The challenge:

As the external environment in which Samaritans operates continued to evolve rapidly and the demand for support was increasing, the Samaritans embarked on a huge programme of change, to develop a better service for callers, through modernising services and improving the experience of volunteers. As a predominantly volunteer-led organisation, changes at any scale are understandably complex and with such an important service to maintain, The Samaritans head office and volunteer leadership knew that change needed to be carefully planned and managed to ensure it drove value with minimal disruption.

What we did:

Working with the team, we consolidated the lessons learnt of previous projects, to ensure that the programme approach would take these into account. We defined and consolidated outcomes and benefits and developed a benefits map that clearly articulated how benefits could be realised, and where changes may be disruptive

Carried out interviews with staff and volunteer leadership and branches to understand change impact and likely response to change, including where we could expect resistance

Developed a bespoke change approach bringing together The Samaritans tried and tested methodologies and our expertise

The outcome / results:

Through increasing the change capabilities within the core team, we were able to raise awareness of the need for a considered and people-led approach to change. Our deliverables were used to further our vision and change narrative and gain the required support from leadership and the board.