstrate their commitment to delivering high-quality helpline support.

And our work extends beyond the helpline sector. Through our Helpline Hub we help people find trusted support and connect with the right service for them.

Everything we do has one goal: to help create a stronger, more effective helpline community where people can access the support they need, when they need it.



The Right Help, Right Now

Search over
300 UK helplines
in one place

thehelplinehub.org

Key Achievements

91%
Membership retention and renewal rate

1,376
Delegates trained

19
Helplines certified

Membership

Putting members at the heart of what we do

We maintained a strong 91% membership retention and renewal rate throughout the year, while continuing to welcome new organisations to the Helplines Partnership community.

Making membership work harder

We reviewed our 2025/26 member offer with one goal in mind: making membership as valuable and useful as possible. The review helped us strengthen the benefits and support available to members.

Bringing members together

Our Virtual Member Space Events continued to bring members together, with around 50 bookings per event. From writing effective policies and discovering new digital volunteering opportunities to practical training on supporting callers who stammer, the programme offered plenty to learn, discuss and take away.

More ways to connect

We continued to create opportunities for members and non-members to meet, share ideas and learn from each other through our networking events — helping build stronger connections across the helpline community.

Keeping calls affordable

The Helpline Freephone Range continued to help services keep the cost of calls down, with telephone providers capped at a rate of 2.1p per minute.

Key Achievements

£34,479

Saved for members in 2025/26, thanks to our agreement with BT to waive the Payphone Access Charge. Freeing up funds for the vital work of supporting callers.

A new offer for a wider audience

We launched our Commercial Collective, extending our expertise beyond traditional helpline settings to professionals working across health and social care, public services and the private sector. New training courses focus on helping organisations elevate performance, protect their teams and strengthen staff wellbeing and resilience.

Training

It was another busy year for our training team, covering the knowledge and skills that help teams deliver high-quality support.

131
training sessions delivered

1,376
delegates trained

174
organisations reached

And the feedback speaks for itself — of the 779 delegates who completed our feedback survey:

99%
said their expectations were met

98%
said training was relevant to their needs

99%
would recommend our training

Key Achievements

Helplines Standard

Supporting helplines to achieve quality

The Helplines Standard continues to be an important way for services to demonstrate their commitment to quality. Our assessors supported organisations throughout their journey, from one-to-one conversations for those considering certification to pre-assessment chats helping services understand the process and prepare with confidence.

19 helplines achieved certification

This included 6 new certifications and 13 successful re-certifications. A further 18 organisations were actively working towards certification as at 31 March 2026.

Wider Highlights

Connecting, learning and celebrating together

Our 16th AGM took place in October 2025, followed by our Annual Conference in November — bringing people together for a day of learning, connection and celebration.

Labour Party Conference

We made a strong impact at the Labour Party Conference, securing a high-demand stand in a prominent location and connecting with delegates, politicians and key stakeholders. The conference also opened doors to potential new members and partners, while raising awareness of HLP and our services.

A standout success was building a new relationship with JCDecaux, which resulted in us winning a digital advertising campaign to further amplify our reach and profile.

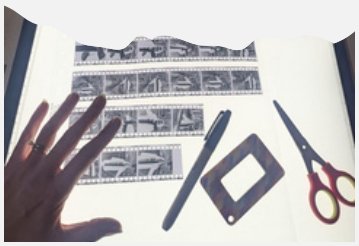
Helplines Awareness Day 2026

The fourth Helplines Awareness Day took place on 23 February 2026, with a week of activity celebrating the important work of helplines and raising awareness of the support available through the Helpline Hub.

Our Developing in the Dark campaign was at the heart of this year's activity. Created with Little Vintage Photography, the portrait exhibition shared powerful images and stories from people whose lives have been transformed by helplines.

The exhibition was hosted at Baltic Creative in Liverpool and included a special evening viewing attended by guests including the Mayor of Liverpool. We also secured digital screen advertising across Liverpool One and Liverpool train stations, giving the campaign a strong presence across the city and helping us reach new audiences.





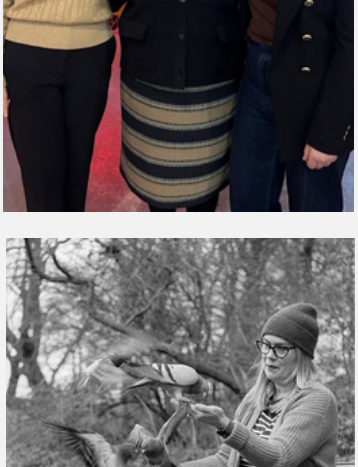


















Looking ahead: our future plans

There's lots to look forward to at Helplines Partnership. We're building on the progress we've made, reaching more people, growing our influence and finding new ways to support and add value for our members. We have ambitious plans for the year ahead.

Build a stronger team and Board

Bringing in the skills, experience and diversity we need to take HLP forward.

Set our direction for the future

Developing and putting into action a new four-year strategic plan.

Grow and diversify our membership

Reaching more organisations and creating new ways for members and potential members to connect with HLP.

Take our training further

Reaching new audiences, expanding our training offer and continually developing content.

Grow the Helpline Hub

Continuing to develop our online directory as an accessible and trusted way for people to find the right support.

Launch the Helpline Sector Magazine

Creating a new space to share ideas, insight, stories and developments from across the helpline community.

Expand our digital reach

Creating engaging social media content that connects with new audiences, strengthens relationships and supports membership growth.

Secure our financial future

Continuing to build a strong and sustainable organisation that can deliver for members and champion helplines for years to come.

Strengthen our voice and influence

Becoming an even more authoritative and visible voice for helplines, trusted by members, policymakers, funders and the public.

Build powerful partnerships

Developing new and existing partnerships that bring expertise, opportunities and added value to HLP and our members.

Champion quality

Promoting the value of the Helplines Standard and supporting more organisations to demonstrate and develop high-quality helpline practice.

Helplines Partnership

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