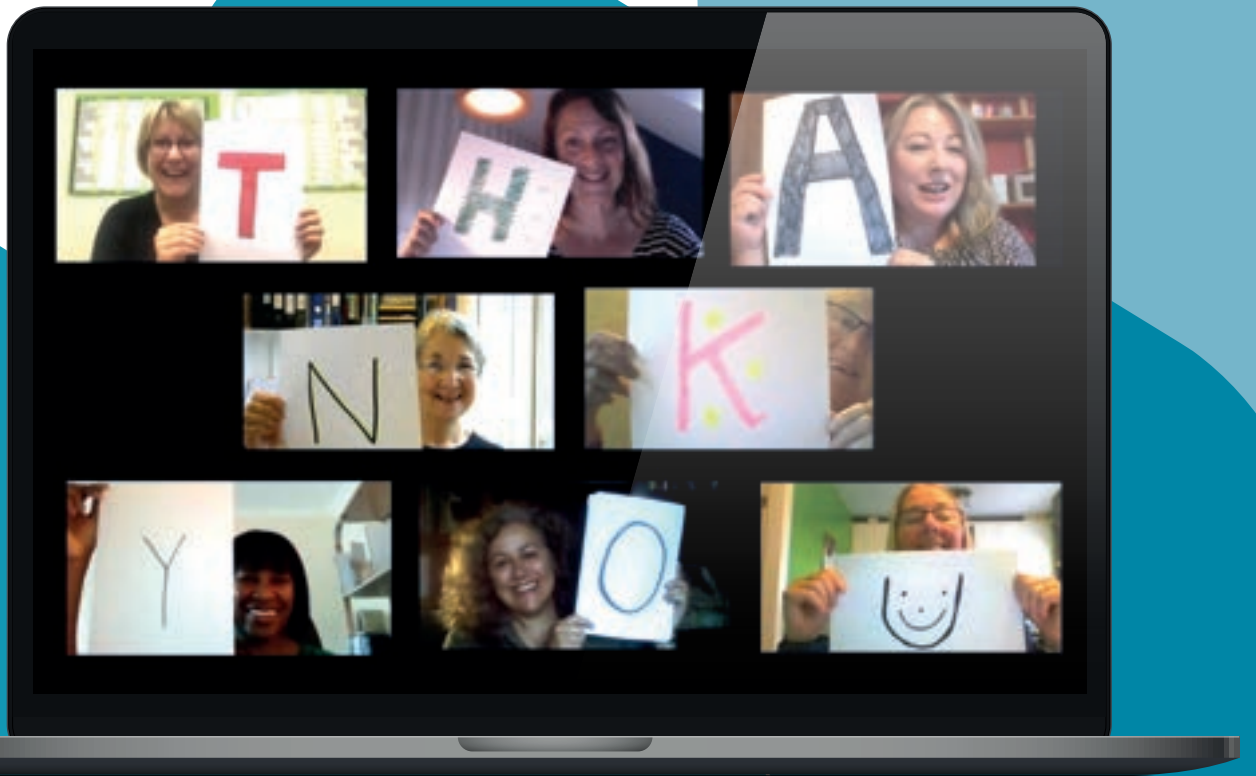


MISCARRIAGE
ASSOCIATION

The knowledge to help

Annual
Review

2020/21



Welcome to the Miscarriage Association's annual review, the document in which we reflect on the year between April 2020 and March 2021.

What a year it was for all of us, here in the UK and across the world. So many lives lost due to Covid 19, and all the other losses that went along with that – of income, of security, of normal everyday life.

It would be easy for pregnancy loss to be dwarfed by the pandemic, to be seen as less worthy of compassion, care and support in the face of so many more losses. But the impact of miscarriage, ectopic and molar pregnancy was no less than in pre-pandemic times. On the contrary, reductions in access to some NHS services, restrictions for partners and the pain of social distancing meant that the need for care, support and information was often even greater. That was evidenced in a 42% increase in the number of people contacting us for help.

It is thanks to many of you reading these words that we were able to maintain all our helpline and online services without pause during the year. We send special thanks to:

- **our many donors and supporters**, whose generosity ensured that we did not need to furlough any of our staff
- **our support volunteers**, who continued to offer peer support by phone, on social media, in our forum and by holding support group meetings online when they could not meet face to face
- **our media volunteers**, whose willingness to share their stories helped to increase public understanding and awareness
- **our staff**, who moved swiftly to working from home in time for the first lockdown, ensuring no loss of service
- **our Trustees**, for their regular and consistent support.

In the following pages, we share some of our activities and achievements over the last year and our plans for the future. Thank you for being there with us to help people through.



Virtual Hugs – images for people to send when real hugs weren't possible

OUR VISION

Everyone affected by pregnancy loss receives the care, support and information that's right for them.

WHY WE'RE HERE

1 in 4

An estimated one in four pregnancies ends in miscarriage.

1 in 80

A further one in eighty pregnancies is ectopic – a potentially life-threatening condition.

1 in 600

And one in six hundred pregnancies is a molar pregnancy, requiring specialist care and follow up.

HOW WE HELPED THIS YEAR



2,807,314

website visits

We had 2,807,314 website visits from people seeking information and support.



15,975

leaflets to hospitals and clinics

We supplied 15,975 leaflets from our range of 18 titles to NHS hospitals and other service providers.



9,953

direct contacts

Our helpline team responded to 9,953 calls, emails, direct messages and live chats, with 49 volunteers offering additional telephone, group and online support.



657,709

people reached

Our candle image shared on social media to mark the Wave of Light at the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week reached 657,709 people.

Remembering all the tiny lives that ended far too soon. Tonight & always.

#WaveOfLight

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk/babyloss



Offering online support and information

Between 2006 and 2009 I experienced three different kinds of loss – I had a miscarriage, an ectopic pregnancy and a termination for medical reasons. It all made me think, what positive can I make out of this horrendous journey?

I thought about how much I would like to help others, which is how I came to find the Miscarriage Association and became a support volunteer.

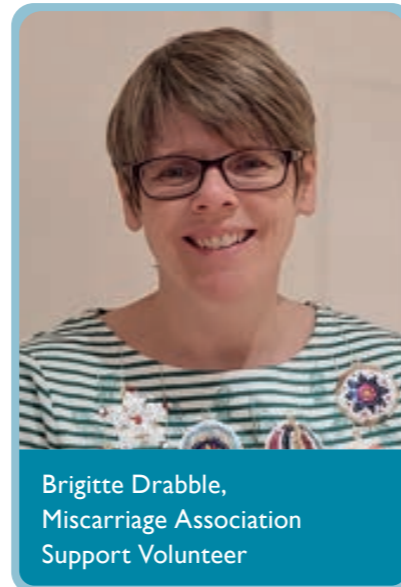
I've been leading the Winchester support group for several years now, meeting once a month in a church room, until Covid restrictions were put in place.

Once we were in lockdown, the groups were set up to be held online over Zoom. There are definitely some upsides, especially in terms of accessibility. I've had

people take part from not just all over the UK, but from all over the world, as far as Florida and Trinidad and Tobago.

With groups taking place every week, people who want more support can easily attend multiple groups, and for those who don't want to speak out loud, they can still participate by using the chat function.

We also have monthly 'pregnancy after loss' Zoom groups which I'd only been able to offer *ad hoc* and locally before.



Brigitte Drabble,
Miscarriage Association
Support Volunteer

In place of having any physical contact the groups make full use of the chat function, sending each other messages and emojis. You can always see people nodding when something resonates and I make sure to tell people I'm sending virtual hugs.

Online access to our support and resources is essential in enabling us to reach out to people affected by pregnancy loss, particularly as it's the way most people find and communicate with us. **Increased and improved online support and information** is one of our most important goals.

WHAT WE DID IN 2020/21

Continued to provide accurate, up-to-date and understandable information about Coronavirus and its impact on access to miscarriage care.

Launched a new resources hub *Miscarriage and the workplace*, with information for employers, managers, HR and staff, a policy template, videos and a new leaflet.

Noted a 23% increase in website sessions during the year – 2,807,314 compared with 2,280,422 in 2019/20. We also saw a 73% increase in membership of our 'Pregnant after loss' Facebook group.

We were invited to be included on the 'Healthinote' app, which allows GPs to 'prescribe' key M.A. web pages to patients.



YOU TOLD US

“ Thank you for the clear and sensitive information on your site. I found everything I wanted to know and found the way you talk about things to be kind and compassionate. ”

Providing direct support and information

In October 2020 I had a late miscarriage, featuring a rush to hospital in a taxi at 11pm and an admission to A&E with very heavy bleeding, culminating with being discharged from a ward at 4pm the next afternoon.

My miscarriage was caused by a subchorionic haematoma. I was 15 weeks and 6 days pregnant when I lost “Tiny Human”, as we had named our baby. The 12-week scan had revealed the haematoma, but it had also shown a healthy baby with a heartbeat.

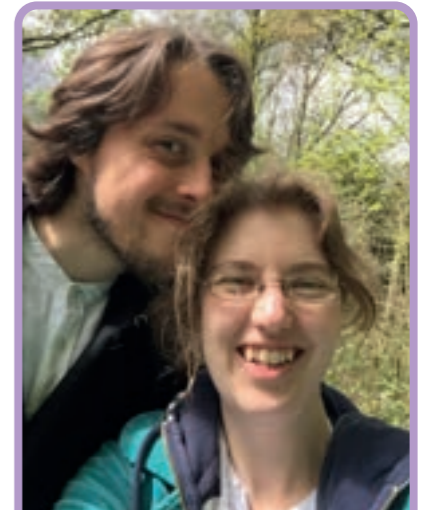
The loss came out of the blue and hit my husband and me like a bus.

One afternoon in early December I found myself sobbing at my desk as I tried to work from home. Eventually I called the Miscarriage Association helpline.

I'll never forget the kindness I received from the woman at the end of the line as I cried my questions at her. Every reason I could think of to blame myself was carefully explained away with sympathy and understanding.

I had been crying for about 3 hours at that point, but she calmed me down and helped me see that I hadn't done anything wrong.

After suffering a second loss I decided to walk 300,000 steps to raise money for miscarriage charities including the M.A..



Katie with husband Jon

Katie Cole,
Miscarriage Association
Fundraiser

There are other people out there who will also need the support of the helpline and I'm proud that I have helped contribute to keep it running.

While online services are vital, we offer support in other ways too, so people can access our help in the way that is right for them. That's why **appropriate direct personal support and information** is another of our goals.

WHAT WE DID IN 2020/21

Maintained all services throughout the transition to working from home due to Coronavirus restrictions, with no pause in operations.

Responded to 9,953 helpline calls, emails, direct messages and live chat messages, an increase of 42% compared to the previous year.

49 volunteers offered additional telephone, group and online support.

Updated our leaflet on recurrent miscarriage to incorporate UK and European research and guidance; and reviewed and updated a further six leaflets.



YOU TOLD US

“ I gave the leaflet for friends and family of someone who has experienced a loss to my brother. He was saying all the wrong things and really wanted to help but didn't know how. It made such a difference to him – he's been an amazing support ever since and he was so grateful for the leaflet. ”

Health professionals providing good and sensitive care

At BMJ Learning we provide medical education for GPs, hospital doctors and other health professionals. We reach 156,000 primary care doctors, in the UK and internationally.

In my role I am editorial lead for the online learning content. We recently developed a new pregnancy loss module, which covers miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy and molar pregnancy. It informs about changes in clinical guidelines and provides pointers on how to talk to patients about pregnancy loss.

Communication felt like a really important part of this course – with my own clinical background as a GP and personal experience of pregnancy loss. In my medical training I felt like there was little guidance on how to talk to patients

about pregnancy loss and language I had been taught to use in this setting felt very jarring when I experienced it myself as a patient.

We approached the Miscarriage Association to help us when creating the module, which included finding a patient and GP to talk about their experiences of communication in pregnancy loss. We interviewed Kate Wynne who has been through recurrent losses and GP Nicola Caplan, for a video component of the resource. Kate and Nicola discussed how best doctors can approach consultations



Dr Christine Bowen,
Lead Editor, BMJ Learning

about pregnancy loss – from the perspective of a patient and a GP.

We hope it will make doctors feel more confident and be better equipped to care for people going through pregnancy loss.

Raising awareness of pregnancy loss

I wanted to become a Miscarriage Association media volunteer to help myself process my grief, but also to help others realise they are not alone in theirs.

As part of my role I wrote my miscarriage story for the M.A. website and despite the time that has passed, I still struggle to read back over it. It brings up so many raw emotions but despite this, I am so pleased I shared it.

I was also involved in the BBC radio series 'Grief Encounters', which was really impactful. They recorded a long conversation between me and another person who had been through miscarriages. We discovered many similarities in our different experiences and discussing these was both therapeutic and comforting.

I have had such a positive reaction from all my media work as well as when fundraising for the Miscarriage Association, from people I know and from complete strangers. A friend told me he hadn't considered how the man in a relationship could be affected by a miscarriage, but since reading my story online he now understood.

To have helped just one other person work through their feelings or understand how a miscarriage can affect partners is something I am very proud of.



Brett Salako, Miscarriage
Association Media Volunteer
and Fundraiser

Hopefully continued sharing of experiences from everyone affected by miscarriages can help more and more people work through the really tough times.

The care you receive from a health professional – whether it's your GP, hospital doctor, sonographer, nurse or midwife – can make all the difference to your experience of pregnancy loss. Having **more health professionals able to provide good and sensitive care** is our goal.

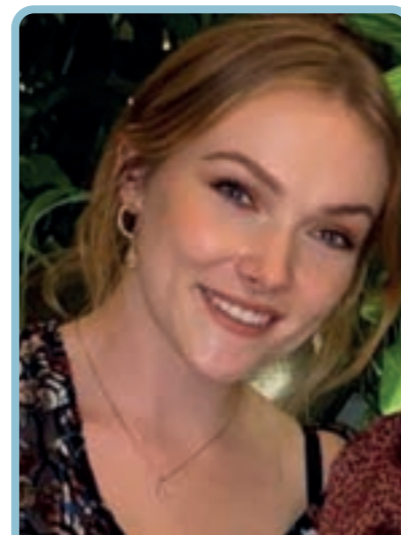
WHAT WE DID IN 2020/21

Provided advice and consultancy for care providers concerned about reduced service levels, for those seeking help with patient information and for a group of private scan clinics needing training resources on delivering difficult news.

Supported a range of research studies, from providing focus group input and advising on public and patient-facing communications to serving on advisory groups.

Contributed to new consensus guidelines for sonographers and as editorial lead for the National Bereavement Care Pathway in England and in Scotland.

Provided information to policymakers and influencers, including the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Baby Loss and the Scottish Government.



“Thank you so much for the session today, it was perfect, I know I have taken so much away from it, and I feel much more confident about supporting women who have experienced pregnancy loss.”

Polly Ellis, attendee on Zoom session for student midwives

Many people find it hard to talk about pregnancy loss or worry about how to support someone they know. That's why **more public discussion, awareness and media coverage of pregnancy loss** is one of our goals.

WHAT WE DID IN 2020/21

Responded to over 105 media requests, including print, broadcast and online media, with the help of our 91 Media Volunteers.

Served on the core group planning Baby Loss Awareness Week (BLAW) and led on communications and engagement. We also facilitated six online Wave of Light events.

Saw continued growth across all our social media channels, including a 71% increase in our Instagram followers.

Worked with prison charity Pact to increase awareness of our services for prisoners and their families, collaborated with LGBT groups to better understand specific needs, and provided information for 'Enable' magazine for a feature on miscarriage for women with a learning disability.



“I wanted to raise money and awareness around pregnancy loss as it still seems to be such a taboo subject, and a lot of women are finding out that they've lost their babies on their own due to the pandemic.”

Leanne Tokely, Miscarriage Association Fundraiser

Abridged Financial Statements

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
INCOME FROM:				
Donations and legacies	529,688	-	15,381	545,069
Other trading activities (fundraising & merchandise)	71,257	-	-	71,257
Charitable activities (leaflet sales)	5,697	-	-	5,697
Investment income	7,050	-	-	7,050
Other income	2,250	-	-	2,250
Total income	615,942	-	15,381	631,323
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Raising funds	31,436	13,090	-	44,526
Charitable activities	343,258	2,371	7,599	353,228
Total expenditure	374,694	15,461	7,599	397,754
Net income / (expenditure)	241,248	(15,461)	7,782	233,569
BALANCE SHEET				
Fixed assets				1,216
Current assets				901,341
Total liabilities				(13,618)
Net assets				888,939
Represented by:				
Brought forward from 2019/20	601,314	42,312	11,744	655,370
Net income/ (expenditure) 2020/21	241,248	(15,461)	7,782	233,569
Transfer between funds	(500)	500	-	-
Balance carried forward	842,062	27,351	19,526	888,939

These abridged financial statements have been extracted from the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The full financial statements were prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and receive an independent examination report from Mazars LLP.

These abridged financial statements may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full financial statements, the independent examiner's report on those financial statements and the Trustees' annual report should be consulted. Copies of these can be obtained free of charge from the Miscarriage Association, 17 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield WF1 3QW or from the Charity Commissioner's website.

The full financial statements were approved on 15th December 2021 and have been submitted to the Charity Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and Companies House.

Signed: 
P. Kerry (Hon Treasurer)

Independent Examiner
Mazars LLP, 5th Floor, 3 Wellington
Place, Leeds LS1 4AP

Principal Bankers,
Co-operative Bank, 1 Balloon Street,
Manchester M60 4EP

Reviewing our finances 2020/21

Despite the uncertainties brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic, the Miscarriage Association had a very positive financial year, thanks largely to the generosity of our many supporters.

We began the year with a healthy fund balance, which provided immediate security for our core services. We faced a significant drop in income with the cancellation of the London Marathon and other mass participation events, but this was more than compensated for by the success of a series of 'virtual' events and activities, which proved extremely popular.

We benefited from a local government Business Support grant of £10,000 and a restricted fund grant of £10,648 from the Scottish Government for work in Scotland.

Donations from companies and charitable trusts dropped significantly compared with 2020, most likely reflecting the general economic climate. Income from leaflet sales also fell: the anticipated result of our providing more leaflets free of charge.

Total general fund expenditure was very similar to the previous year, with the increased costs of

charitable activities balanced by lower fundraising costs than in 2020. Designated fund expenditure was significantly less than the previous year, reflecting projects that were completed in 2019/20. Restricted fund expenditure is that of branches and work in Scotland.

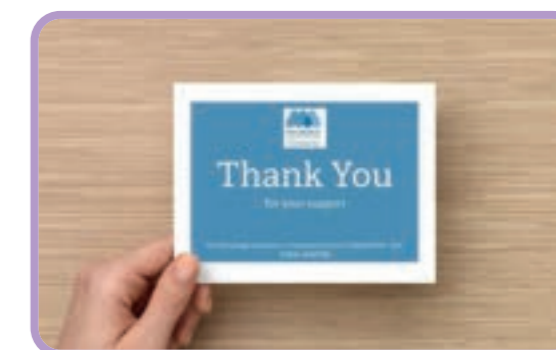
With income greatly exceeding expenditure during 2020/21, the M.A. ended the year with a significantly increased fund balance, well above the six months' operational costs that our reserves policy demands.

This level of reserves has provided much-needed financial security during 2020/21 and will continue to do so as we enter the new financial year, particularly in relation to future income. Even more importantly, however, it will allow us to expand the work of the M.A. in a sustainable way, enabling us to increase our support and

information services during the continuing pandemic and beyond.

We should end this financial review as we began it – with thanks to all our supporters: our fundraisers and donors; the volunteers who help to keep the costs of providing direct charitable support relatively low; those who share their knowledge and skills; our members and our friends.

With your help, your wish to make things better for others, we can continue working in line with our vision: that everyone affected by pregnancy loss gets the care, support and information that's right for them.



Our thanks to the companies and charitable trusts that supported us during 2020/21

DONATIONS

Adobe Inc

Duncan Norman Trust Fund

CNOOC International

Google

Ipsos Mori

Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust

JW Robertson Trust

Morrisons

Norton Rose Fulbright

Royal Institution, c/o Steve McNeil

Stella Symons Charitable Trust

The Point 1888

GIFT IN KIND

Google for Nonprofits

Thank you to our supporters

We would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the work of the Miscarriage Association during the year.

We are very grateful to our telephone support volunteers, support group leaders and helpers, and to those volunteers who administered and moderated our online support platforms. Almost all people with personal experience of pregnancy loss, they helped to provide comfort and support to others going through difficult times.

We greatly appreciate all our media volunteers and others who shared their stories in the media and online, helping others to feel less alone.

We are grateful too to all those who donate their time and expertise to inform and improve our services: health professionals, researchers, writers and colleagues from related charities and of course, those with lived experience of pregnancy loss.

We are deeply grateful to all those who contributed to our funds. Their support might have been the result of a fundraising event, or a donation in memory or in celebration or simply made anonymously online. Some have supported us through payroll giving or by their annual membership fee. We also greatly appreciate donations made by companies and charitable trusts.

Every donation is a gift that helps us make a difference. Every gift helps to fund our work now and going forward – especially important given the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Our fundraisers also raise awareness of pregnancy loss and of the M.A. as a source of help. And during this year as every year, at least some of those supporting our fundraisers found that they too could finally talk about their own experiences of pregnancy loss, helping to reduce taboos. There is nothing more powerful.



The M.A. team



Trustees (left to right): Ola Obaro, Amy Braier, Jan Birrell, Natasha Necati, Laura Norris (retired), Barbara Hepworth-Jones, Sarah Bailey, Penny Kerry. Missing from picture: Beena Lad.

PATRON

Nigel Martyn

AMBASSADORS

Matthew Burton

Natalie Lowe

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Mr Roy Farquharson

Ms Diana Hamilton-Fairley

Dr Marjory MacLean

Prof Lesley Regan

Prof James Walker

TRUSTEES: AT 31 MARCH 2021

Penny Kerry, Hon Treasurer and Interim Chair

Amy Braier, Vice-Chair

Barbara Hepworth-Jones, Vice-Chair

Sarah Bailey

Jan Birrell

Beena Lad

Natasha Necati

Ola Obaro

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Peta Harrison

STAFF: AT 31 MARCH 2021

Ruth Bender Atik, National Director

Vicki Robinson, Deputy Director

Lisa Bruce, Senior Support Worker

Helen Berry, Support Worker

Juanita Charles, Support Worker

Ann Collier, Support Worker

Karn Dyson, Fundraising Manager

Alice Weeden, Communications Manager

FREELANCE STAFF

Clare Foster

Natasha Judd

Plans for the future

Our over-arching priority is to maintain our existing service provision and to continue developing it in line with the needs of current and potential stakeholders. We will therefore continue working to our goals, as set out in our Strategic Plan:

- Increased online support and information.
- Appropriate direct personal support and information.
- More health professionals able to provide good and sensitive care.
- More public discussion, awareness and media coverage of pregnancy loss.
- Increased organisational capacity and skills.

IN 2021/22 WE'LL BE:

- Launching a pregnancy loss pledge for employers, encouraging sign-up to a set of standards to ensure appropriate support for employees affected by pregnancy loss.
- Researching and developing new resources for people who experience second trimester miscarriage and for people who are pregnant after loss.
- Further developing our online learning resources for health professionals, with a new section on caring for women with second trimester loss and a plan for a complete review and refresh.
- Campaigning to increase knowledge of pregnancy loss and of the Miscarriage Association.
- Developing our new long-term strategy, to deliver as much as possible for people affected by pregnancy loss.



I was so grateful to come across the Miscarriage Association website when we recently experienced our second miscarriage.

It was so helpful to read all the information but particularly to read the stories and poems from women and men who were going through similar feelings and experiences.

My husband and I felt an alonsideness that was extremely helpful in our grieving. It has helped us in coming to terms with our experience and to talk to each other about how we both have been feeling whilst also validating and processing our emotions around it all.

Thank you all for your work on this website. It has been a gem during the difficult times.



**MISCARRIAGE
ASSOCIATION**

The knowledge to help

CONTACT US

01924 200799 (Helpline)

01924 200795 (Admin)

info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk

17 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire WF1 3QW

VISIT US

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Live chat available on our website

FOLLOW US

