



SUDDEN SAM CHARITY INFORMATION PACK

Registered charity number – 1207785



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@suddensam_



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**



**NCVO
MEMBER**



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MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER



When my brother, Sam, died suddenly, my whole world changed in an instant. One minute, everything was normal – and the next, life as I knew it had been torn apart. In those early days, I was overwhelmed. I didn't know what to do, who to speak to, or how to keep going. I just knew that I didn't want anyone else to feel as lost and alone as I did.

That's why Sudden Sam was created.

Sudden Sam is more than a charity – it's a promise. A promise that no one should face sudden loss without support. That children and families will be heard, held, and helped through the hardest moments of their lives. That we'll raise awareness of the impact of sudden death, fight for prevention, and do everything we can to make sure fewer families have to go through what mine did.

Whether you've found us in your darkest hour or you're here to help us raise awareness, thank you. Sudden loss changes everything – but with the right support, compassion can carry people through it.

With love and hope,

Tom Hanlon.
Founder.

WHO ARE SUDDEN SAM?

Sudden Sam is a registered charity that provides support to those impacted by sudden death within the Liverpool City Region.

In the wake of a heart-breaking tragedy, Sudden Sam emerged in 2023, honouring the memory of Sam Mercer, who died unexpectedly and suddenly in February, aged just 35.

Sam's family understand the struggle of sudden death all too well. As a family, we struggled to process Sam's death and our grief was compounded by trauma, shock and numbness. The months after Sam's death were traumatic and complex – the complexity of the sudden death delaying the grieving process.

Sudden Sam aims to ensure that we stand as a pillar of strength, offering guidance, emotional support, and financial support to those grappling with the profound aftermath of sudden death. We aim to extend a helping hand to to guide individuals through the darkest of times, proving that, even in the face of sudden loss and immense trauma, there can be hope and healing.



Scan this QR code to go to our 'about us' page on our website.

WHAT IS OUR VISION AND MISSION?

VISION

Our vision is that Sudden Sam becomes a beacon of support for those enduring the pain and confusion of sudden loss, ensuring that no one faces the challenges of sudden death alone, thereby promoting healing, unity, and resilience within our community.

MISSION

Our mission is to ensure that, through support from Sudden Sam, families of loved ones who have died suddenly feel supported, both emotionally and financially and that the community, through public awareness, develop a greater understanding and empathy of their suffering.

MEET THE TEAM



Tom Hanlon
Founder



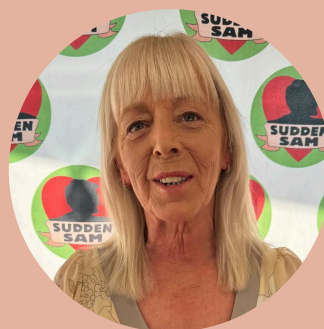
Andrew Mercer
Trustee



Gaynor Shields
Trustee



Susan Hanlon
Trustee



Paula Mercer
Trustee



Andy Greeny
Counsellor

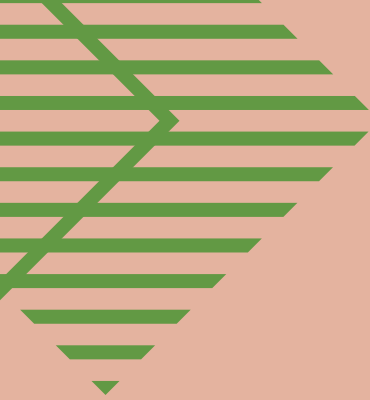


Jan Griffiths
Counsellor



Klara Sharples
Counsellor

All of our passionate and dedicated counsellors are registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and are highly qualified and experienced.



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

At Sudden Sam, we understand that grief following a sudden death is not linear. It's messy, overwhelming, and deeply personal. That's why our emotional support is centred on one simple belief: no one should go through it alone.

We offer a trauma-informed, person-centred approach to emotional support. This means we meet people exactly where they are – with no expectations, no time limits, and no pressure to "move on." Everyone grieves differently, and we respect that.

We know that the weeks and months after a sudden loss can be a blur – that's why we don't believe in long waiting lists or time-limited support. Once you're referred, we'll be in touch to offer the right kind of support and the right time.

Sometimes, the first step is just being heard. Our counsellors create safe, non-judgemental spaces where people can express their grief freely.



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

What services do we offer?

- Trauma-informed 1:1 therapy – We provide 1:1 therapy for those impacted by sudden loss. Our sessions can either be remotely or in person, depending on your preferences.
- Hypnotherapy – We offer hypnotherapy as part of our emotional support services for those who may benefit from a gentle, guided approach to processing grief. Delivered by qualified practitioners, hypnotherapy can help ease anxiety, release emotional blocks, and support healing after sudden loss.
- Community support – We regularly run coffee mornings in our community. These are for people who have been impacted by grief and trauma and would like to connect with likeminded people, where their feelings can be validated.
- Art and play therapy – We provide emotional support to children and young people who have been impacted by sudden death – this includes art and play therapy.



Scan this QR code to read more about emotional support on our website. You will also find the referral forms here too.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

When a loved one dies, financial implications should not be something that you have to consider. Unfortunately, statistically speaking, those who die suddenly are significantly less likely to have life insurance than those who have an expected death. This can leave bereaved families in a very difficult situation.

Our aim at Sudden Sam is to provide financial support for the relief of financial hardship related to a sudden death. We are passionate about alleviating this stress from you, therefore allowing you to grieve with the peace of mind that your loved one will have the funeral that they deserve.

What services do we provide?

- Funeral Assistance Grant – this is for those impacted by sudden loss who are struggling with the costs associated with a funeral and burial.
- Emergency Living Grant – this is for those struggling financially after a sudden loss with the cost of every day living, due to changes in your circumstances.
- Practical Support Grant – this is for practical financial support for events out of control, such as, the cost of travel or accommodation for an inquest or a medical review.



Scan this QR code to go to our financial support page. You will also find the referral form here.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

More often than not, a sudden death is also an unexpected one. When a death of this nature occurs, certain agencies are enlisted in order to investigate and understand the cause of the passing.

This can include:

- The police
- The coroner
- The coroner's investigation officer
- Medical meetings
- Legal meetings
- Funeral directors
- Registrars

This can be a very difficult process for the bereaved families to navigate, especially considering they are already grieving and likely in a state of numbness and disbelief.

When in the depths of grief, families also find themselves in this multi-agency process, not knowing what to expect or when. This is where Sudden Sam comes in. Our aim is to guide and support those who need it through the process and ensure nobody feels alone.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

What services do we offer?

- Immediate Support – we help families understand what to expect in the early days after a sudden loss – including information about post-mortems, when you can register the death, and arranging a funeral.
- Inquest Support –when a death is unexplained, unexpected, or unnatural, an inquest may be opened. We offer practical guidance on the inquest process: what an inquest is and why it happens; what to expect at each stage; how to prepare for a hearing; what rights families have as ‘Interested Persons’; emotional support before, during, and after the inquest.
- Clear, Compassionate Information – grief affects memory and concentration. That’s why we provide information in clear, simple language – both verbally and in easy-to-follow written guides – so families can absorb it at their own pace.
- Advocacy and Signposting – we can help families communicate with coroners, funeral directors, registrars, and other professionals. Where needed, we signpost to specialist legal, financial, and mental health services.



Scan this QR code to go to our page all about the process after a sudden death.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

At Sudden Sam, we believe that sudden death doesn't just affect individuals – it ripples through families, workplaces, schools, and entire communities. That's why a key part of our mission is to raise awareness of the impact of sudden loss and to work towards preventing avoidable deaths wherever possible.

Raising Awareness – through talks, campaigns, and events, we help communities understand the reality of sudden loss – not just in the immediate aftermath, but in the weeks, months, and years that follow. By sharing real stories and lived experiences, we shine a light on the emotional, practical, and societal challenges faced by those left behind.

Prevention Work – while not every sudden death can be prevented, some can – and we are passionate about helping to reduce preventable deaths through education and advocacy.

Our prevention work includes:

- Raising awareness of risk factors like blood clots, sepsis, and undiagnosed heart conditions
 - Encouraging early intervention and routine health checks
 - Working with medical professionals to promote public health messaging around sudden death risks
 - By empowering people with information, we aim to help save lives – and spare more families the pain of sudden, unexpected loss.
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TESTIMONIALS

Testimonial



"Andy is amazing. He is very easy to talk to and was very understanding of my situation. He made me realise that I can go on and do have things to look forward to. He has made me realise that I do have a future without my fabulous, funny husband.

I felt very secure and safe when I was with Andy during the counselling sessions. He is definitely one of the most caring and understanding men I know.

I will always be in his debt for his reassurance that life does go on. I can't say enough about Sudden Sam. Thank you for the support."

BEV, A SUDDEN SAM CLIENT

WWW.SUDDENSAM.ORG.UK
ADMIN@SUDDENSAM.ORG.UK

Testimonial



"My world was shattered when my son, Robert, passed away so suddenly last September. My grief was unimaginable. I never thought I would go through such pain.

Sudden Sam came to the rescue. Sudden Sam was there for me and my girls in our hours of need. They provided us with not just the tools to carry on and help deal with the grief but with such compassion.

I felt I wasn't alone. I could open up like I never thought I would have ever had to. There is just no words to express my feelings for the comfort and support at such a painful time in my life.

This is something a mother should never have to do. Say goodbye to her lovely son. I will be forever thankful to the charity. The charity is life changing. The counsellor I saw for weeks was brilliant. Her support was more than a helping hand. I know I wasn't alone. Each week was so rewarding. My grief will never go away but I now have the tools to deal with my sadness.

Sudden Sam Charity is vital for the work they do for families like mine. I wish them every success for the future. I will support them as much as I can.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

"A VERY GRATEFUL MUM"

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Testimonial



I want to say thank you to Sudden Sam for the support I've had since coming across the charity last year. Thank you for having counsellors on hand and there being no waiting times. This was amazing as I knew I needed to see someone quickly as my mental health was really declining.

Where do I start with my counselling journey? It's been really tough but an experience I will never forget. I was placed under the care of the amazing Jan, and that 1st meeting I was so anxious. I walked into her homely space and felt so comfortable, with her soft voice and caring nature I was able to open up and speak to her about things I've never told anyone. I knew I wouldn't be judged. She made me know that's it OK not to be OK, and have the bad days when needed.

She has taught me how to set boundaries and not be the 'yes' person I once was. I feel like I am using this more in day to day life. I know my journey is far from over and that's OK. I will use all of my coping mechanisms given by Jan to help me push through them.

She has given me so much help, advice and guidance to enable me to get through the hard days, and I will be forever grateful. Jan, you are amazing and a breath of fresh air and truly one of God's angels sent to help people in need. She has even helped me with ways I can help my daughter.

I can't thank you enough. There are not enough words.

A SUDDEN SAM CLIENT

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TESTIMONIALS

Testimonial



"I lost my daughter, Sam, in February. Your amazing charity blessed me with your wonderful Andy, who saved me when I needed it."

We had no help or support in any capacity from Australia or UK officials and you guys, apart from our kind funeral directors, were the only organisation to actually get back to us.

I can never repay you and will never forget. I can only thank you from the bottom of my heart... especially my earth angel, Andy."

A SUDDEN SAM CLIENT

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Testimonial



"Thank you so much for setting this charity up. I've been searching for something like this for 11 years. Waiting lists for Trauma Therapy was up to two years and I spoke to one of your counsellor's within 3 days of referring myself to Sudden Sam and I am now receiving therapy."

I attended the Coffee Morning too and felt so welcomed. It was very healing for me.

I feel like a big weight has been lifted from my shoulders. Thank you"

A SUDDEN SAM CLIENT

Testimonial



I want to send over a huge thank you for the support Sudden Sam has been giving me over the last 3 weeks. I lost my mum back in August last year suddenly and I haven't come to terms or dealt with it yet. I was on the waiting list since August for bereavement counselling through occupational health but heard nothing for 7 months.

I messaged Sudden Sam at the start of March and was referred to the kindest person, Jan, within 2 days. She has been helping me so much with acceptance and how to grieve in a way I never thought I could. She has been the one person I can speak to who understands me and gives me a place where I can just talk about my mum. She talks about how death is not talked about enough and should be something that everyone should feel comfortable bringing up. I completely agree with her.

Thank you so much for making people who have lost someone so close feel like they have somewhere to go.

A SUDDEN SAM CLIENT

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HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Sudden Sam exists because of the power of community. Every donation, every conversation, every kind gesture helps us reach more people living through the shock of sudden loss – and we couldn't do it without you.

Whether you've experienced sudden loss yourself or simply want to make a difference, there are so many ways you can support our work:

- Fundraise for us – From coffee mornings and marathons to charity nights and school events, fundraising helps us grow. We'll support you with materials, promotion, and loads of encouragement.
- Make a Donation – Every pound helps us provide therapy, fund prevention work, and be there for families when they need us most. You can donate online or set up a regular gift to sustain our support long-term.
- Spread the Word – Talk about us. Follow us on social media. Share our story. Sudden death is still not widely understood – but together, we can change that.
- Become a Friend of Sudden Sam – Join our volunteer team and be part of something special. Whether it's helping at events, spreading awareness in your community, or lending a skill – there's a place for you.



Scan this QR code to head to our 'support us' page, where you can request a fundraising pack.

THANK YOU

