

IMPACT REPORT

2023/24

WHY DO PEOPLE COME TO FDAMH

SEE THE IMPACT WE
HAVE ON REAL PEOPLE

SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT

ON OUR INCREDIBLE
SUPPORTERS

WHEN FDAMH MET THE KING

THROUGH THE INCREDIBLE
WORK OF OUR JOHN MUIR
AWARDS



FDAMH

FALKIRK'S MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



FDAMH

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About Us

FDAMH is a mental health charity, founded in 1981 now supporting more than **2000 people every year**. With a focus on early intervention and prevention, FDAMH's services focus mainly on **'Mild to Moderate'** Mental Health Challenges although **25% of our clients** report that they are experiencing **'overwhelming suicidal thoughts'** when we first meet with them.

FDAMH currently offers **ten different core services** to the public and can be provided in person at our centrally located premises or remotely, using telephone or videoconferencing.

Our staff are all extensively trained, experienced and suitably qualified to undertake their work, ensuring that our clients receive the best possible experience and the **best chance of positive outcome**.

Our counsellors are all **professionally qualified** and FDAMH is accredited by Scotland's Professional body for Counselling and Psychotherapy, COSCA.



Our aim in producing our annual report is communicating the **impact we've had on real peoples lives** within the Falkirk Community. We have given specific focus on our clients, our staff and the amazing people we have had volunteer and fundraise for us this last year.

FDAMH is a hugely valued charity in Falkirk District, so much so that **self-referrals accounted for 47%** of our referrals in this reporting period, demonstrating the trust and confidence the Falkirk public has in our Mental Health services.

CEO's Report

Ian Dickson

We have observed further growth in our services during the year, with increasing demand setting our agenda for change. Our Young Persons Service, supporting people from aged 13, has now become a vital part of our offering, encapsulating our impact in early intervention and prevention activity.

The ongoing cost-of-living pressures have continued to impact on our clients, and indeed our staff, adding new stresses and worry to many of us. Coupled with the volatile and increasingly competitive funding environment, we have not had to seek our financial related challenges.

Despite the many challenges faced by FDAMH, I am immensely proud of our staff, who despite this, have continued to deliver outstanding service levels to clients and a very strong financial performance across the year. It is a privilege to lead the team.

“GIVING YOUR TIME IS ONE OF THE MOST SPECIAL THINGS YOU CAN DO, SO WE ARE IMMENSELY GRATEFUL TO OUR VOLUNTEERS.”



As a measure of our positive impact on the local community, FDAMH have provided Mental Health & Wellbeing support to over 10,000 people, since the outbreak of the Covid Pandemic. A remarkable achievement for what is essentially a modestly sized, local charity.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about our volunteers, who bring passion, professionalism and unparalleled commitment to our cause.

We believe that giving your time is one of the most special things you can do, so we are immensely grateful to our volunteers, who will continue to play a vital part in our success in the future. Thank you to all of you!

A Message From Our Board

Theresa Sharp

On behalf of everyone at FDAMH our sincere thanks go Angus MacVicar who ably served as a Board Member for 10 years and the last 4 years as Chair. We wish Angus every success at Start Up Stirling.

The demand for services on FDAMH has continued to increase as we deal with a post pandemic world. The Board have been impressed with the way that our staff and volunteers have been so willing to adapt. They have shown flexibility in rising to the challenge of continually delivering a high quality service to the people of Falkirk. In all areas of our service, FDAMH staff have been willing to alter their working styles and practices to respond to the increase in demand. This is testament to their commitment to our clients.



We are excited for the next year as we expand our delivery. We are grateful to our funders who have the confidence in our delivery of services and continue to support us as we continue to grow to meet the demands of the community of Falkirk.

“ **IN ALL AREAS OF OUR SERVICE, FDAMH STAFF HAVE BEEN WILLING TO ALTER THEIR WORKING STYLES AND PRACTICES TO RESPOND TO THE INCREASE IN DEMAND.** ”

When FDAMH Met The King

In July 2023, members of our Social Spark team, along with a few of our clients from our John Muir Award group, were given the opportunity to meet HM King Charles! Thanks to our partnership with Sustainable Thinking Scotland C.I.C, our team and clients were able to speak with the King about their work in completing their John Muir Awards Level 2 and all the incredible work they have been doing at the walled garden.

Our Social Spark service have been working in partnership with STS. As a result of this partnership, we have had the opportunity to run John Muir Award groups, educating our clients on conservation, nature, and campaigning. Our clients have been able to work in the walled garden, growing fresh produce for local food banks and even taking part in a beekeeping workshop.



[Photo credit: Michael Gillen, The Falkirk Herald]

Our Social Spark service helps to tackle loneliness and isolation by building confidence and connections. By providing a range of diverse community-based activity groups, like our John Muir Award group, we aim to improve social contact and encourage community connecting.

Thank you once again, Sustainable Thinking Scotland for this unforgettable opportunity to meet the King!

Supporter Spotlight

The Power of Our Local Community

Here's what some of our other supporters got up to in the last year.

BRAES HIGH SCHOOL BEN NEVIS CHALLENGE



We want to extend our gratitude to all the amazing teachers at Braes High School who, on 27th August 2023, took on the brave challenge of climbing Ben Nevis all in aid of FDAMH. We are absolutely blown away by their efforts, as they managed to raise an incredible £2,771 for our services. We are so grateful for their support, every penny donated to FDAMH goes towards helping those in need providing mental health support to our community when they need it most.

FALKIRK ROUND TABLE

We would like to say a huge thank you to Falkirk Round Table for their incredible donation of £3000 in December 2023. We were so grateful to be one of the chosen charities for their Annual Santa Sleigh Appeal. A huge well done to everyone involved!



STEVE TAPLEY WALKING CHALLENGE

In May 2023, Steve Tapley conquered one of the most challenging long distance walks in Britain, Cape Wrath in support of FDAMH. With his love for hillwalking, Steven challenged himself to cross over 200 miles of Scotland's wildest and most beautiful country all the while raising over £430 for our services. We are so grateful that Steve chose to support us.



Supporter Spotlight

The Power of Our Local Community



THE ENGINE ROOM

The team at The Engine Room took on an incredibly tough challenge in July 2023, raising an amazing £5,115 for FDAMH.

As part of their challenge, the team of 19 gym participants had to complete a 20 minute workout every hour on the hour for 24 hours! We'd like to say a huge well done and thank you to the team for their incredible effort. It is the passion and generosity of people like you that makes a real difference in our community.

INEOS GRANGEMOUTH TOUR DE FRANCE

The incredible team at INEOS Grangemouth completed a "Tour De France" challenge in aid of FDAMH. The challenge was no small feat, with the team having to match kilometre for kilometre the distance ridden by the professional cyclists during each stage of this year's Tour De France. And as if this achievement wasn't enough, the team chose to donate an incredible £1,000 to FDAMH. We are utterly grateful to INEOS and their incredible team for their impressive effort and kind donation.



GET INVOLVED

There are many ways in which people choose to support us and whichever way you choose we are incredibly grateful. If you would like to find out more, please email us at:

community@fdamh.org.uk

A Volunteer's Story



Jackie & Jacqueline

At FDAMH, we understand that our clients are all individual and a 'one-size-fits-all' approach simply doesn't work. Our clients have access to all our services and will often work with a number of different teams and resources to help get their lives back on track. We meet up with Jackie and Jacqueline to talk about their journey with us.

How did you hear about FDAMH?

Jackie - FDAMH came into to my work to do a talk. We had a wellbeing session, so they came in to chat to the team about the services they provide.

Jacqueline - Through my husband's work, FDAMH had come into Falkirk Fire Station to provide a talk on their services and he came home and urged me to make contact with them.

What first made you reach out for help?

Jackie - I had serious issues with mental health due to family circumstances. My Daughter had a full mental breakdown, and I was badly affected over the course of 20 years. This culminated in a personal crisis.

Jacqueline - I felt I couldn't go on. My husband convinced me it would be good for me. Making contact was the easy part. I went onto the website and filled in my details and a member of FDAMH contacted me very quickly.

What service did you use?

Jackie - I used three different services, Social Prescribing, counselling and then a joined the Social Spark Group - this was my absolute favourite!

Jacqueline - I used 6 FDAMH services and they all helped me in different ways: Social Prescribing, Better Sleep, Bereavement, Counselling, Social Spark and 1-2-1 services.

How do you view our services?

Jackie - my initial thoughts were how can this work? What difference can this make? But I was willing to try anything. I Loved Chris at Social Prescribing, she was so warm. I felt for the first time I had someone to talk to and I wasn't judged at all. Angela was also a wonderful counsellor.

A Volunteers Story

Jacqueline – I didn't think I would get better, I wasn't sure it was me. I think every town in Scotland should have this service. It's a life saver/changer.

How has FDAMH changed your life for the better?

Jackie – through Social Spark I've made my own friends for the first time in 59 years. I feel included. I feel part of the world. I feel supported and I look forward to coming every week to social spark where I now act as a volunteer to help others in the way I was helped.

Jacqueline – I'm alive. Truthfully, I wouldn't be alive today if it hadn't been for FDAMH.

What did your support network look like?

Jackie – I faced this alone. My family situation was a huge contributory factor in my mental health struggles and continues to be so.

Jacqueline – My immediate family. At that time it was a very difficult thing for me to talk about openly. Now I tell everyone my story in the hope that they get the courage they need to get help.

What advice would you give to someone who would like to reach out to us but doesn't know what to expect?

Jackie – Take whatever you think you'll get and multiply it by a thousand and it'll be much better than you ever imagined. FDAMH are so supportive and friendly.

Jacqueline – Just do it! You have nothing to fear. FDAMH is a safe space for you to get the help you need and deserve, and you will get better.

“

**I'M ALIVE.
TRUTHFULLY, I
WOULDN'T BE
ALIVE TODAY IF IT
HADN'T BEEN FOR
FDAMH.**

”

WHAT WE DO

Initial Assessment Service

All clients accessing FDAMH will receive an initial assessment in which we aim to provide within 5 days of receiving a referral.

Assessments are conducted via telephone and 1 hour is allocated for each assessment in case of more complex presenting issues. Clients are then internally referred or sign posted to the appropriate service for support.

LEWIS'S STORY

Lewis was struggling with low mood and high levels of anxiety. This was impacting upon his attendance at university, his place of work and his personal life.

During his assessment the client was given the space to discuss his situation indicating to the practitioner he was finding his low mood and levels of social anxiety overwhelming to the point where attending work was almost impossible. The client shared with the practitioner that he had become reliant on substances to feel better. He also shared some childhood trauma which we were able to link to recent triggering events.



Anxiety and low mood issues were high on the clients' priorities to manage. The practitioner was able to refer him to the Social Prescribing service within FDAMH where he would receive one to one support from a practitioner equipping him with tools and strategies for anxiety management and emotional regulation.

The client was also signposted to Quiet Waters and Health in Mind services allowing him to consider some support with childhood trauma.

WHAT WE DO

Counselling Service

This year we welcomed two new full-time qualified counsellors to the counselling service together with a dedicated team of student counsellors to offer one to one support to our clients.

We were delighted to receive additional funding to provide a vital service for carers in the community. Carers often find themselves in situations where their needs take second place to the person they are caring for. Our new service gives carers the support they need to continue providing care.



SARAH'S STORY

Sarah was referred to the service after completing the Carer's Education Course and wanted one-to-one support. Sarah shared care responsibilities for a family member but struggled with the feeling of hopelessness and helplessness when it came to providing care. This pressure was detrimental to her own mental health and was affecting her ability to look after herself.

Using several different approaches, Sarah became aware of the changes necessary for her to improve her mental health. She focused on maintaining consistency by building a routine that complimented her needs and goals. In turn, this helped renew her self-esteem and confidence and empowered her to feel in control of the situation. She also learnt how to create healthy boundaries for her own health and invested in coping strategies that helped manage her care responsibilities.

Sarah found counselling helped her reach a renewed understanding of her role as a carer.

“ **THE SERVICE HAS HELPED ME GAIN CLARITY AND UNDERSTANDING OF WHO I AM, PRIORITISE MY NEEDS AND BE CONFIDENT IN COMMUNICATING THEM.** ”

WHAT WE DO

Young Person Service & Parent Groups

YPS

The Young Person's Mental Wellbeing Service aims to promote recovery and self-management for those experiencing reduced mental wellbeing. Now in its third year we continue to offer support to 13-24-year-olds.

LUCY'S STORY

Lucy had self-referred to FDAMH after a recommendation from her GP. She required support with anxiety, low mood, stress, and self-harm. Lucy expressed that she does a lot of unrecognised caring for her younger siblings which was an added stress. Through her sessions Lucy shifted the focus onto something that she can control, and this small change helped her feel more in control of the situation.



PARENT GROUP

Our Parent groups offer four 2 hourly sessions to support parents to gain a greater knowledge, and understanding of their young person's anxieties, emotions, and behaviours. To learn tools and strategies on how to best support them through this difficult time and to share concerns and experiences with other parents going through the same experience.

“

The Parent Groups really helped on how to deal with our own anxiety and to understand and help our daughter. It was good to speak with other parents going through the same things as us and realise we are not the only ones.

WHAT WE DO

Family Carers Service

FDAMH continues to provide a wraparound service to carers/families. This last year has been challenging having seen a large increase in referrals from families/carers supporting loved ones who are impacted by neurodiversity. To support this effectively all our practitioners attended intensive training to ensure they were equipped to offer appropriate, meaningful, and specific support with the different challenges they face daily that impacts on their Mental Health and wellbeing.

We also revised The Carers Education Course and Parent groups to include awareness, tools, and strategies to support parents/carers with the complex issues surrounding Neurodiversity to improve their self-esteem and take control of the clients lives. The addition of the new Carers Counsellor has complimented the service offering 1-1 bespoke support to clients who are not ready or able to access support groups.



I REACHED OUT TO FDAMH TO SUPPORT MY 13 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER WHO WAS RECENTLY TOLD SHE IS AUTISTIC AND STRUGGLED UNDERSTANDING HERSELF AND EMOTIONS. THE PRACTITIONER WAS EXCELLENT AND MY DAUGHTER AND I HAVE LEARNED A LOT IN HOW TO HANDLE CERTAIN SITUATIONS, AND LEARNT A LOT ABOUT OURSELVES.

WHAT WE DO

Bereaved by Suicide

FDAMH'S Bereaved by Suicide Peer Support Group runs once a month and is a safe, confidential environment where people can share their experiences and feelings giving and gaining support from each other. We also offer a Seasons for Growth Course looking at loss and grief and how to navigate your way through this stage whilst gaining tools and strategies to cope.

DAVID'S STORY

David contacted the service looking for support after the suicide of his close childhood friend. The two lived very close to each other and saw each other daily. He described his friend as "like my brother". In his initial appointment with FDAMH the client was given the opportunity to talk about the situation indicating to the practitioner he was now alone, depressed and feeling hopeless.

David had a young family and was struggling to cope with day-to-day family things, he shared that he felt he was to blame as he should have been at his friend's house the night before but one of his children were feeling unwell. Anxiety and negative thoughts were overwhelming.



An assessment was completed by one of our mental health and wellbeing practitioners, which looked at all areas of his wellbeing. A referral was made to FDAMH Bereaved by Suicide group offering David support to share and be supported by others who had experienced suicide in their life.



**YOUR SERVICE
PRETTY MUCH SAVED
MY LIFE. WHEN
OTHER MENTAL
HEALTH SERVICES
HAVE REPEATEDLY
FAILED FDAMH
SHOWED THEM HOW
IT SHOULD BE DONE.**

WHAT WE DO

Psychoeducational Groupwork

FDAMH's psychoeducational groupwork offers individuals the opportunity to increase their understanding of mental health, develop their self-awareness through reflection, tasks and sharing to gain knowledge of tools and techniques to self-manage their mental wellbeing.

Over the past year individuals have attended CBT for Anxiety, Seasons for Growth, Promoting Better Sleep, Improving Self-esteem & Communications & Positive Wellbeing groups

Through these skills participants can make positive changes in their lives which in turn has a positive impact on others around them.

MEGAN'S STORY

Megan attended the Improving self-esteem & communications group stating in the first session through group discussion "I don't have boundaries with people", was using statements such as "I can't" and "I don't know how to".

One section of the course is personal boundaries and Megan stated "I could try" in relation to starting to set small boundaries with people in her life. In the next session she stated that she had set a small boundary with a friend and felt "great" that it had went well and that her friend didn't stop talking to her which had been a fear for her.

“

THE SERVICE HAS HELPED ME DEVELOP NEW SKILLS THAT I'VE ALREADY BEEN ABLE TO USE, AND THAT HAS HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY LIFE AND MENTAL HEALTH

”

WHAT WE DO

Social Spark Service

The Social Spark service provides a multitude of social, creative and outdoor activities for people who are lonely and isolated, have poor mental or physical health.

Our small groups are run by experienced staff and volunteers. Groups generally run for 12 weeks, with the hope that confidence is built, newfound interest and hobbies are gained and that friendships flourish.

Our groups this year have included, pool, fishing, women's groups, craft groups, John Muir Awards, mobile phone photography groups and Tea and a Blether Groups.

Many people referred to the Social Spark Service have attended other services within FDAMH. By doing so it allows them to gain the skills to help them deal with social situation and practice these skills in a safe and friendly environment.



EVERYONE IS FRIENDLY AND APPROACHABLE, WHICH MADE IT EASIER TO ATTEND THE GROUP. THE GROUP REALLY GELLED, AND WE ALL GOT ON SO WELL. I HAD NO FRIENDS WHEN I CAME TO THE GROUP, AND I CAN SAY NOW I HAVE MADE ONE CLOSE FRIEND AND SEVERAL FRIENDS THAT KEEP IN TOUCH ON A REGULAR BASIS

Social Prescribing



It was good for me to realise there was someone there who could guide me through the situation. It was very easy for me to talk, actually it was just good to have someone to talk to.

The Social Prescribing Service offers a one-to-one holistic support, which aims to promote self-management and recovery for people experiencing poor mental health.

The person-centred approach supports people to make positive changes to their everyday lives by equipping them with the tools and techniques to problem solve, increase confidence and explore new opportunities.



PAUL'S STORY

Paul explained he often had “good and bad days”. Our Team helped Paul cope with suicidal thoughts and worked through a safety plan to use at times of distress.

Psychoeducation also included managing unhelpful negative thoughts, sleep and emotional regulation. Throughout the sessions Paul increased his own self-care, considered and used steps in the safety plan when feeling overwhelmed, challenged negative thinking and sought distraction from these by caring for pets, playing games and spending time with family.

Paul was also referred to Social Spark at FDAMH as he expressed how lonely he felt and thought more social contact would be helpful.

WHAT WE DO

Managing Menopause

Our Managing Menopause course is now in its second year and its gone from strength to strength. Thanks to the Falkirk Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund we have been able to offer this fully funded course FREE to residents of Falkirk District.

Our aim is to offer women throughout Falkirk support and understanding about the wide range of debilitating and impactful symptoms that can be experienced during perimenopause and menopause, many of which we do not realise are a result of fluctuating hormones as there is not much information around this. The response to the Managing Menopause courses has been incredible.



On first joining the course women have said that they feel they have “lost themselves completely” or cannot control their new heightened feelings of real anxiety, lost self-confidence and mood dysregulation. On completion of the course, they have a much better understanding and a range of techniques to help manage the worst of their symptoms both at home and at work.

We have had many women reporting that they feel able to make practical changes in the workplace, allowing them to continue contributing in their jobs and careers comfortably. Most importantly, and with the valuable peer support that group members offered each other throughout the course, women gained the knowledge and support to bring the best of themselves to the fore again and make time and space for their own wellbeing and health. And all done amidst much laughter, some tears and lots of biscuits!

WE DELIVERED
MANAGING
MENOPAUSE COURSE
TO

125

WOMAN IN OUR
LOCAL
COMMUNITY



Meet The Team



Duncan Watson

This past year, 449 people have accessed FDAMH'S Young Persons service. We meet up with our Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner, Duncan Watson, to talk about his role in this fundamental service.

How long have you been a Practitioner for?

I've been with FDAMH as a practitioner for just over 2 years now

What made you decide to get into mental health work?

I'd say there are several reasons including personal life experiences, academia, family and friends. In my early 20s, I experienced my own difficulties with anxiety/panic and low mood after losing my dad suddenly. I remember an overwhelming sense of helplessness with this. It was really distressing and, like a lot of people, felt extremely isolated within themselves.

Long story short - I just remember the immeasurable value of connecting with others when "stuck" in this place and I wanted to be able to offer that to others.

Can you describe what a typical day would look like for you at FDAMH?

my role within the YPS will involve seeing clients daily, checking-in with their progress regarding our work, what they're noticing in terms of improvements or even new challenges and discussing our next steps.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

For me, it's the seeing improvement in clients and a sense of confidence that they can tackle their challenges head on. Sometimes it might just be giving them the space to be heard and listened to or giving them the opportunity to approach their difficulties in a different way.

Do you have any advice for somebody who would like to reach out to us but doesn't know what to expect?

I would say that whilst it can be daunting and scary to begin admitting - nevermind dealing with - your difficulties, I would encourage them to listen to what they believe they need and try to follow this

The Year in Numbers...

2,605

UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS
ATTENDED
FDAMH LAST
YEAR.



16,602

SESSIONS WERE
OFFERED.



1 in 4

PEOPLE TOLD
US THEY WERE
EXPERIENCING SUICIDAL
THOUGHTS.



TOP 5 REASONS FOR REFERRAL

- 1 ANXIETY
- 2 LOW MOOD
- 3 STRESS
- 4 LOW CONFIDENCE
- 5 PROBLEMS SLEEPING

1/3



ALMOST A 1/3 OF
PEOPLE USING
OUR SERVICES
WERE AGED 13-24.

OUR TRAINING
ACADEMY DELIVERED

7,636

OF TRAINING
HOURS IN OUR
LOCAL
COMMUNITY



4.7/5



WOULD RECOMMEND
FDAMH TO SOMEONE
ELSE.

THANK YOU

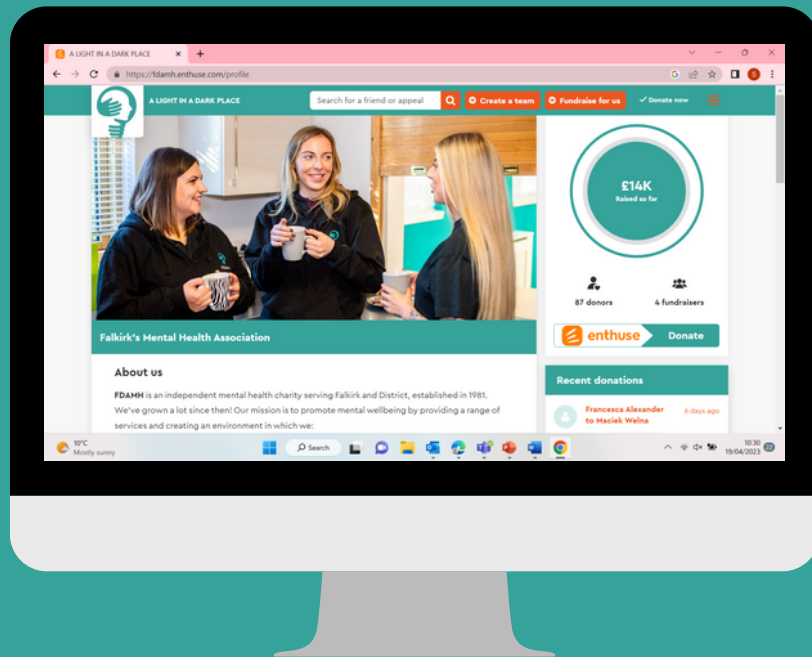
We would like to thank the organisations listed below for their support throughout the year and a big thank you to everyone who made a donation to FDAMH. We are truly grateful for your support. Donations really are vital to our ongoing survival.

- Falkirk Health & Social Care Partnership
- Falkirk Council
- Big Lottery
- Robertson Trust
- Peoples Postcode Lottery
- Grangemouth Rotary Club
- MB Jeruzal
- Larbert East Church
- Inner Wheel Club
- The Helix
- Thomas Cuttel & Son
- Chit Chat Cafe
- The Engine Room
- Ineos Chemicals Grangemouth Ltd
- Graeme High School
- PV Foundation
- Capital Credit Union
- Denholm Environmental
- Falkirk High School
- DM Dawson Trust
- CVS Falkirk
- The Wood Foundation
- Diamond Drilling
- Kilkwalk
- Falkirk Round Table

We would also like to say a big thank you to the **74 volunteers** who worked within FDAMH over the last year.

**WE COULDN'T DO WHAT WE DO
WITHOUT YOU!**

HELP US HELP OTHERS



If you would like to make a donation to FDAMH, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Your support will allow us to continue to care for the mental health of our local community.

THANK YOU!



FDAMH
FALKIRK'S MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



FDAMH

FALKIRK'S MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

IT'S OKAY TO **ASK** FOR HELP

WE CAN ALL USE A LITTLE BIT OF HELP SOMETIMES.
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU WHEN YOU NEED US.

[CLICK HERE](#)

to find out more.

Call us on
01324 671 600

FDAMH (Falkirk's Mental Health Association)
Charity SC011889/Company SC151357