

December 2020



## Some Changes at SAMM

Here at SAMM we are delighted to welcome some new members of staff. Michele Powell has joined us as our new Office Co-ordinator and is getting things into shape already. Although having been with us since 2012, Penny Dixon has undergone a change of job title and is now our Training and Development Officer. This new title recognises and takes into account her many skills. Within this new role she will be able to continue the development of training for volunteers and professionals while also reaching out to members, empowering them through community involvement, particularly through the arts. We are extremely sad to see Rose Dixon step down as CEO of SAMM but also really pleased to welcome Joanne Early as she takes over the new CEO role.

## A word from our Chair, Marie Ellis

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Joanne Early as the SAMM National CEO. I know Jo has all the qualities required to take SAMM forward. She is hard-working, enthusiastic and is committed to securing a stable future for SAMM. Jo is well respected by many people for her dedication to victims of crime, and in the forefront of course, are those who are bereaved as a result of homicide.

Jo is well known to SAMM and at one stage was a trustee so she is well prepared for the role passed on to her by Rose. She understands the needs of bereaved people and will ensure that your voices are heard. I'm sure Jo will prove to be an enormous asset to SAMM.



*Marie Ellis*

## A Word from our New CEO, Joanne Early

I am absolutely delighted to be joining the SAMM community as CEO. Support for the traumatically bereaved is a subject close to my heart and I feel incredibly passionate about getting it right. Having dedicated the last 10 years of my life to supporting families bereaved by murder and manslaughter, I consider it both an honour and a privilege to be able to continue this invaluable work at SAMM.

My own lived experience continues to fuel my drive and passion to help others. My son Charlie was killed in 2008 and I lived through 2 years of a horrendous criminal justice journey. I did not get justice for Charlie.

Shortly after the criminal trial I wanted to talk to others with similar experiences and contacted SAMM. Talking to others who really understood my pain made a world of difference to me. I don't think I would be as strong as I am today without the support I received from SAMM. For the first time I no longer felt alone or isolated. I realised that my trauma and feelings were perfectly normal for what I had been through and that was a huge relief! The SAMM door is always open so please don't hesitate to reach out if you need to talk.

Lastly, I would really like to thank Rose for all her hard work and dedication over the past 21 years. Her shoes will be hard to fill as I've seen her work above and beyond the call of duty to help others. I hope Rose enjoys her well-deserved retirement.



*Joanne Early*





## Happy Retirement Rose!

I first met Rose Dixon 21 years ago when she joined SAMM. At that time we were still quite a small, unknown charity. From that day forward she has dedicated her time to supporting many bereaved and heartbroken families and given comfort to many traumatised people. She is not just a supporter, she is a confidante, a listener, and contact for the many agencies involved with their particular case. She never lets anyone down and is their voice of wisdom when they are at their lowest. Most importantly she cares and she will go the extra mile to help people in need.

Rose has now retired and will be very much missed as CEO. However, I am glad to say she will continue to be a support caller and become a SAMM Trustee. I am sure she will be an asset to the board in the future.

As my colleague and friend I couldn't have wished for a better partner than Rose. We have worked together for many years. We have laughed together and we have cried together.

So once again best wishes and lots of love. Wishing you a happy retirement Rose from all at SAMM.

*Marie Ellis, Chair*

After working for SAMM for 21 years I retired on 30th September. During this time I have met many wonderful and interesting people including politicians and high profile persons. However, those who have impressed me most are the SAMM members who struggle to get up and live everyday after losing their loved ones in such an awful and traumatic way. You are an inspiration to me with how you cope in the awful aftermath of your traumatic loss. Thank you all for sharing with me memories of the precious person you have lost. I will still be around as I have become a trustee for SAMM so I've not disappeared altogether. I have known Jo for some years through SAMM. She is dedicated and passionate with the drive and energy to move SAMM forward. I wish her every success in her new role.

Rose Dixon, Trustee

## Grief at Christmas Time and Other Important Festivals

For those of us who have lost a precious loved one, Christmas, and the many other festivals during this time can be so difficult. Certainly the frantic lead up to Christmas shopping and everyone being happy and planning things with their families is heart-breaking. It seems as if every shop you go into has happy music playing and everyone is looking forward to seeing loved ones and friends. All we see is the empty chair where our loved one should be sitting. Whatever we do there are memories to haunt us and distress us with thoughts of what should have been. This year because of the pandemic things will probably be a bit different but if this is your first Christmas or other festival without that special person then we realise that this is especially hard for you. Please know that all of us within SAMM know and are thinking about you.



Many years ago our Chair of SAMM, Marie Ellis, started lighting a candle for our loved ones at 11am on Christmas morning and now a lot of SAMM members do this. Perhaps you might find some comfort from joining in with this tradition, knowing other SAMM members are doing the same? Remember we really do understand how you feel, and you are not alone.



## Volunteering for SAMM

We are constantly looking to move SAMM forward and sadly as support calls continue to rise we are always looking to increase our team of volunteers. We offer a full training programme for people who may at some stage feel strong enough to want to join our phone line team. It is up to the individual as to how much time you put in. It can be from one hour a week to several hours a week — whatever suits you. If you are interested and would like any further information regarding volunteering for SAMM please contact the office either by phone 0121 472 2912 or email [info@samm.org.uk](mailto:info@samm.org.uk)



## 'Remember Me' - Memorial Quilt Update

A huge thank you to all our SAMM members who have taken part in the Memorial Quilt project so far. It has been so well received and we have absolutely loved seeing all the tributes that have been returned.

SAMM are working alongside a professional textile artist who will ensure all the tributes are combined to create a beautiful art piece. Quilts are traditionally all about memories, warmth and love and we are calling the project 'Remember Me'. It is an opportunity to pay tribute to our loved ones but also a reminder to *remember* to be kind to our selves.

The quilt has offered an opportunity for SAMM members to permanently include their memories of their loved ones and acts as a visual way of raising the profile of the work we do here at SAMM. We are looking forward to sharing the final masterpiece with you, as soon as it is complete.

It is not too late to request a free quilt pack from the office but we will be beginning to put it together in January. Don't forget that a lot of soldiers and sailors were fantastic sewers too so it's not just for the girls!



## 2021 Retreats

As many of us know, SAMM retreats are a very valuable part of being a SAMM member and we do our best to make them available to as many people as we can. Retreats are extremely popular and we do have a waiting list. For those who are not aware, it is an opportunity to meet with other bereaved people over a weekend in a calm and safe environment. There are therapeutic treatments, art activities and discussion groups. It would be impossible to run these without the help and support of our trustees and volunteers so as always a big thanks to them all.

The Coronavirus pandemic has inevitably meant that we have had to postpone the scheduled retreats to ensure everybody's safety but we are hoping to be able to reschedule these again as soon as it is safe to do so in 2021.

We are currently working on a set of online sessions so do check the website for more information.



## Can you help us design a new SAMM Logo ?

Staff and Trustees at SAMM feel it is time for a new, updated logo. We would love you to be involved in this and welcome all ideas. These can be in the form of computer design or paper and pen. It does not have to be perfect as it can be tidied up by a designer. It is your wonderful ideas we are looking for! It needs to:

**Keep our grey and yellow colours**

**Reflect how you feel about SAMM**

**Be with us for consideration by 31 January 2021**

Email to [info@samm.org.uk](mailto:info@samm.org.uk) or send to the address on the back page. We look forward to seeing them all.

## SAMM Secure Forum

The online forum is a valuable tool which is open to all SAMM members, offering a safe place to chat anonymously with other members of SAMM, the trustees and SAMM volunteers.

If you haven't yet registered you can do so by visiting the SAMM website, calling the office 0121 472 2912 or if you are reading the email version by clicking on the link [here](#):

[REGISTER NOW](#)



## SAMM Memorial Service

**Saturday 12 December 2020**

In order to ensure everyone's safety this year the Memorial Service at St Martin's-in-the-Field Church, London will be live-streamed to SAMM members from the church.

Please check the main page on our website  
[www.samm.org.uk](http://www.samm.org.uk)



## Support After Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM)

**L&DRC Tally Ho!  
Pershore Road  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B5 7RN**



[info@samm.org.uk](mailto:info@samm.org.uk)



[www.samm.org.uk](http://www.samm.org.uk)



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



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



**Support After Murder & Manslaughter**

**HELPLINE:  
0121 472 2912**



## Fundraising? Yes please!



SAMM as a charity relies heavily on your fundraising and generous donations. If online you can click on the image to donate or you will also find the links on our fundraising page via our website. [www.samm.org.uk](http://www.samm.org.uk).

We are working hard on producing fundraising packs and can help you along every step of the way if you wish to organise an event for us. Cake sales, online coffee mornings and runs — or even laps of the garden can all still be done at this time.

Donations can be made by Paypal to support at murder and manslaughter



Or Virginmoneygiving.com



Or you can send a cheque made payable to SAMM.

Don't forget to let us know if you are a UK taxpayer. We can claim gift aid on your donation making it work even harder for the charity. *giftaidit*

You can also raise money for us by using Amazon Smile. Donate to SAMM whilst you shop!

### Support Support After Murder And Manslaughter

When you shop at [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk),  
Amazon Donates

[Visit smile.amazon.co.uk](http://Visit smile.amazon.co.uk)

[smile amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk)

## SAMM Trustees:

Marie Ellis (Chair)

Marie Wright (Vice Chair)

Rose Dixon (Secretary)

Avril Royle

Sylvia Smithies

Kathy Barber

Satesh Sharma

David Reid

Steven Williams

Keith Mellalieu (Treasurer)

## Staff Members:

Joanne Early, CEO

Penny Dixon, Training and Development Officer

Michele Powell, Office Coordinator

Thank you for staying in touch with us. As a valued SAMM member this is *your* newsletter. We would love some feedback and suggestions for future issues. We are also keen to receive tributes and poems that we can include in future newsletters and on our website.

Seasons Greetings

The SAMM Team.

