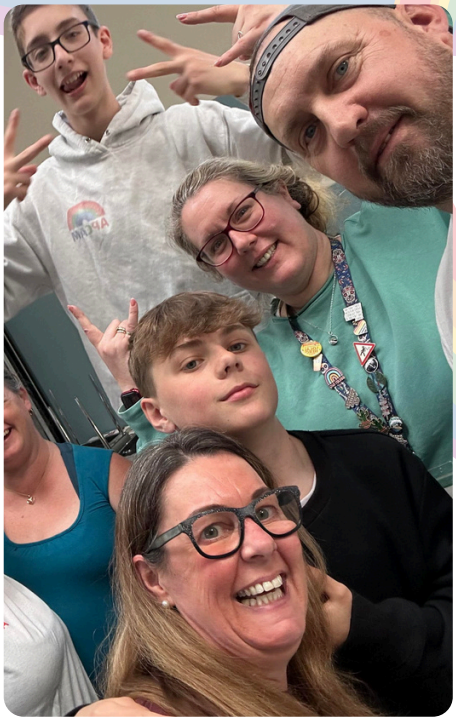


APCAM

# Impact Report 2025/6








CARTERTON · WITNEY · WEST OXFORDSHIRE · APCAMGROUP.ORG.UK

WELCOME

# A year of showing up for local families

APCAM started with a simple idea, connection for parents who were struggling through their young persons mental health and SEND journey, initally in Carterton Town Hall. Parents came because they were worried about their children and did not know where to turn.

Nine years on, that is still why families find us.

This year we have reached more than 500 families. We have grown our therapy capacity by a third, taken WeGame into the summer holidays, and created a new Parent Support Advocate role to help families get the right education for their children.

Everything we do is free. That is only possible because of our funders, our volunteers and a small team who go far beyond their hours. Thank you to every one of you. This report shares what we have achieved, the stories behind the numbers, and where we want to go next.




The APCAM team meeting representatives of the local council in 2017

## Who we are

APCAM supports children and young people with mental health difficulties, SEND, or who are disengaged from education, and the parents and carers around them.

**We work from Carterton Family Centre and Witney Corn Exchange.**

Registered charity 1186256

**Lauren Ridley**

**CEO and Parent Support Service Manager**

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

# The difference you helped us make

**500+**

families reached in our last financial year

**150+**

young people and families supported with indepth interventions every year

**200+**

young people supported by WeGame

**+33%**

therapy capacity in 2026, thanks to the Better Mental Health Fund

**100%** of our services are free at the point of need. No family is turned away because they cannot pay.






WHAT WE DO

# Mental health and practical help, side by side

## Therapy for young people

- Weekly andfortnightly 1:1 integrated therapy, including CBT and talking
- therapy No fixed number of sessions: support lasts as long as it is needed
- Group sessions to build coping skills and confidence

## Parent support and advocacy

- Help withEHCPs, needsassessments and SEND support in school
- Advice on benefits and housing
- Our Parent Support Advocate works with schools and the local authority to find the right education for each child

## Drop-ins

- Thursdayyoung people's mental health drop-in, 4pm to 6pm, Carterton Family Centre
- Parent drop-ins in Carterton and Witney
- Young people who have finished therapy can always come back

## WeGame and safe spaces

- Gamingsessionsthat buildfriendships, confidence and social skills
- Safe, inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ young people
- Workshops and peer support for families




OUT REACH - ACTION IN THE COMMUNITY

### Sofa in the street

**We do not wait for families to find us.** We put a sofa outside Witney Corn Exchange: no referral, no forms, just a conversation.

We also take our support to family events in the commnity, pride, RAF families day and more

# Walking alongside parents

Parent support is where APCAM began, with a drop-in at Carterton Town Hall in 2017, and it is still at the heart of what we do. When a young person is struggling, the whole family feels it. We help parents find their way through education, SEND, benefits and housing, and we make sure they have people around them who understand, so they never have to face it alone.

ADVOCACY

## Practical help that changes outcomes

- Support with EHCPs, needs assessments and annual reviews
- Finding the right school, alternative provision or specialist place
- Help with disability benefits, housing and hardship
- Our new Parent Support Advocate works with schools and the local authority alongside families

COMMUNITY

## A group parent carers come back to

- Weekly Thursday parent drop-in at Carterton Family Centre
- Regular social outings, from bingo nights to meals out
- Free tickets to our annual ball, so parents can enjoy an evening for themselves
- Friendships and peer support that carry on outside the group

## Our parent support service each year

**50**
peer support sessions held across the year

**200+**
parents supported regularly at our sessions

**16**
EHCP reviews and needs assessments supported

**62**
families moved from peer sessions into our parent support service

> **"Coming to parent drop-in has meant that I don't feel alone anymore. Coming to the parent group has meant I've met other families in the same situation who really understand. You can't keep talking to your friends and family about it, you feel like you're boring or depressing them, but here they get it."**
>
> Parent carer, APCAM parent group

PARENT CARER

## H: from the end of her tether to a community of friends

When H first came to APCAM in 2022, she was in desperate need. Her child, who is neurodivergent and has SEND, was completely out of education with no support in place, and she did not know where to turn. Caring around the clock left her isolated and rarely able to get out into the community.

H has come to our weekly parent support group ever since. Over time she has rebuilt her confidence, formed real friendships and started spending time in the community again. She now has regular contact with her peers, finds caring for her child much easier, and continues to grow in wellbeing and self-esteem.

*Names have been changed. Stories shared with permission.*

Our Parent Support Advocate role is funded in part by the **GreenSquareAccord Community Impact Fund**. We are seeking further funding to grow the parent carer group and keep every part of this service free for families.

# A safe space to be heard

Many oftheyoungpeople wemeetarestruggling withtheirmentalhealth and have nowhere else to turn. Our therapists offer free one-to-one support in a familiar community setting, with no fixed number of sessions. Young people stay with us for as long as they need, and the door stays open after therapy ends.

ONE-TO-ONE

## Shaped around each young person

- Weekly or fortnightly integrated therapy, including CBT and talking therapy
- No fixed number of sessions
- Qualified therapists at Carterton Family Centre
- Young people can always come back

EASY WAYS IN

## Help that is simple to reach

- Thursday mental health drop-in, 4pm to 6pm
- Group sessions to build coping skills and confidence
- WeGame, where many first meet our team
- Working with schools on a gradual return to education

## Who we help

Anxiety and low mood | OCD | School avoidance | Autism and ADHD | Trauma | Isolation | LGBTQ+ young people

## Our therapy service in 2026

**+33%**
more therapy capacity, thanks to the Better Mental Health Fund

**Free**
for every family: wenever charge a feefor therapy

**2**
new referrals each week, on average

**6 & 12**
months: whenwe checkin after support ends

### Rising demand

Referrals to our therapy service grow year on year. We now receive an average of two new referrals every week, and the needs young people bring are increasingly severe and complex.

Our service does not replace CAMHS. It eases symptoms and offers interim support, so no young person is left without help while they wait.

### Supporting the whole family

Therapy works in partnership with our parent support and education service. While a young person works with their therapist, our parent support team helps the family with school, EHCPs, benefits and housing.

Together, we support each young person holistically.

### Led by specialists

Ourtherapeuticteamis led by Lyndsy Doyle, Head of Clinical Services, who has specialist training in working with neurodivergent young people, children in care and those who have experienced severe childhood trauma. We also offer supervised placements to trainee counsellors, helping to train the next generation of local therapists. Young people tell us they feel heard, safe and genuinely supported in their sessions.

Our 2026 growth in therapy is funded by the **Oxfordshire Community Foundation Better Mental Health Fund**, and any surplus from WeGame goes back into therapy hours. There is a suggested donation of **£30 a month** for families able to give. It is entirely optional, and therapy is exactly the same either way. **We are seeking further funding to offer more therapy hours.**

# WE GAME

## Gaming is the way in. Connection, confidence and belonging are what young people take away.

WeGame launched in February 2025 for young people who are isolated, anxious or finding it hard to connect. It is now commissioned by West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney Town Council and Yellow Submarine charity. Any surplus WeGame makes goes back into funding therapy hours at APCAM.





**Summer 2026 at Carterton Family Centre - Pilot summer project funded by West Oxfordshire District Councils Youth Partnership Fund**

**3**
Free to access drop in summer activities

**37**
Young people accessing the sessions

**5hrs**
per bi-weekly session providing flexibility for atendees

**2**
families now in our wider support

> "A asks every morning if today is WeGame day, and is really disappointed when it isn't. This is the first activity that he has really engaged with."
>
> S, parent

STORIES

# Behind every number, a family



YOUNG PERSON

## J: from school refusal to college

J had severe anxiety, OCD and school-based trauma, and had stopped going to school. He saw our therapist every week for five months. We then worked with his school on a careful, gradual return.

J now attends every day and comes to our young people's sessions. He is predicted grades 6 to 8 in his GCSEs and has applied to college to study Computer Science.

FAMILY

## K: one family, held through crisis

K has three daughters, each with mental health or educational needs.

We supported her middle daughter in therapy and helped her move into an alternative provision she now attends regularly. When K's mother died, we supported the whole family through their grief.

Today we help with benefits, SEN support and schooling for her youngest. K says the mix of mental health and practical help has been invaluable.

**Mental health support and practical help, together, from people who understand.**

*Names have been changed. Stories shared with permission.*

WHY WE ARE NEEDED

# West Oxfordshire's hidden need

West Oxfordshire looks prosperous, but Carterton carries some of the highest family need in the county. West Oxfordshire has 83% rural population, 60% higher than county average Troubled Families and more than 2000 MOD and veteran families.

## More than 60% higher than the district and county rates

**27 in 1,000**

**Carterton families identified through the Troubled Families programme**




**£582**

Spend per child referred to CAMHS, 2024/25. Amongst the lowest spend in England

**9,584**

10 to 19 year olds in Oxfordshire were referred to mental health services in a year

**24%**

Referrals to CHAMS closed before treatment, 2024/25

## The cost of acting too late

NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING

**£244,000**

lifetime public cost of one young person becoming NEET

CAMHS INPATIENT CARE

**£61,000**

average cost of one young person's mental health admission

EXCLUSION AND LOST SCHOOL PLACES

**£61,500**

a year for an independent special school place, against £23,900 for a state special school

CRISIS CARE

**£318,400**

a year for one children's home place

**APCAM's whole clinical project costs less than one CAMHS admission. Helping one young person avoid becoming NEET covers it for nearly five years.**

**£49,920pa**

Sources: Troubled Families rate, 2019 (via APCAM evidence base); Children's Commissioner, 2026; Oxfordshire HOSC, Nov 2025; DfE exclusion statistics via Centre for Social Justice, 2025; Impetus, July 2026; EPI, 2017 (2016 prices); NAO, Oct 2024 and Sept 2025. Costs avoided are estimates, not guaranteed cash savings.

# From a drop-in to a lifeline

### June 2017
Parent support drop-in begins at Carterton Town Hall.

### November 2019
APCAM registers with the Charity Commission.

### 2021
A £20,000 grant from West Oxfordshire District Council sets up our community support service at Carterton Family Centre.

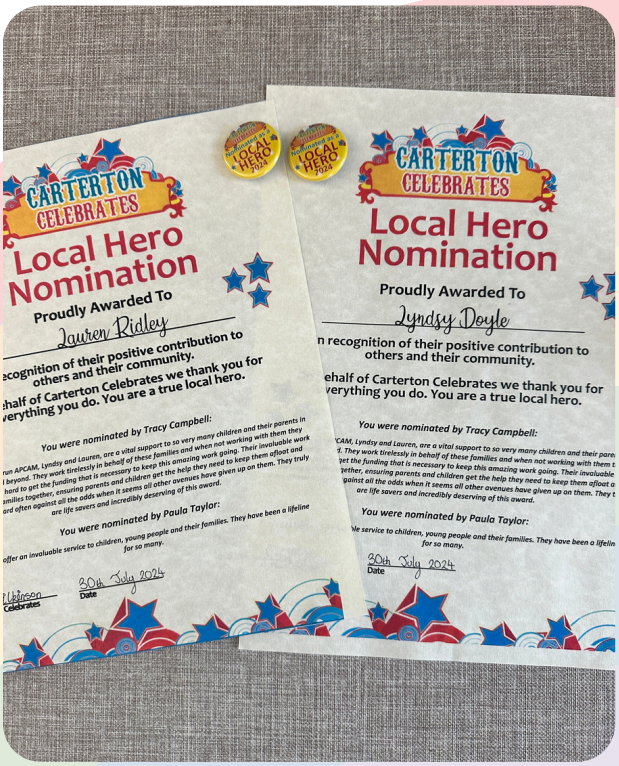
### 2023
Witney Town Council supports the launch of our Witney support service.

### February 2025
WeGame launches.It is now commissioned by WODC, Witney Town Council and Yellow Submarine Charity.

### 2026
Therapy capacity grows by a third, Youth Worker team expands and we create a Parent Support Advocate role




*Supporting the launch with local councillors*




*Carterton Celebrates Local Hero nominations for members of our team.*

# Thank you to our funders & fundraisers

Ourservicesarefreebecauseoftheorganisationswhofundthem.Theirsupport keeps our doors open for local families.

**£9,428.57**

**Oxfordshire Community Foundation**

Better Mental Health Fund, 2026 extension - 3 year funding. **Funding the expansion of our 1:1 clinic.**

**£2,000**

**GreenSquareAccord**

Community Impact Fund, towards our new Parent Support Advocate role.

**West Oxfordshire District Council**

Through the West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership, funding our free WeGame summer sessions and staff training

**Witney Town Council**

Funding our Witney support service, giving families in the town direct access to help.

**£1,000**

**TheNational Lottery Community Fund**

National Lottery Awards for All, forWeGame equipment, thanks to National Lottery players.

**£10,500+**

**Cottsway Housing**

Over £8,000 raised by Cottsway staff, plus £2,500 from the Cottsway Community Fund.

**Witney Town Mayor's Charity 2025/26**

Thank you for choosing APCAM as a supported charity.

**WODC Leader's Charity 2026/27**

Thank you for choosing APCAM as a supported charity.




*Our chair Yasmin and a parent running a 12k in aid of APCAM*




*Two of our young people having completed a 5k their way*

LOOKING AHEAD

# Our plans for 2027 & 2028

## Youth work in the community

More outreach programmes,so more young people have somewhere to go and someone to talk to.

## More WeGame

Holiday and after school sessions.
**BoardGame Buddies:** life skills, turn taking, social connection and interpersonal skills.

## A space of our own

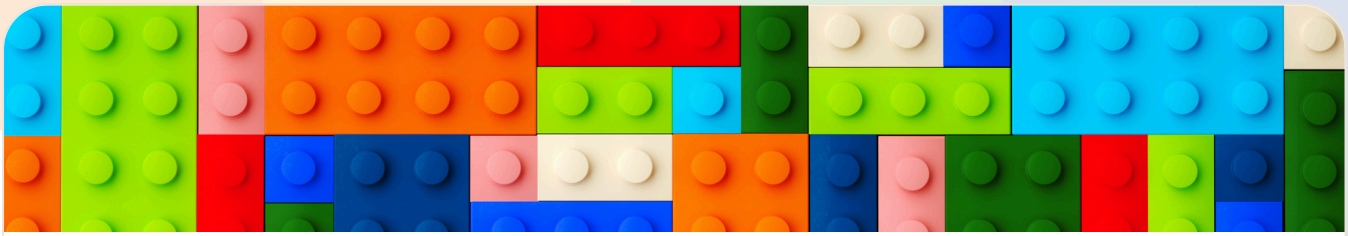
Our own building, open for morehours, so young people and families can get therapeutic support when they need it.

## How we measure our impact and followups

We track attendance and re-engagement with education, gather feedback from young people and parents, and review progress in therapy. We check in with families 6 and 12 months after our work ends, and ensure that those who have accessed our services are able to attend any drop in at any time.
**We are introducing the Warwick- Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to measure change over time.**







APCAM

## Help us reach more families

Whether you are a trust, a business, a community group or an individual, we would love to talk about how your support could help.

**info@apcamgroup.org.uk**
apcamgroup.org.uk

Carterton Family Centre, The Allandale, Carterton OX18 3AA
Registered charity 1186256