

# Bereavement Services and Support in Kingston Report (Impacts, & Future Plans)

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**healthwatch**  
Kingston upon Thames



**KINGSTON**  
VOLUNTARY  
**ACTION**

# About Healthwatch Kingston



Healthwatch Kingston was set up by the [Health and Social Care Act of 2012](#) to be **the independent champion for local NHS and social care.**

We seek the views of patients, service users, carers and the public to help services work better for the people who use them.

We play an important role bringing communities and services together.

Everything we say and do is informed by what local people tell us.

As well as encouraging those who run local services to act on what matters to people, we also share local views and experiences with [Healthwatch England](#) and the [Care Quality Commission](#) who make sure that the government put people at the heart of care nationally.

# KVA - Who are we?

Infrastructure Support organisation for voluntary and community organisations in the Borough of Kingston Upon Thames



## KVA Vision

Communities and people that KVA works with are empowered to drive social change towards a fairer, more inclusive, healthier and happier society

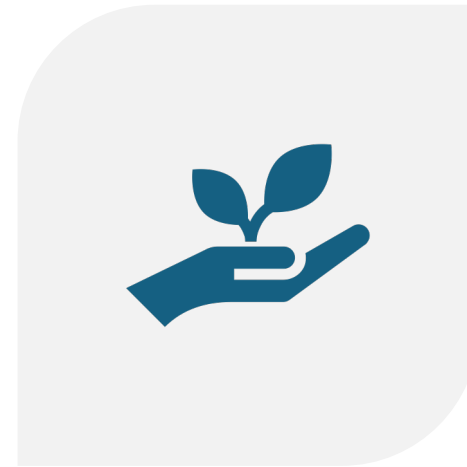
## KVA Mission

Meeting the needs of community organisations and individuals by equipping them with relevant tools, skills, knowledge, confidence and voice to drive positive change

# KVA – Two main areas of work:



DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING  
VIBRANT AND ROBUST VCSE  
ORGANISATIONS (**HEALTHY VCSE  
ORGANISATIONS**)



DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING  
COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING  
INITIATIVES (**HEALTHY COMMUNITIES  
AND RESIDENTS**)

# KVA Healthy VCSE Organisations



# KVA Healthy Communities and Residents



# Bereavement Report: Engagement

Following a mapping exercise of bereavement services across the region, in August 2021 Southwest London CCG commissioned a pilot in Kingston to gather feedback on experience of bereavement and bereavement support and services available.

Healthwatch Kingston (HWK) and Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA) were the organisations commissioned to undertake this engagement. 348 people and 59 NHS and other health and social care professionals, shared their lived experience of accessing bereavement services and support in Kingston. This engagement had a particular focus on the intersection with culture, faith, and life philosophies.

- **We set up a Kingston ‘Think Tank’** to lead the project (Membership was from across Place and included health and social care acute, mental health and community providers, hospice, voluntary community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE), commissioners, ambulance trust and Local Authority representation)
- HWK hosted a **‘Let’s talk about Bereavement Services’** session at the Open Meeting
- **3 online surveys designed collaboratively by Think Tank.** Shared across Kingston communities and available in easy read. Surveys were also translated into Korean (Surveys included, general public, health & social care professionals and VCSE Organisations).
- **9 funded focus groups**, who ran 2 hours session on Bereavement in their communities, **supported KVA.** This included focus group for faith, beliefs and life philosophy communities.
- **One to one case studies**
- **HWK were lead authors for the data analysis, report and formal recommendations**

# Bereavement Report: Findings

348 local residents and service users informed the final engagement report, that was published in July 2022, with 17 recommendations:

*c9-10K people die in SWL,  
1.1K in Kingston  
each year*

## Bereavement Services and Support in Kingston - Community Engagement Report.

- Bereavement varies widely, common themes were of loss, sadness, shock, depression, isolation and the need for practical and emotional support
- 62% said that bereavement had affected their mental health and 45% said it affected their physical health
- Bereavement care and support, should be mindful of a person's faith, belief and lifestyle choices and delivered with kindness and empathy
- Speaking about death is still a taboo in some cultures
- Death is a culturally significant event and honouring the dead with mourning and an appropriate and timely funeral is crucial
- People are often struggling with grief and bereavement at the same time as they need to complete challenging admin
- There are issues where the deceased person undertook all the 'life admin', especially if English was not the family's first language and digital literacy is a problem
- Some participants mentioned that they had been offered support but waiting lists were very long
- 40% of respondents stated that they were carers. The support that carers need is not always recognised



# Bereavement Report: Response to Recommendation

From the 17 recommendation within the report, the 'Think Tank' have suggested the following areas to focus on, as they are within their gift to manage/deliver.

- **Encourage** collaborative working between the borough 'bereavement officer' and organisations within Place
- **Create** a multi-agency task and finish group to develop services and set bereavement service standards in consultation with our diverse communities
- **Provide** bereavement services, crematoria and burial sites to meet the needs for all faiths, beliefs, and life philosophies, being mindful of community demand for culturally sensitive rapid burials or cremations
- **Co-produce** a multi-cultural leaflet/document steps on how to arrange a cremation or burial support services
- **Make** Connected Kingston the digital hub for bereavement services and ensure all information is accessible to all residents
- **Introduce** voluntary 'bereavement champions' to connect communities with bereavement counselling services and support - **RBK Hub/Bereavement Cafes VCS**

# Bereavement Report: Wider Impacts

- **In response to our report recommendations, Kingston Hospital have recruited a Bereavement Support Practitioner.** The role is funded for an 18-month period and will include provision of pre-bereavement support to families and staff. (Contribution to funding from RBK)
- Our collaborative community engagement work was recognised as a quality exemplar by NHS England and NHS Improvement at the 2022 '**Getting to Outstanding**' event.
- **RBK has created an information hub on [Connected Kingston](#)** where information about bereavement services and support in Kingston can be found and maintained. We have also established our All about: Bereavement, faith and spirituality website page. Bereavement Hub established by RBK located at Kingston Cemetery - death registration, practical funeral advice.
- **We were invited to submit our Kingston work as a case study to the 'Equitable bereavement care for all'** research teams at Kings College London and the University of Bristol who were commissioned by the Government to inform national policy.
- HWK and KVA have secured additional South West London Integrated Care Board funding to coordinate and report on the south west London **engagement roll-out to address the gaps we** identified from our Kingston work.
- HWK secured funding from Kingston Council to create **a bereavement film by and for young people**
- Findings from the report were used to inform, The Kingston Carers Strategy and during the commissioning process for the new Kingston Bereavement Counselling Service

# Bereavement Report – The SWL Bereavement Community Engagement Gap Grant

Healthwatch Kingston and Kingston Voluntary Action, have been asked to lead coordination of further Bereavement engagement work across SWL where gaps were identified within the Kingston work.

The SWL Bereavement Community Engagement Gap Grants, of £1000 will be awarded to successful community organisations that apply to run face-to-face focus groups within their chosen community. Gaps identified include:

1. Children, young people and their families/friends/teachers
2. Survivors of bereavement by suicide
3. People experiencing homelessness
4. People experiencing funeral poverty
5. People experiencing loss through pregnancy and/or fertility
6. People from LGBTQ+ communities
7. People with learning disabilities, special educational needs and disabilities and neurodivergent people (such as autism and ADHD)
8. Domiciliary (home care), care and nursing home workforce
9. Hospice and other palliative care focused teams
10. Residents in care and nursing homes
11. Recently widowed
12. Veterans and their families
13. People living with frailty and/or dementia
14. People from the Afro-Caribbean community
15. Refugees, asylum seekers and people from other migrant communities

**Deadline for submission of applications: Midnight on Friday 1 November 2024**

**Assessment of applications and grants awards: Friday 29 November 2024**

**For any questions email: [Eneida.capaldi@kva.org.uk](mailto:Eneida.capaldi@kva.org.uk)**

Thank you

Any questions?



# Healthwatch Kingston

## Next Open Meeting:

- **29 October 2024** - Social Care (MS Teams)
- **12 December 2024** - Christmas meeting –  
Cold weather services for vulnerable communities (face 2 face)
- **11 Feb 2025** – Help us prioritise community engagement project 2025/26 (MS Teams)

## HWK Recent Reports

- [Including Communities: Engagement Report March 2022 to October 2023 | Healthwatch Kingston](#)
- [Including Digitally Excluded Communities: Engagement Report | Healthwatch Kingston](#)

For further information please email:  
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