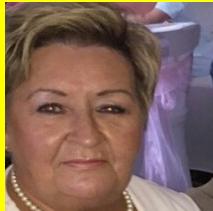


Newsletter



A word from our Chair, Marie Ellis

Hello,

I know some people reading this will be having a really tough time and may be experiencing some of your darkest day's, my heart goes out to you and I feel your pain. Suffering such a tragedy as murder or manslaughter is over and above any other grief felt.

I have walked in your shoes I have suffered that deep torturing pain, when you feel you just can't go on any longer. When you feel isolated and alone with your emotions and nobody understands how much you are suffering. This could be the time when you need to talk to a SAMM volunteer who will be able to offer you the support you desperately need. Talking will not take away your pain or change whatever has happened, but you will have a person who will understand every pain and emotion you are feeling. They may be able to give you the strength to carry on until perhaps at some stage you will be able to manage and carry your terrible burden. It's a long road but you don't need to walk it alone it can be that much easier if you have a hand to hold or someone who will just listen to you.

I hope you will find some peace, I hope you will gain some strength, I hope you will be kind to yourself and share your pain, either through a phone call to SAMM or the SAMM Facebook where people just like you are ready to listen, or even the pop-up café Tuesday evening for ladies and Wednesdays for men. Whatever you choose please remember SAMM cares for you and **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

My kindest regards to all. **Marie Ellis—Chair**



A word from our CEO, Jo Early

We hope you enjoy our June newsletter.

Some of you have been SAMM members for many years and others may be reading our newsletter for the first time after just joining us. Everyone is welcome at SAMM. It doesn't matter who died or how long ago, we are here to support you when you need it.

Losing a loved one to murder or manslaughter can be a lifelong rollercoaster of emotions. There may be times when you feel as if your mental health really suffers, even if it's years after the loss of your loved one. It will be the 14th anniversary of my son's death this year and the good and bad days will always be part of my life. I can remember the early days following Charlies death and I felt deeply traumatised for a long time. I felt as if my brain wouldn't work properly and forgot what I did 5 mins before. I even remember putting cheese in the cutlery draw instead of the fridge and could not even recall doing that.

When I got help and started to talk to others with similar experiences, I realised this was completely normal. When I look back and thought I had lost my mental health I now look back with a good understanding of my own bereavement. Being able to understand your own feelings and emotions may help get you through those dark times. I no longer feel ashamed or embarrassed about how I feel, in fact, I no longer feel as if I have to hide my experience or feelings. We should never feel as if we cannot talk about what happened and we should never worry about what others think.

Thinking of you all. **Jo Early—CEO**

If you are receiving this as a paper copy and are able to receive it via email instead please email the office: info@samm.org.uk



Special Volunteer Edition



Volunteer Profile—Dawn Shailer

1. What's the best thing about volunteering for SAMM?

Definitely meeting with others and the retreat experiences. It's as much the unspoken collective as our physical presence when we stand in remembrance. I feel proud of my loved one and I'm honouring the dignified way she deserves and others, standing together honouring their family.

2. Describe SAMM in three words.

Human, connections, living.

3. How long have you volunteered for SAMM?

Only a year or two. I started in the Covid 19 lockdown. We were the first cohort to be trained on zoom back when zoom was new. We supported each other on text and messenger as peer support first before then but after training ringing people up who wanted a volunteer to ring them.

4. Where is your happy place?

Baths and bed after a long day, probably. Putting on some tunes, film or a podcast.

5. What is something people don't know about you?

I can drive a minibus.

6. Have you met anyone famous?

Oh and Michael Mosley gave his train seat up for me once when I was traveling with my girl on a train. He's a gentleman. I have a cousin who played for England Football Men's team in the World Cup in the 80's.

7. What's the best advice you have been given?

Practical advice to access services have helped me e.g., criminal compensation. When old enough, paying for counselling to process my thoughts and feelings with a professional rather because it was too hard to ask to be broken among family and self-compassion.

8. Where is the best place you have visited?

Thailand although the Holy City in Israel was amazing - I floated in the dead sea due to the salt content.

9. What do you do to relax?

I have long baths with salts or oils in. Play music lists. I do a bit of jewellery making and constantly learning about things.

10. What is your favourite food?

Curry - I can go as hot as a Madras and Vindaloo but I fell in love with Thai Curry too.

Men's Pop-up Cafe

"The pop-up group is brilliant and I'm really cheered up after group, they are brilliant and I really appreciate the group and SAMM National as well, they have all been very supportive on this journey, and I'm very grateful for the support they have given me.

Rose is an amazing person and I'm very grateful to her for everything she's done for me and how she's supported me".

Mike

"The pop up cafes are a great way to talk about things in a safe place free from any blame or judgement. No topic too big or too small is discussed and everyone is welcomed. It's a bit like being with your mates down the pub and having a right old blether."

Rob



Women's Pop-up Cafe

"I have now facilitated and attended quite a few Pop-Up Cafe sessions. Members who have attended know that everything that is discussed at a session is kept completely confidential and kept between the group attending.

The sessions are open to any discussion each person wants to discuss and to exchange experiences. They are able to talk openly about how they are "coping" physically/mentally and with their feelings at the present or previous times knowing that everyone at the session has or is going through the same or similar.

The general feedback I have had mainly is the members who have attended feel it is somewhere they can open up and interact with others attending and not feel so alone with their feelings i.e. anger/frustration/emotions also knowing they don't have to join in the discussion unless they feel able to which sometimes happens in the first couple of sessions they attend, after which they seem to feel more relaxed and confident with joining in.

The sessions are not all 'doom and gloom', yes serious discussions but also light discussions and laughter. It is a safe place to open up. So anytime you feel you can join the Pop-up Café session please phone the office."

Sylvia

Volunteers Wanted!



We are looking for Telephone Supporters and SAMM Facilitators to join our team.

Would you like to:

- make a difference to someone
- be part of the SAMM community
- get to meet new people
- learn new skills
- give something back
- help your well-being
- feel valued and part of a team

Full online training and support is provided. The SAMM Volunteer course is CPD Accredited. For more information and a registration form contact:

Sarah McGrory - Officer Co-ordinator

E: info@samm.org.uk

T: 07342 886 672 / 0121 472 2912



Volunteer Empowerment Weekend

We organised 2 out of 3 Empowerment Weekends as soon as lockdown restrictions were relaxed. A total of 34 people benefitted from attending and attendees came from London, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester, Surrey, Kent, West Midlands, Merseyside, Nottinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, North and West Yorkshire, Wales and Scotland.

We were able to provide Art Therapy on both occasions with a qualified Art Therapist and a 90% of people benefitted from creating a range of pieces from glass and canvas.



Before attending an Empowerment Weekend 83% of people felt lonely and isolated. After attending an Empowerment Weekend only 12% of people felt lonely and isolated.

Before attending an Empowerment Weekend 75% of people felt significantly angry about their bereavement and after attending an only 6% of people felt significantly angry.

"I found the weekend very useful – both personally by speaking openly about my own experiences. Also, professionally as a new volunteer – learning from others which has given me more confidence as I start the role – some very useful tips".

"Lovely weekend, meeting everyone. Getting to know everyone. Learnt so much. Proud to be part of SAMM".



Donate & Fundraise

SAMM relies on donations to support those traumatically bereaved by murder or manslaughter, and with your help we can provide the support needed for those affected by raising much needed funds.

Some ideas for fundraising:

You may want to do something energetic like run a **marathon**, organise a **danceathon**, exercise class, a friendly **football match** or bring people together by organising as a **cake sale**, **summer BBQ**, **book sale**, **teddy bear picnic** etc.

There are many ideas for fundraising which can involve family, friends, work colleagues etc. and will help raise funds for SAMM.

Ways to donate:

- **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.
- **Amazon Smile**—donate to SAMM whilst you shop!
- **Ebay**—we are one of the listed charities you can support when selling items on eBay. Once you have chosen us you can decide to donate between 10 per cent and 100 per cent of your sales.
- **CAF**—Charities Aid Foundation
- **PayPal and PayPal Giving Fund**—support SAMM by donating through PayPal or PayPal Giving Fund.

However you decide to fundraise we can provide you with the help and support you need to get started. Download our free fundraising pack for inspiration and everything you need to know. If you have any questions please phone us on: **0121 472 2912**, text us on **07342 888570** or email us at info@samm.org.uk



One More Day

I prayed for one more day just to say goodbye and pray I love you more than life itself, so be happy and be yourself.

I speak now in different ways and if you look you can see me through the haze, out of the corner of your eye and in the teardrops that you cry, I'm always there I'll never leave.

I'm in the heart you wear on your sleeve, trust in love and just believe, it's amazing what you can achieve, don't worry have no fear if things get tough I'll be right here, to shelter you from every storm, to keep you safe to and keep you warm, and when you think that I'm not there you only have to say a little prayer, and speak to me and it won't be long, before you hear me in a song.

Michael Carpenter—SAMM Member

Memorials & Tributes



If you have a tribute you would like to add to this section of the newsletter, onto our website or in the Memorial Book then please contact the SAMM Office.

Help us protect the environment by going 'paper free'



If you are receiving this as a paper copy and are able to receive it via email instead please email the office:
info@samm.org.uk

Self Care

- Stay active
- Eat healthily
- Meditate
- Read
- Call a friend
- Listen to a podcast
- Write a journal
- Spend time outside



Remember that self care is not selfish – it's essential!

SAMM Online Pop-Up Cafés



Our Pop-up Cafés are very popular and we have lots of positive feedback about the support they provide to our members. The sessions are a chance to share your thoughts and feelings whilst being supported by others with similar experiences. If you would like to book a space on the online session please get in touch.

Women's - Tuesday 19:00-20:00 / Men's - Wednesday 19:30-20:30
Booking is essential. Call the SAMM office to book your place.

Thought of the day
“Don’t be too hard on yourself,
it’s OKAY to not be OKAY”

SAMM Trustees:
Marie Ellis (Chair)
Marie Wright (Vice Chair)
Rose Dixon (Secretary)
Keith Mellalieu (Treasurer)

Avi Royle
Sylvia Smithies
David Reid
Steve Williams
Dr Lauren Bradford
Lesley Rees

Staff Members:
Joanne Early—CEO
Sarah McGroarty—Office Co-ordinator
Matilda Boateng—Office Administrator

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.

The SAMM Team

HELPLINE
Call: 0121 472 2912
Text: 07342 888 570



info@samm.org.uk
www.samm.org.uk
[@sammnational](https://www.sammnational.com)


www.samm.org.uk
[SAMM Members Only Group](#)

[SAMM Facebook Page](#)