

Our programme

Since August 2021 Compassionate Sheffield has been collaborating with individuals, communities and organisations to co-deliver a programme of work enabling Sheffield to do the small things that make a big difference to our life and experiences of death.

We take an asset-based participatory approach to our work, engaging people based on their needs and interests.

Our programme has three main strands:

Bringing people together to have compassionate conversations

People can share their own experiences and hear other people's, to build understanding, encourage empathy and harness compassion for themselves and others, for example:

- Death Cafes
- Creative school workshops
- Film and Food Socials
- Bereavement Cafes

Building confidence in individuals and organisations around compassion and death literacy

Compassionate Sheffield enables this by being adaptive and providing resources relevant to needs and interests, for example:

- 'Navigating End of Life' workshops
- 'Would You Like to Facilitate a Death Cafe?' workshops
- Death and grief competency workshops
- Dying Matters events and activities, May 2023

Connecting the knowledge and experience of individuals, groups and organisations to strengthen compassionate communities

This work is about building bridges between organisations and services like primary care, voluntary sector organisations, religious institutions and community groups, for example:

- Sheffield Covid-19 Community Memorial grants
- Stories from the Pandemic exhibition
- Advance Care Planning workshops
- Circle of Life community art project



“Although many attendees were accessing local support services, this space was different, enabling people’s grief and loss to be heard, held by a wider group...People mixed with strangers while they ate, lively, some quite emotional conversations, lots of one-to-one chatting and support.”

Facilitator's reflections, Film and Food Social



“This was thought provoking and refreshing, allowing myself to consider feelings and emotions of people who are dying.” Health care practitioner, Navigating End of Life workshop



Our impact

- Raised awareness of the importance of knowing more and speaking more about death, dying and grief
- Inspired individuals to put end-of-life plans in place
- Introduced people to creative techniques to help them explore their experience of death, dying and grief
- Encouraged empathy, self-reflection and promoted person-centred practice for health care professionals
- Established the value of a compassionate approach for engaging with diverse communities
- Engaged a network of communities across the city in the process of healing collectively in the wake of the pandemic
- Amplified the interests and needs of Sheffield's under-represented groups
- Enabled individuals to connect or re-connect with their local support networks
- Initiated a network of activated citizens in Sheffield who want to contribute to the Compassionate Sheffield movement
- Broadened recognition of the transformative power of compassion, for individuals, communities, and organisations

To date our work has seen us partner with 41 facilitators and 47 organisations to co-deliver:

- 39 events with 934 participants
- 26 workshops with 776 participants
- 1 exhibition with 3,500 visitors
- As well as sharing and archiving over 600 of Sheffield's stories from the pandemic, gathered from across the breadth of the city's diverse communities

The impact of this work is informing the future directions for the programme and continued growth of the Compassionate Sheffield movement.

We have generated insights, built trusting relationships and established a network of collaborating organisations.

By harnessing the power of compassion, together, we can create a happier and healthier city.



“I’ve made a mental list of things to take away and use in my own life and death.”

Participant,
Dying Matters
theatre event



“[Running this event] has made us look at the end of life and the full living of life so differently...this will hopefully ripple out to others around me and people we work with.”

Facilitators, Dying
Matters event



“This helped me to think more outside the box when it comes to end-of-life care – not just practical.”

Health care
practitioner,
Navigating End
of Life workshop



“Our family almost lost their dad and coming here today was a very cathartic experience for us all. Much needed in our healing process.”

Participants, Craft
and Compassion
workshop

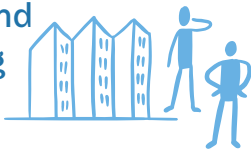
Our activities

600+ stories gathered, shared and archived

We led Sheffield's Covid Memorial activity and, by taking a compassionate approach, we ensured that people and their communities were at the heart of it. Through this work 100s of stories were gathered from across our city's diverse communities. Many of these stories were included in the *Stories from the Pandemic exhibition* (see right).

All of the stories are stored in Sheffield City Archives and were incorporated into the design of our city's Covid Memorial statue.

41 facilitators and 47 collaborating organisations

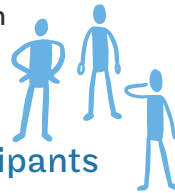


We have only been able to deliver this programme by partnering with a broad range of individuals, community groups and organisations. These partners have supported our work through sharing their knowledge, skills and experience as well as venues, equipment and food.

1 exhibition with 3,500 visitors

We co-curated the *Stories from the Pandemic exhibition* that ran for 10 days at the Millennium Gallery. We also hosted a series of reflective and creative workshops to run alongside the exhibition.

Both the exhibition and workshops created opportunities for the people of Sheffield to share our stories and see ourselves in the lives of others, having all experienced such an era-defining period of upheaval.



26 workshops with 776 participants

Through our *Navigating End of Life workshops* we build people's confidence to provide practical, person-centred support when those they interact with are dying or grieving.

We also tailor *death and grief competency workshops* for organisations who want to learn more about end of life, death and grief.

Working with members of Sheffield's Yemini, Pakistani and Roma communities who tend not to share their end-of-life plans with local GP practices, we have co-produced *Advance Care Planning workshops* and video resources to bridge this gap.

Our *Would You Like to Facilitate a Death Cafe? workshop* enables us to support those people who want to set up and run a Death Cafe themselves. To date, 20 people we have supported have gone on to run their own Death Cafe or host a similar space with a alternative name.

54 grants and 5 commissions

We awarded 54 *Sheffield Covid-19 Community Memorial grants* to communities across the city to enable them to come together, reflect on their experiences from the pandemic and engage in memorial activity together. This led to projects ranging from the creation of short films to a light show in the park.

We also later commissioned 5 further projects to connect with and support under-represented communities to memorialise their pandemic experience. These were mainly creative workshops whose outputs included, for example, an art exhibition in the Moor Market (*Circle of Life community art project*), a book of Queer covid stories and an intergenerational photo portrait project that toured locally.

Participants from 16 Sheffield postcodes

The people who have engaged with our events, workshops and exhibition come from across the city.

36 venues across the city

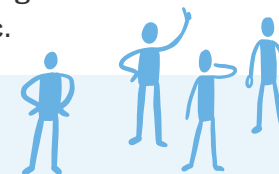
We've co-hosted our events, workshops and exhibition in venues including pubs, parks, cemeteries, universities, community centres, woods, in places of worship, hospitals, town halls, hospices and libraries, as well as online.

39 events with 934 participants

During our *Dying Matters month* we coordinated over 20 events across Sheffield, in a diverse range of venues, to get more people talking about death, dying and grief.

Whilst we support people to run their own, we also host *Death Cafes* where we bring people together in a safe space to talk about death, dying and grief over tea and cake.

Other events have included the *Film and Food Socials* and *creative school workshops*, which enabled specific communities across Sheffield to come together and reflect collectively on their experiences from the pandemic.



Why compassion?



“Nothing went as planned but what happened was good. Trust the process!”

Facilitator’s reflections, Advance Care Planning workshop

Taking a compassionate approach is central to the value of our work. We use compassion to embrace the complexity of individuals and their communities, enabling them to be at the centre of shaping the world that they want to live in.

We understand compassion as a process with four steps:

Being there

Meeting people where they are at

Listening

Really hearing and understanding what people are experiencing

Empathising

Relating to people on a human level

Helping

Taking useful action based on the needs of people and their community

The benefits of taking a compassionate approach

Through connecting and supporting Sheffield’s individuals, communities and organisations to harness the power of compassion, together we can create a happier and healthier city.



Why death, dying and grief?



“[What I got out of this session was] a sense that by cutting ourselves off from death we are cutting ourselves off from an important part of what it is to be human.”

Participant, Dying Matters event

Our programme focuses on death, dying and grief because:

- It’s something we all have in common, it connects us together as humans.
- We can build our confidence to support others through death, dying and grief.
- By talking about death we come to understand what’s important in life.

However, while our work is anchored by this focus, it has naturally reached further.

Compassion runs through everything we do as humans. The potential is there for actively taking a compassionate approach to many other aspects of our lives, like supporting our mental and physical health, delivering care services or protecting and restoring nature, all of which also contribute to the creation of places in which we can all thrive.

What's next for Compassionate Sheffield?

We are currently in the process of co-developing our future programme.

Through our work over the past two years many of us across Sheffield have acquired more knowledge, experience and skill around how to take a compassionate approach in the context of death and dying.

Going forward, our aim of working in partnership with Sheffield's individuals, communities and organisations to harness the power of compassion remains unchanged.

However, we are now in a position to turn this into a more sustainable offer for Sheffield.

We will be working to extend, share and embed knowledge, experience and skill around compassion for our city and communities.

We are identifying target areas across the city to work closely with over the next 12 months.

We know there is demand to continue delivering the **offers** we have co-developed so far:

- 'Navigating End of Life' workshops
- 'Would You Like to Facilitate a Death Cafe?' workshops
- Death and grief competency workshops
- Creative workshops
- Outdoor activities

We will build on the many **networks** we are connected into as a result of the breadth of collaborative work we have been involved with across the city:

- Primary care networks
- Carers' groups
- Activated citizens
- Voluntary sector
- Health care professionals
- Cultural, creative and education networks

We have identified specific **audiences** to work with:

- Carers, both professional and unpaid
- Cultural communities experiencing health inequalities
- Neighbourhoods experiencing health inequalities
- General public across sheffield
- Children and young people

If you'd like to get involved in what we do next, please get in touch with Nick Deayton:

07851 240 523 or n.deayton@hospicesheffield.co.uk

Together we will create a happier and healthier Sheffield.

