



125

1899 - 2024

Impact Report 2024

125 years of supporting surveyors

Impact Report 2024 – an introduction from the CEO



How do you begin to sum up the impact your support might make when someone is in crisis or facing a challenge of some kind?

It's something charities like LionHeart try to measure each year – to make sure the work we are doing is making a positive difference when people need us, and to show the people who support us what they're helping us to do.

While the numbers in this Impact Report indeed tell a story, it is arguably the words of the people we've supported that really convey what LionHeart is all about – powerful testimonies that demonstrate time and again how we gave people somewhere to turn when they needed it most.

'What on earth do surveyors need a charity for?' is something we hear from time to time. The answer is quite simple: surveyors are people, not just professionals doing a job, and people inevitably face bumps in the road along which they travel.

An increase of 100% in the call on our services over the past five years is perhaps indicative of a growing need within the surveying community in general. And the team at LionHeart has been proud to meet that need, responding swiftly with compassion and an individual approach to every single person that calls us.

But this is of course placing a significant challenge on LionHeart's resources – operating as we do in close partnership with RICS but completely independently funded as an autonomous charity. As we celebrate our 125th anniversary this year, it will be our challenge to ensure LionHeart's income matches its expenditure, and to ensure that we are here to support surveyors and their families for the next 125 years with the same quality of service as we do now.

None of us can be sure when life is going to launch a curve ball at us, and none of us can be sure of being immune to that ball when it lands. But surveyors and their families can be sure that LionHeart will be there when that moment occurs – trusted, knowledgeable, independent and consistent in its response.

Everything we do is only possible with your support. As we reflect on our work over the past year, a huge thank you to everyone who has donated, fundraised, or championed us in some way. We only exist due to the generosity of generations of surveyors - and it is your continued support that will keep us here for many more years to come.

Phil Sparke, CEO

A large, dark blue, wavy banner with a 3D effect. The number '125' is prominently displayed in large, bold, multi-colored digits (red, yellow, and blue). To the right of the number, the text 'years of supporting surveyors and their families' is written in a white, sans-serif font, following the curve of the banner.

125 years of supporting surveyors and their families

In the beginning...

A little over 125 years ago, a group of chartered surveyors came together to discuss how support could be provided for the widows and orphans of their fellow surveyors through an independent benevolent fund – in the absence of any kind of welfare state or other 'safety net' at that time. The idea of LionHeart was born, and we have been helping the surveying community and their families ever since, with increasing scope and services over the years.

It was an initial donation of £500 – worth at least £50,000 today – from the then outgoing president of the RICS, Robert Vigers, which established the creation of LionHeart as an independent charity in 1899. And it is the generosity of subsequent generations of chartered surveyors that has kept it going ever since – through donations, legacies and other fundraising, and the hundreds of surveyors who have given their time to volunteer as trustees, shaping the charity that supports their own.

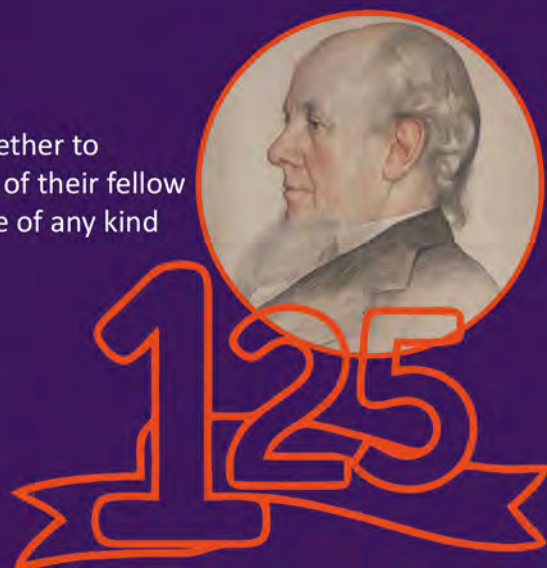
The Institution of Surveyors – the 'Royal' bit came later – Benevolent Fund, as LionHeart began its existence, was originally purely a grant-giving body, supporting former surveyors and their families when they were unable to do so themselves.

In more recent years, LionHeart added additional, more holistic services, recognising that with financial need often came a range of other emotional and practical needs – and that by supporting people proactively with personal and career support, it may be possible to prevent some of life's challenges from turning into a crisis.

In his history of the RICS, 'Chartered Surveyors: Growth of a Profession', Francis Thompson recorded this:

Proposals to run a fund for the support of surveyors and their families who fell on hard times, and to relieve special cases of individual hardship, had been aired from time to time from the foundation of the Institution, but had always been turned down on the grounds that the Institution, as such, was precluded from any activities which conferred pecuniary benefits on individual members...

In 1899 the Council set up a special committee to devise a Benevolent Fund, to be run under the Institution's auspices, but to be managed by a separate body of trustees so that its affairs could be kept distinct from those of the Institution proper, and so that its funds could derive solely from special contributions and have no connection with members' ordinary annual subscriptions. In May 1899 the outgoing President, Robert Vigers, announced to the Annual Meeting that he intended to take action, and he subsequently donated £500 to start the Fund.



2023/24 – our year in numbers



10%

Last year we handled 10% more requests for help from surveyors all over the world. This means demand for our services has risen by over 100% in the last five years.



13%

Almost 13% of all our support cases were due to poor mental health, including stress, anxiety and depression.



9%

Just over 9% of calls were from surveyors facing redundancy and unemployment.



14%

Requests for legal advice represented 14% of calls, a rise in 17% on the previous year. More than half of these enquiries related to employment law, as well as family law, wills and probate, consumer and property law.



6%

Some 6% of cases needed support due to serious ill-health and disability.



1,500

We delivered over 1,500 hours of counselling, with an 8% rise in numbers using the service.



36

We supported surveyors and their families in 36 countries worldwide.



£597K

In 2023/24 we gave more in grants than we have ever done in our history - £597,000.



1 in 4

An astonishing 1 in 4 calls were in support of APC candidates, many of whom were experiencing anxiety, stress, not eating or sleeping due to work pressures.

More demand than ever

LionHeart is helping more surveyors in more countries with a broader range of services than ever before. We have continued to see year-on-year growth in service use, with another 10% rise in cases in 2023/24. This means we have more than doubled the number of people we've helped in the last five years – people facing all kinds of difficult circumstances.

In 2023/24 we gave more in grants than we have ever done in our history - £597,000.

This was £151,000 more than we spent in the previous year, allowing us to help 23% more people.

We also supported more individuals and families than ever with counselling and other emotional and practical support to help them get through whatever challenges they were facing.

Most professionals never imagine they'll need to call on an organisation like LionHeart for help. But the truth is, none of us ever know what's around the corner.

 *The reasons people get grants from LionHeart are varied. In almost all cases, these are surveyors and their families who have lost their income for whatever reason – maybe due to serious ill health, a life-changing accident or they've lost their jobs and haven't been eligible for redundancy or other support.*

Sometimes the monthly grants we give to help bridge the gap is the difference between them being able to support their families and keep their homes. Often all that is needed is a little support to get people into a better position. Sometimes, depending on circumstances, the financial support will last longer and may, sadly, be extended to support a family following bereavement.



Bena Kansara, Support Services Manager

 *The financial backing eased the burden over a period of uncertainty and ensured I could continue to provide for my family during the time I was not employed. The help and support we received as a family was second to none, thank you so very much.*



In your words - how LionHeart helped



I called LionHeart after a serious suicide attempt. The support I received was second to none and I can honestly say saved my life. I am now back at work and in the knowledge I have LionHeart by my side.



Following the death of my husband, I had counselling and advice regarding a distressing partnership dispute which now had passed to me. The legal advice helped to clarify some issues and gave me more confidence in taking the process forward.



LionHeart helped me avoid losing my home and become financially self-sufficient again. They helped with my self-confidence and my CV as I looked for work. The support was just invaluable at a time it was needed most.



My counsellor was fantastic in allowing me to process the bereavement in a safe environment, providing guidance in how to move forward. I now have coping mechanisms in place for future challenges I might face. I've finished the sessions feeling like me again.



Never in a million years did I think I would need the support of an organisation like LionHeart. Thank you for the much needed support, your generosity, and just being there at my time of need.



The assistance I received was exceptional. By the time my counselling sessions were through, I had a better understanding of how to approach my problems confidently and gradually. It's given me real tools for life. I cannot thank LionHeart enough.



Chartered surveyor Edward was struggling in a stressful work environment, while balancing the needs of his disabled wife who needed increasing support at home.

He said: *"I needed help dealing with an exceptional amount of stress. My counsellor was incredibly good; some of the strategies I have put in place with her help will assist me for the rest of my life."*



Sita contacted LionHeart after being made redundant from her surveying job. With other things going on in her life, it had been a bruising experience which left her professional confidence at an all-time low and she was unsure about her next steps.

She said: *"I was really apprehensive about the future. I felt my support officer really understood what I had experienced and was totally empathetic but practical at the same time - a tricky double act to pull off!"*

A final note from the Chair

As I come to the end of nearly eight years as a Trustee, and six as Chair of the Board, I continue to be inspired by the range and depth of services which the LionHeart team continue to offer the surveying family across the world.



The statistics in this report speak for themselves: demand for services up by 10% and the highest level of grants ever made. We continue to help surveyors at either ends of their career path, whether preparing for retirement, or preparing to qualify – where our support to APC candidates continues to surge.

The Board of Trustees regularly reviews our support offer, both at a strategic level and, from time to time, by considering sample cases. These are invariably both informative and moving, and in this report we offer you examples of the real-life impact LionHeart has made to people in real need.

All of this costs money, and so as a final request please do consider donating; you never know when life might cause you to make that call for help for you or your loved ones.

And so as I prepare to leave the board, and hand over to Philippa Sampson-Bancroft, I know that LionHeart is in safe hands, and is as relevant today as when it was founded some 125 years ago.

Peter McCrea FRICS

Can you support LionHeart?

LionHeart is the only charity specifically set up to provide support to RICS professionals and their families. We are uniquely by your side, for life – from the beginning to the end of your career as a surveyor and into retirement.

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As you have read in this report, we have seen year-on-year growth in demand for our support - from people just like you, who happen to have hit a tough time in their lives. As an independent charity, this makes donations from the surveying community more important than ever.

LionHeart only exists thanks to a single generous donation that got the ball rolling 125 years ago. And it is the generosity of subsequent generations that has kept us here ever since. Last year we spent **£2.4million** on our charitable aims – helping people like you, whatever they faced.

Can you donate to ensure we can continue to support the surveyors of today and tomorrow too?



Donate now – or set up a regular Direct Debit donation for added flexibility



Say 'yes' to donate when you renew your RICS subs



Support our work as a corporate or organisational partner



Fundraise for us



Tell people about us

Thank you for your support!

**Donate
Now**

www.lionheart.org.uk/donate