



Annual Social Impact report  
2017 - 2018



INVESTING FOR GOOD

# Contents

Social Impact and Financial Confidence Scores	3
Foreword and Executive Summary	5
Social mission	6
Theory of Change	7
2017/2018 Key achievements	8
Our impact at a glance	10
Our approach	14
Understanding and measuring impact	15
Our impact	18
Limits and challenges	40
Financial Information	41
Plans for next year	48
Appendix - Overview of methodology	50

# Social Impact and Financial Confidence Scores

## By Investing For Good

### Context

The results presented in this Impact report are based on the data collected and provided by Thera. To meet social investors' requirement for an independent assessment, Investing for Good also evaluates Thera's social impact and financial performance by awarding a score on both aspects. This is the third year in a row that we have conducted this analysis within the context of the Thera Trust Charity Bond issued in April 2015.

### Methodology

Ratings are assigned based on an assessment of over 200 impact and financial criteria. The Social Impact Rating, determined through the application of 'The Good Analyst' methodology, aims to share our findings with investors and to communicate our assessment of the quality of Thera's impact processes and ability to capture and improve their impact.

#### Social Impact

Social Impact reflects both the investment's capacity to generate positive social impact, and Thera's capacity to measure and report on its impact. It is based on a weighted assessment of: evidence of mission fulfilment, stakeholder integration, depth of change, breadth of change and impact management practices.

#### Financial Confidence

Financial Confidence is a measure of financial confidence in the investment and the underlying organisation. It is based on a weighted assessment of: size, structure, development, operational performance, governance and specific risk factors.

### Results

Thera retained its high ratings for both Social Impact and Financial Confidence (scoring a maximum 1 on a scale of 1 to 3).



## Social Impact Rating Rationale

Thera is a particularly impactful organisation, delivering high quality services to people with a learning disability. One of Thera's main strengths is its beneficiary focus: it has an in-depth understanding of its beneficiaries' needs, engaging in regular systematic consultation, and places people with a learning disability at the centre of the decision-making process. The choice of having executive and non-executive directors with a learning disability reflects this approach. Thera also offers bespoke support to every individual in support of personal goals.

Thera has a comprehensive impact strategy, based on a strong social mission and a theory of change. Thera displays strong impact leadership, with the management fully engaged to ensure that impact management is on everyone's agenda.

Thera meets the requirements that would be expected from an organisation of its size (c.3,500 employees) in terms of evidencing its impact, with many processes in place to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data. Impact measurement and management practices could be strengthened further to ensure greater consistency of data over time and across services. A more systematic approach to gathering data will help make the reporting system more robust. This would be facilitated by the adoption of common software across all projects to collect and store data uniformly.

The vision and practices described above support our assessment of Thera having a low impact risk, i.e. the probability that impact is different or weaker than expected is low<sup>1</sup>.

1. Impact risk is assessed against the following aspects: evidence risk, external risk, execution risk, stakeholder participation risk, drop-off risk, unexpected impact risk, efficiency risk, contribution risk. More information about this approach on the Impact Management Project website: [www.impactmanagementproject.com/understand-impact/risk](http://www.impactmanagementproject.com/understand-impact/risk)

## Financial Confidence Rating Rationale

Thera has been awarded a score of 1, the highest Financial Confidence rating. Thera reports positive income levels this year and a seventh consecutive year of revenue surplus. The charity bond covenants were again significantly exceeded. Thera met coupon payments throughout the life of the bond and in April successfully redeemed the bond, putting the organisation among a small number that have successfully exited a social investment in the UK, which can help attract continued interest from social investors. Thera maintained a significantly improved cash balance of £4.9m as at 31 March 2018 and has continued to improve its financial position against a difficult backdrop.



Note: Whilst audited, all figures provided for 2017/18 are not finalised, and therefore could be subject to change.

## Foreword and Executive Summary

Through the dedication and enthusiasm of our leaders and teams, year 3 of our impact report has seen all strands of our activity progress, enabling a wide range of positive outcomes to be achieved by people with a learning disability.

It has been another challenging year of learning how to better measure our social impact and I'll take this opportunity to thank all of those involved in the collection of data and the analysis and reporting that sit behind this impact report. Using the lessons learned this year we are now reviewing our Theory of Change and further developing our impact measurement, with the aim of further improving our impact on the lives of people with a learning disability.

Jenny Garrigan  
Director, Thera Trust



## Social mission

Our social mission remains the same: to work closely with and for people with a learning disability to empower them and support them to lead full, productive lives, and support them to have control over their own life. We do this by providing care and support at home and in the community and through a range of specialist services such as Financial Advocacy and Employment and Training support. Our leadership structure embodies this mission by having people with a learning disability directing and controlling Thera Trust and its regional companies.



## Theory of Change

Input	What we do	What we aim to achieve	Our impact goal
Motivated, well trained, experienced leaders and staff, who are expert in their field	Full and equal integration of people with a learning disability within the governance of Thera and its teams	People with a learning disability are Company Members, Company Directors and employees in Thera	Demonstrate that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society
	Individual direct care and support to people with a learning disability	People have ambitious life goals People with complex needs have equality of service	Increase personal and social well-being of people with learning disabilities
	Financial advocacy	People have choice and control over personal money	Increase financial well-being
	Bespoke housing solutions	People find housing solutions meeting their complex needs	Improve access to housing
	Support to entrepreneurs	People improve skills and confidence to set up a business/get a job, People gain and sustain employment People reduce reliance on paid support	Improve readiness and access to Employment, Training and Business opportunities
	Employment and training programmes		
	Community capacity building	People have greater social opportunities and develop friendships	Broader community and social networks

# 2017/2018 Key achievements



## People's Place in Society

- In addition to our Service Quality Director roles, Thera Trust Head of Development is now a joint position shared between a leader with a learning disability and a business development professional
- Supported Company Members are actively engaged
- We have more voluntary directors on our boards, who have lived experience of learning disability



## Personal and Social Wellbeing

- Quality Assessors with a learning disability continue to report that Thera teams are providing universal high quality care and support including to those with complex behavioural needs
- Results from our iPlanit person-centred planning tool also evidences, through the goals set, an equality of opportunity for people with complex behavioural needs.



## Financial Wellbeing

- Dosh<sup>2</sup> has supported a greater number of people to gain additional welfare benefit income and is enabling people to have more choice about how they spend their own money. Dosh continues to enable people to have control over their Personal Budget to spend on their care

.....  
2. Dosh, Forward Housing, Camden Society and Equal Futures are subsidiary companies of Thera Trust.



## Access to Housing

- Forward Housing<sup>2</sup> has continued to strive towards creative solutions to housing, working alongside people and their families to find houses specifically developed to meet their needs and in the right location, whilst in parallel engaging with Thera teams and other professionals to ensure care and support is tailored to individual need



## Employment, Training and Business

- People have continued to be supported by the Dolphins' Den project in Swindon and Chippenham, participating in a range of business development workshops and establishing their business ideas with mentors. Many have progressed exciting business projects - from glass blowing to horse care. Dolphins' Den is newly active in Salisbury and Trowbridge



- Apprenticeships and training courses, many of which are accredited, continue to be a great success through the Camden Society's Unity Works programme<sup>2</sup>. Many have found and maintained paid employment



- Knowledge is being shared across Thera Group with the development of a supported employment programme in Cambridgeshire including accredited training courses for Craft and Creations' voluntary workers

- The Quality Company remains a centre of excellence in supporting people to maintain their employment and develop in their roles and in the organisation



## Community and Social Networks

- Families are continuing to be supported with enduring circles of support through Equal Futures<sup>2</sup>. Further progress has been made in connecting and working alongside harder to reach families



- The TEN and Gig Buddies projects have increased peoples' social activities and friendships. Gig Buddies has had an exciting year working with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe on accessibility, in addition to its core activity of getting people out to local venues and promoting musicians with a learning disability

## Our impact at a glance

Our Theory of Change (page 7) outlines the 7 areas of activity ranging from our day-to-day care and support, specialist activity and defined projects, supporting 6 broad outcomes. This report focusses on the reporting period April 2017 to March 2018.

### Promoting People's Place in Society

Thera promotes the leadership abilities of people with a learning disability by employing them in senior roles within the organisation and offering them membership of their local Thera Company.



13

**paid posts held by leaders with a learning disability**

1 additional post this year



4

**of Thera's leaders celebrated 10 years in post**



7

**Voluntary directors with a learning disability**

2 more than last year



104

**Company Members with a learning disability**

reduced from 121 due to re-definition of member categories this year in one company



26

**staff with a learning disability**

reduced from 31, with some current staff taking the opportunity to increase their working hours

### Access to Housing

Forward Housing develop bespoke housing solutions for people with a learning disability plus housing brokerage.



84

**people over the previous two years have achieved sustainable housing solutions as a result of the funding facility from Cheyne Capital**

### Personal and Social Wellbeing

The main area of Thera's work is to support people to achieve their ambitions, increase their independence and social/personal wellbeing with support in many aspects of their day-to-day lives.



3,000

**people supported**



626

**people supported for greater than 30 hours a week**

results in the report are based on this sample. Over 50% of them have complex behavioural needs.



85%

**the quality of our individual support services is rated at 85% by assessors with a learning disability**

86% quality for support to people with complex behavioural needs.

### Financial Wellbeing

Dosh offers corporate appointeeship, person centred financial advocacy and support to manage individual budgets and direct payments.



**Dosh supported 853 people this year, an increase of 164**



**97% of people happy with their financial advocacy support**



**93% say they can choose how they spend their money**



**Income increased by £53 on average in the first 12 months**



**Savings increased by £4,500 on average**



**59% people who have had a decision about their Personal Independence Payment (PIP) have seen their income increase**

## Employment, Training and Business

Thera, through its Dolphins' Den initiative, supports people with a learning disability to set up their own business or community project.

 **29** people with a learning disability completed a programme of Dolphins' Den workshops

 **11** people were matched with business mentors

 **5** projects led by people with a learning disability in the life of the project - 2 this year

Offered through:

- The Camden Society Unity Works programme in addition to supporting a range of employers and work with FE colleges
- The Quality Company employing people with a lived experience of learning disability as Quality Assessors
- 82 Craft and Creations - a new shop selling craft from a range of suppliers; and other initiatives

 **308** people with a learning disability enrolled in Unity Works programme

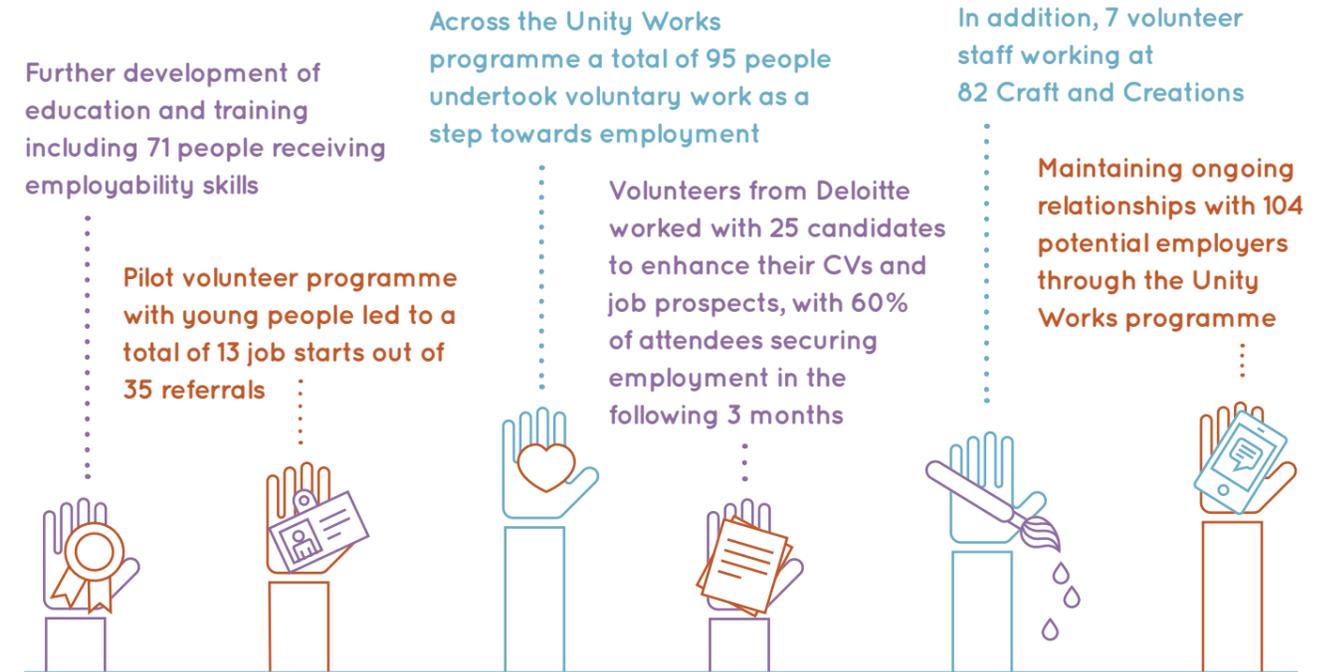
Of which:

 **186** people completed fixed-term work placements

 **219** people found paid employment - 165 ( 75%) sustaining employment for at least 6 months. A further 26 quality assessors sustain long term employment in The Quality Company

 **55** people completed accredited qualifications or awards

 **8** (100%) apprenticeships successfully completed



## Community and Social Networks

Thera works to build the capacity and capability of people's communities to be inclusive and involving of their neighbours with a learning disability.

- Equal Futures are set up to build circles of support around individuals with a learning disability
- Thera (Scotland), Equal Futures and Neighbourhood Networks - TEN, are collaborating to increase the social inclusion and opportunity of people with a learning disability
- Gig Buddies project offers an opportunity for people with a learning disability to attend music and other gigs, pairing each person with a like-minded person to share the experience and fully take part

 A further 2 new circles set up by Equal Futures, totalling 20 Lifelong circles of support

 1 new Equal Futures project working with hard-to-reach families

 10 people with a learning disability actively engaging with TEN (Thera, Equal Futures and Neighbourhood Networks)

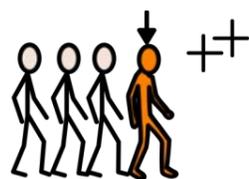
 25 people with a learning disability getting out and about with their Gig Buddies

## Our approach

### Leadership by People with a Learning Disability

The key to our impact lies in the way we do things. As set out in our vision (see box), we want to lead by example to demonstrate that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society. We want to embody the change we would like to see in society. We have therefore built our leadership structure on this principle and employ people with a learning disability as paid directors (or paid in other senior positions) throughout the organisation.

We have employed people with a learning disability in many roles, from the leadership of an equal executive team in Thera Trust, the parent company, which includes a shared role of Director of Quality and Involvement, to Service Quality Directors as part of the Managing Director / Service Quality Director executive team in our care and support companies. Our company rules (Articles of Association) state that there will also be at least one voluntary non-executive director on each of the boards. In addition, through company membership, people with a learning disability have the opportunity to be in control of the company that supports them, by having their vote at Annual General Meetings and appointing an Independent director.



#### Leaders

Thera will show that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society



#### Respect

Thera will respect the rights and wishes of people at home, at work and in the community



#### Control

Thera will be controlled by people with a learning disability



#### Quality

People with a learning disability will check the quality of support from their Thera company



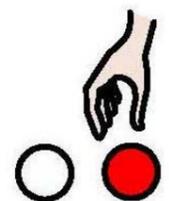
#### Manage

People supported by Thera can say how their Thera company is directed and managed



#### Charity

Thera Group will be led by a charity



#### Choice

People with a learning disability will design the support they want from Thera

## Understanding and measuring impact

### Our impact journey and learning

In the three years we have been publishing our impact report, we have learned how to better measure and report our impact. We were ambitious from the start, seeking to not only measure focussed areas of activity, such as housing, financial advocacy and employment support, but also to measure our impact on people's day-to-day lives. With the support of Investing for Good, we developed our logic model or Theory of Change (see simplified version page 7). Early 2015, we embarked on the construction of a framework that defined certain indicators, tools and measurement timescales for 8 strands of activity (including the measurement of a pilot project limited to one year).

#### Data collection and measurement

As with any organisation, we have always collected data and have striven to harness it to better inform our day-to-day activities and inform management decisions. Supporting someone in their day-to-day lives is a very personal undertaking, and Thera has always been able to demonstrate with people their own achievement in their day-to-day lives and the input of the staff supporting those individuals, through person-centred plans, support plans and monitoring.

Alongside any performance data, we also collect on an on-going basis, quantitative and qualitative impact-related data. In doing so, we have realised that there is a need for further improvement in data collection tools and processes to fully capture our performance and impact. This has been, in some cases, a hard and frustrating lesson to learn. We have found now that we need to further develop the outcome scales in areas of activity such as day-to-day care and support that have longer-term goals. Therefore, for the coming year and beyond, we will also focus on more defined activities within that area of work, which is, after all, the majority of the Group's activity.

In the longer term, we aim to codify the specialist aspects of the work that we do. This will enable us to better collect meaningful data that is more focussed on measuring against specific desired outcomes and impact.

#### Reporting

We are keen to ensure that we incorporate impact reporting into everything that we do, in addition to reporting to investors in Thera Trust's social bond.

Stepping back and compiling the social impact report has been a rewarding exercise that allows us to mark the achievements of the people we support and their teams. We have developed the style and content of reporting our social impact - becoming more concise and precise, given that the first report needed to include a significant background and context.

We have an integrated and evolving culture of impact management, with leaders and boards never losing sight of the importance of and regularly demanding “how do we know we are doing a good job?” We have directly used our impact data to inform the update of our strategic plan, and we seek to further improve the use of our impact data to monitor our performance and inform decision-making.

### Next Steps

We remain determined to better measure, report and manage the impact we have with people with a learning disability, for whom impact may realistically mean a modest change over a period of years, rather than within the confines of a time limited project.

#### Key questions to which we aim to answer in this report

What difference did we make in the lives of people with a learning disability?

Can we evidence that we had an impact and what does the information tell us?

What do people with a learning disability and others tell us about the support we provide?

#### What impact do we measure?

Thera’s focus is to ensure that people are supported to live the lives they choose and are not judged by others on how fast they themselves progress in their lives. Therefore, rather than measuring directly whether people with a learning disability are achieving their goals and aspirations, we have chosen to focus on measuring whether they are supported and enabled in the right way, to recognise and maximise their opportunities. This approach is to ensure that we are solely measuring our impact on the lives of the people with a learning disability.

#### How do we measure it?

Data is collected from a range of sources:

##### Quantitative

- Regular reporting – monthly/ quarterly as appropriate, from operational teams covering staff input, key outputs such as person specific plans developed, activities undertaken and performance against key plans and indicators
- Operational audit and exceptional reports, from support teams and managers
- The Quality Company’s Quality assessment data measured against Thera’s quality standards
- Data provided through analysis by experts such as Thera’s behavioural specialists
- Data available through contracts monitoring, HR and finance systems, iPlanit and corporate records

##### Qualitative

- Bi Monthly Service Quality Director reports
- Quality surveys of family carers from The Quality Company and Quality Assessments reports carried out by our assessors with a learning disability - measured against Thera’s quality standards
- Annual customer satisfaction surveys by Dosh manager - measured against the Dosh Promise and key indicators
- Project specific surveys e.g. Dolphins’ Den workshop delivery, through a mix of adapted wellbeing survey (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale) and key project indicators
- Topic focussed interviews e.g. leadership by people with a learning disability
- Testimonials as they arise or requested
- Case studies delivered through support staff working alongside individuals with a learning disability

# Our impact

## People's Place in Society

### Our Organisational Impact - Leaders with a Lived Experience of Learning Disability

The embodiment of Thera's Vision is the equal leadership team in Thera Trust, the charity and parent company, that includes a paid director with a learning disability and the employment of leaders with a learning disability as part of the executive team in each of the subsidiary companies that provide direct care and support to people with a learning disability - Service Quality Director (SQD) posts. This role is key to Thera as it ensures that quality of support is monitored and reported at board level by someone with a learning disability.

This year, 4 of Thera's leaders celebrated 10 years in post. The positive impact of the Service Quality Director post can be further demonstrated through Aspire joining Thera Group in 2016 and the inclusion Ian Harper, an established Thera Service Quality Director joining their executive team. Ian, with the support of his Executive Assistant, quickly started to get to know the people supported by Aspire and their teams and has had a positive impact on the lives of people supported by Aspire as well as the board and wider organisation.



Celebrating 10 years of leadership (left to right): Matthew Smith, Graham Skidmore, Andrew Bright and Helena Frewin. Accompanied by Jenny Garrigan far left

*"The role of the Service Quality Director was new to Aspire when we joined the Thera group in 2016. New SQD at Aspire, Ian Harper's contribution in this role has been a revelation, not just in terms of auditing and ensuring the quality of service provided by the organisation, but also in many other ways which we hadn't anticipated. Working as a senior executive he has earned the respect of all his colleagues and board members, as someone who is able to draw on his personal experience of learning disability to ensure that the needs and wishes of the people we support are always at the centre of everything we do. The support Ian receives from, and shares with, the other Service Quality Directors across the Thera Group acts as an effective multiplier in terms of overall contribution and effectiveness. Ian provides a tremendous example for others by what he has achieved for himself, for his organisation and for the wider community."*

Ken Jollans, Chairman, Aspire Living

Ian has also influenced the wider learning disability community in his work.

*"Ian has played a central role in the reconfiguration of our Learning Disability Partnership Board. He has consistently sought to be the voice of people with Learning Disabilities and has ensured that their views have been represented in our deliberations. He has also been a valuable source of benchmarking material for our work through his contacts in the Learning Disability community in Worcestershire."*

John Gorman, Herefordshire County Council

Building on the success of the Service Quality Director role, Thera has also seen the addition of a further leader with lived experience of learning disability, through the recruitment process mid 2017 of a new Thera Trust Head of Development. This brings the total leadership posts held by people with a learning disability to 13 paid leadership posts.

The Head of Development post is a shared post combining the lived and professional experience of Andrew Bright alongside the professional business development experience of his colleague.

*"I have learned a lot from being a Service Quality Director. It has helped me think about what is good and bad support and what Thera expects. I have enjoyed helping new Thera companies develop and I thought I had the skills and experience for [this role]"*

Andrew Bright

This year has also seen an increase by two to 7 voluntary directors with a learning disability – covering 64% of boards. We will continue to seek more across Thera Group. This enhances the knowledge on the boards, provides real challenge and support to the Service Quality Director. We are also seeing that this is a pipeline for development to the Service Quality Director role as evidenced by the successful recruitment in the past two years in the south west of England and in Scotland. Although we wouldn't rely on this as the sole source of talent nor is this ambition a pre-requisite for recruitment to these voluntary roles.

### Company Membership

Company membership is in place to ensure that, alongside staff and family carers, people with a learning disability (Supported Company Members) are in control of their Thera company. Company boards are accountable to their members.

Last year, we surveyed Supported Company Members to measure the impact on themselves and their view of the level of involvement and influence they had (see [Thera Trust Social Impact report 2016/17](#)). It is the aim to repeat this after two years. In the meantime, we asked the views of one of the Supported Company Members to get a flavour of how this impact is developing.

*"Company Membership has helped me get out and about and meet other members, which is good because I sometimes find it difficult to be with groups of people. I find it easy being a Company Member – I always have someone with me to help me understand what is being discussed. I come to most of the meetings and speak up and give feedback about things. Being a company member has helped me to remember things about the company and how it is run. It has helped me do other things as well"*

KS, Supported Company Member

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members have continued to be creative and involving this year ensuring the inclusion and active participation of members with a learning disability. Whilst the majority were well attended, two AGMs were not quorate on the first meeting. These were rescheduled and were able to go ahead. A review by the relevant Service Quality Directors found that this was most probably due to communication of event details being only within the statutory required AGM notice period and the need for better understanding of company membership amongst some of Thera's teams. This is being addressed through Service Quality Directors aiming to complete train-the-trainers learning in 2018 as part of the implementation of Thera's revised Being Heard strategy. The training will be put on by some experienced Service Quality Directors and Executive Assistants. All Service Quality Directors will then offer this training to staff teams as part of Thera's staff induction programme.

### Employees with a Lived Experience of Learning Disability

The number of employees with a declared learning disability has reduced this year, due to leavers in The Quality Company. However the current 26 staff with a learning disability have taken the opportunity to work more hours.

Evolution since last year:



**Increase in paid leaders with a learning disability - 12 to 13 with the addition of a person with a learning disability taking up a shared Head of Development role**



**Increase in voluntary directors with a learning disability 5 to 7 representing 64% of boards with these posts filled**



**Reduction in company members with a learning disability due to re-definition of member categories in one company - 121 to 104**



**Smaller number of staff taking the opportunity to work a greater number of hours, in The Quality Company - 31 to 26**

## Personal and Social Wellbeing

Thera supports people with a learning disability to have an ordinary life, maximising their opportunities and supporting them to reach their own personal goals and ambitions. As stated on previous impact reports, the activity of day-to-day support is as simple yet as complex as getting up in the morning, bathing, choosing what to wear, preparing and eating breakfast, deciding to go out, travelling, and there the day has just begun.

Thera teams provide a range of support for people to have a good life at home, in their local community and for work and leisure.

### Our Impact

The impact results presented here are based on a follow-up carried out with 1,126 people out of a total of 3000, having received individual direct support in 2017. Among them, 626 people have been supported for more than 30 hours per week, including 391 with complex behavioural support needs<sup>3</sup>.

The intention is not to measure whether people with a learning disability are achieving their goals and aspirations, but rather whether they are supported and enabled in the right way to recognise and maximise their opportunities.

Thera has continued to concentrate on reporting impact of our support to people with complex behavioural support needs as it is nationally recognised that they are at greater risk of poor support<sup>4</sup>. This report has used anonymised Quality Assessment results and anonymised evidence from Person Centred Planning using the online tool iPlanit as a means of comparing results from last year and carrying out a comparison of support for people with complex behavioural support needs against that of Thera's wider population.



3. Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion" Challenging Behaviour: A Unified Approach, Royal College of Psychiatrists, et al, 2007

4. Sources:

Department of Health Winterbourne View Review: Concordat: Programme of Action, 2012

Winterbourne View – Time for Change, Sir Stephen Bubb, Nov 2014

Time for Change – The Challenge Ahead, Sir Stephen Bubb, Feb 2016

NHS England Transforming Care for People with Learning Disabilities – Next Steps NHSE et al, Jan 2015.

## Quality rating<sup>5</sup>

Assessors with a lived experience of learning disability offering peer quality assessment of support rated the quality of support as follows:



**Overall quality rating of 85% - broadly similar to last year (84%)**



**Leading Your Own Life - slight fall to 62%, vs. 65% last year (remains broadly similar for people with complex behavioural needs)**



**Designing Your Support - has increased by an average of 4% to above 82%**



**Having a Say - has remained high at 93%**



**Your Community has risen by 2% to above 87%**



**Your Home has risen by 5% to 96% for the wider population**



**Being Safe remains broadly the same at 95%**



**Controlling Your Thera Company - has seen a drop by 4% to just above 79%**

5. Assessors with a learning disability, employed by The Quality Company, have assessed the overall quality of support, based on 7 Quality standards and 64 indicators.

The quality of our individual support services has been rated 85% on average by assessors with a learning disability, and 86% for people with complex behavioural needs, evidencing that Thera provides again this year at least as good support to people with complex behavioural needs as the wider population supported by Thera. The small dip in the rating for Standard 1, Leading Your Own Life, can be explained by assessors not seeing physical evidence of Person Centred Planning (PCP)<sup>6</sup>. PCPs have traditionally been paper based, whereas they are now on-line and therefore not always as easily visible to the assessor alongside the person. We have however seen an increasing number of people have their plans live on-line through iPlanit.

As a response to the small dip in the rating for Standard 7, Controlling Your Thera Company, Service Quality Directors have planned training throughout 2018/19 to further teach support teams methods and tools to improve awareness of Membership

Utilising the clarity that iPlanit<sup>7</sup> offers, a comparison has been undertaken of an anonymous representative group of people with live plans on iPlanit and of those with complex behavioural support needs. This analysis found that both groups had a greater amount of goals linked to the same areas of



6. Person centred planning is a collection of tools and approaches based upon a set of shared values that can be used to plan with a person – not for them. These tools can be used to help the person think about what is important in their lives now and also to think about what would make a good future. Planning should build the person's circle of support and involve all the people who are important in that person's life ([www.inclusive-solutions.com](http://www.inclusive-solutions.com))

7. iPlanit is a web-based person centred planning tool with goals covering 7 broad areas of activity - Community, Home/where I live, Employment, My Money, Relationships and Communication, Independence, Confidence and Learning, Health, Lifestyle and culture. Thera has tailored the tool under its licence with Aspicco.

ambition i.e. community, relationships, independence and health. Both had smaller amounts of goals linked to home, employment and money. Although the detailed activity under these headings differed, we can conclude that through analysis of iPlanit activity, people with complex behavioural support need get broadly similar level of support to plan in their lives, as the wider population of people supported by Thera.

In addition to PCP goals being on iPlanit, this year has seen a roll-out in training for teams on inputting support plans onto the iPlanit tool. The aim being to make them more accessible, easy to track and review plus be more visible to managers to track team performance. It is aimed that all support planning will be on the iPlanit system by October 2018.

Whilst it has been a challenge to ensure that all information from the paper based planning is put onto iPlanit, anecdotal evidence tells us that the process of putting information onto iPlanit has helped support teams revisit people's personal histories and re-engage with the things that people like and dislike. It has also supported teams to be able to monitor and manage their input to enable people to achieve their goals.

*"T" and I started working on her Iplanit support plan in the summer 2017. One of "T"'s life goals / outcomes is to see if she would qualify for free funding for a high tech communication aid.*

*"T" is very independent and her communication difficulties can hold her back at times.*

*"T" sat with me to personally input her goals and she was involved in informing the team about the particular outcome in question.*

*The team are aware of the actions linked to this outcome and consistently strive towards helping "T" to achieve them.*

*"T" uses the steps indicated in her Iplanit PCP to ensure the team supported her correctly.*

*"T" will sit with me each time actions are updated and new ones added via my laptop. I suggest things and "T" lets me know if she thinks they are a good idea.*

*"T" sat and helped me to input all her detailed support needs correctly; ensuring "T" has ownership over her plan".*

Team member, The Meeting Place

### Impact of housing on people with complex behavioural needs

As confirmed by Thera's behavioural specialists and a data analysis (i.e. types of incidents and interventions reported) we continue to evidence that living in houses of multiple-occupancy can increase the number of behavioural incidents.

This, in part, is due to the ability to manage the environment when others live there and the impact of relationships in shared households with those other than family members or partners.

## Financial Wellbeing

The Dosh project supports people with a learning disability to have more independence and control over their money. This year we supported 853 people with appointeeship and financial advocacy, which includes support with benefits, bills and budgeting. Dosh continually develop new tools to help people to learn new skills and make choices with their money.

Dosh has continued to support more people. We aim to support each person in a person-centred way as set out in the Dosh Promise (see [www.dosh.org/dosh-promise](http://www.dosh.org/dosh-promise)). This is used to measure impact and success through the Annual Review process. The 2017 annual review results showed:



**Dosh continues to support more people - 853 this year, building on 689 last year and 512 the previous year**



**97% of people supported and their circles of support are happy with the support we provide**



**94% of people say they can choose how they spend their money to do the things they want (and 6% say they can sometimes)**



**96% say they get the information they need and understand from Dosh**

## An increase in income and savings<sup>8</sup>

People are increasing their income and savings in the first 12 months after they are referred to Dosh, thanks to the Dosh team's benefits assessment and applications and support with budgeting.

Income and Savings levels over 12 months			
	Av. on referral	Av. after 12 months	Increase
Income (per week)	£230	£283	£53
Savings	£5,816	£10,322	£4,506
# of individuals contracted to have intensive behavioural support		267	363

## Transfers from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Dosh has submitted 276 applications for PIP on behalf of people supported. On average currently, people supported by Dosh who have moved to PIP have increased their income by £50 per week or £2,604 over a year.

Applications	
Total	276
Decisions	238

Increased income		
	Per week	Per year
Total increase	£3,856	£200,502
Average increase	£50	£2,604

Summary of Outcomes	
Not yet decided	38
Stayed at max rate DLA care and mobility and receiving enhanced rates under PIP	95
Increase	141
Stayed at lower rate DLA care and mobility and remained at lower rate under PIP	0
Decrease	2
Appealing	2

Appeals	
Total	13
Successful	11
Unsuccessful	0
Pending	2

8. as at 28/02/2018.

## Number of people supported

March 2018



Number of individuals who have a Financial Advocate

762



Number of individuals receiving support from Dosh

853



Number of Individual Service Funds managed

9



Number of circles Dosh is involved in for direct payment

82

## Training delivered



Dosh has delivered training to 280 people in 2017-18, including 139 people with a learning disability.

## Financial Advocacy in Action

*"I have recently taken on a young man in Cambridge who was struggling to make ends meet. I spent the best part of a day with him and his support staff going through his commitments and identifying that he was paying for two different broadband and TV providers plus lots of small bills that really need to be direct debits as the invoices are being lost for weeks.*

*Several calls later and four hours passing, the one Broadband/TV provider agreed to cancel his contract immediately, resulting in a £110 per month saving, the other provider worked with us and this monthly bill is reducing by £52 per month at the end of February.*

Financial Advocate, Dosh

## Access to Housing

### Independent living as a goal

The majority of people with a learning disability want to live independently, and the vast majority of parents whose adult child lives with them want to see greater independence for them. Independent living is 'about disabled people having the same level of choice, control and freedom in their daily lives as any other person<sup>9</sup>. This is what we focus on delivering at Thera through our charitable company Forward Housing. We support people to have choice and control over the support and/or equipment they need to go about their daily life.

### Funding opportunities

To help The Forward Housing project provide sustainable housing solutions, Cheyne Capital have made available a facility of £15m based on a purchase and lease-back model. The number of houses purchased and tenancies achieved was high at the beginning of the funding to meet the pent up demand for property and activity has therefore subsequently reduced as planned. This year, we have continued to use this facility to provide housing solutions and have completed projects for further **8 new tenants – a total of 92 tenants over 3 years** to the end March 2018. Thera Trust companies provided support, enabling people to live in the comfort of their own home, along with the security of an Assured Tenancy from Empower Housing Association. The delivery of this accommodation and completion of the tail end of current projects has fully committed the £15m facility.

In December 2017, Forward Housing and Thera Trust entered into an agreement with Cheyne Capital to extend the existing facility to £27.5m, giving Forward Housing up to a further £12.5m to enable them to continue providing much needed housing solutions. In addition, in February 2018, Thera Trust opened its third bond offer and the bond closed with Thera Trust having raised £5m of which at least £3m will be invested in capital expenditure.

### A bespoke solution

Thera aims to find suitable properties that meet the housing brief provided, ensuring the properties are a bespoke solution to meet the specific needs of the prospective tenants as well as providing properties that are both sustainable and affordable. This work, with the support of Thera Trust's Development Team, involves meeting with the person with a learning disability and their family / circle of support, alongside the Thera company providing support and other professionals. Thera has developed and used a range of tools to enable the person and those around them to ensure that the property meets the needs and aspirations of the new tenant. Bringing all of the key support people together, alongside professionals, ensures that all aspects of the housing and location are considered; such as choosing the staff who will support them, mapping out the community people will be living in. In the case of house shares, this extends to choosing who to live with and spending time to get to know each other.

9. UK Office for Disability Issues, Independent Living Strategy, available at: [http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi\\_projects/](http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi_projects/)

Last year's Social Impact report profiled Andrew and Tim, who continue to enjoy their home and the opportunities it offers:

*"Tim and I have been living together for over two years now and it has been great, we love living together and have so much fun. Since we moved in, Tim now has a volunteer job at the local garden nursery and goes once weekly. Terri has been helping Tim to look for more volunteer / job opportunities. He has also transformed our garden into a lovely one where he grows fruit and vegetables, he has even sold some of his plants that he has grown.*

*I am a company member and because of that I have decided that I would love to be a Quality Assessor, so I have also been working with Terri and we are looking for me to volunteer within an advocacy role somewhere, this will help me learn more skills that I can use as a Quality Assessor.*

*We are both much more independent within our home now. We work as a team to keep our house clean, do our own laundry and ironing, and we both love to cook for each other. Sometimes we have our friends over and cook for them too which I really like"*



Andrew

## Employment, Training and Business

### Supporting Entrepreneurs

The Dolphins' Den project aims to empower people to achieve their dreams by encouraging people with a learning disability to believe in themselves and to set up their own business or community project. After attending a series of workshops, participants have access to one-to-one mentoring from a local business person. The role of a mentor is to support the participants to make their idea a reality.

Thera Trust has secured £110,942 from the European Social Fund and the Big Lottery as part of the Building Bridges partnership<sup>10</sup> programme, to run 6 Dolphins' Den projects (2 per year) in Wiltshire between September 2016 and September 2019.

### Swindon and Chippenham (2017-2019)

In 2017, 2 projects ran, one in Swindon and one in Chippenham, Wiltshire. In July 2017, 11 people were matched with a business mentor to receive individual mentoring for a period of 6 months. There was a delay in the beginning of the mentoring period, from the initially planned May/June time to July 2017, due to the difficulty in recruiting mentors. The celebration event date took place at Swindon Football Club on Tuesday 16 January 2018.

Status of business projects:

**Café:** A group of 5 members of Open Door decided they wanted to set up a café as a social enterprise. The location is still under reconstruction. The mentor hopes to continue to meet with them until they are able to launch the café.

**Glass blowing:** A man supported by Thera who blows glass to form objects and sells them, worked with his mentor to set up an online shop and revamp his website. He has set up a separate bank account into which monies from online sales are kept.

**Meet and greet:** See case study below

**Horse care business:** A woman decided to go back to college to gain further English and numeracy skills that she will need to set up her own business.

**Computer repair business:** Due to family circumstances the men were unable to start mentoring until January 2018. They have re-joined our Trowbridge project and are working with their mentor.

10. Building Bridges is a partnership of organisations, led by Community First, that has come together to deliver the Building Better Opportunities Programme across Swindon and Wiltshire.

The project has received up to £3.9M of funding from the European Social Fund and the National Lottery, via the Big Lottery Fund, as part of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. The Department for Work and Pensions is the Managing Authority for the England European Social Fund programme. Established by the European Union, the European Social Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support skills development, employment and job creation, social inclusion and local community regenerations.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>

### Case Study

During the projects in 2017, Kaye came to our Chippenham workshops with an interest in becoming a receptionist. We worked with her to find out that it is that she likes about being a receptionist and what parts of the job she feels she is good at so as to be able to formulate her wish into a business idea. Eventually, she came up with the idea of setting up her own meet-and-greet business.

She was matched with a mentor specialised in event marketing, who worked with her to do some research about what kind of events she would like to work at and to explore her competition.

In the meantime, she also found a meet-and-greet position at Bath Abbey, where she currently works to practice her skills for a few hours once or twice a week. We employed her to meet and greet guests at the Celebration event in Swindon in January 2018 and she is also being invited to meet-and-greet guests at Thera's 20th birthday event on Friday 6th July 2018 in Grantham.

When the workshops started – in Swindon and Chippenham in 2016, the emphasis was on learning about work, friendship and community topics as well as business. There were 29 participants:

Participants who learned about:	Beginning of the project - March 2017	End of the project - January 2018
Work	79%	64%
Friendship	46%	33%
Business	67%	65%
Community	58%	30%

In January 2018, after completion of the workshops, participants reported learning outcomes reflecting the change in content – an emphasis away from networks and concentrating on business elements such as market research, business planning, marketing, pricing, budgeting and resilience.

### Salisbury and Trowbridge (2018-2019)

At the beginning of 2018, we commenced a Dolphins' Den project in Salisbury and in Trowbridge, with a total of 14 people participating in these workshops. We will also report on these locations next year.

## Employment and Training

Over the past year, The Camden Society's **Unity Works** programme has engaged with **308 people**, offering and enabling people with a learning disability to gain skills, qualifications and jobs. Of those **186 people completed fixed term work placements** and a total of **219 people found paid work with 75% sustaining employment for more than 6 months**.

The **Camden Society** has continued to develop its training and education opportunities and the number of employability workshops supporting **71 people to develop employment related skills**, as well as linking in with other providers such as Centre Circle and Groundworks to widen the opportunities available.

**8 apprenticeships** were undertaken in 2017/18. The apprenticeship scheme has continued to excel; **100% of the graduates of the 2016/17 apprenticeship scheme secured full time employment** upon completion of their NVQ level 2 and 12-month training programme.

Over the last year, The Camden Society has continued to develop its employer engagement with nationwide employers. This culminated in Springboard, a hospitality showcase event in October 2017, hosted in partnership with Foxes Academy. **110 employers attended** the event and were served a three-course meal prepared and served by trainees and apprentices, working alongside celebrity chefs. This led to **over 58 employer pledges to offer work placements and paid opportunities** to people with a learning disability. We have maintained **ongoing relationships with 104 employers** through the Unity Works programme. Furthermore, we have recently become a Disability Confident Leader (level 3 of the Disability Confident accreditation scheme). This means that they will act as a champion for Disability Confident within local and business communities. The recognised Leader status allows them to provide support and assessments for other companies wanting to become Disability Confident on behalf of the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions).

In partnership with Deloitte, we successfully ran two workshop days with candidates looking for work. Volunteers from Deloitte worked with **25 candidates to enhance their CVs and job prospects**, with **60% of attendees securing employment** in the following 3 months. This work is continuing with the setting up of a mentoring scheme with professionals from Deloitte.

Other service developments include a successful pilot of a new programme in partnership with Volunteer Centre Greenwich and the DWP for a **supported volunteering programme for young people aged 16-24 years with a learning disability**. This programme offers employability skills training, the opportunity for people to complete a six months volunteering placement with a trained mentor. This has led to a total of **13 job starts** out of the 35 total referrals. Due to the positive outcomes achieved, The Camden Society has received continuation funding for the next year of the programme. In total, the Unity Works programme has enabled **95 people to undertake voluntary work as a step towards employment**.

## Offering Employment Support in More Areas

Building on the enthusiasm of Thera East Anglia leaders, the talent and energy of one of our managers and the support of their peers, we have sought to test how Thera might roll out the learning from The Camden Society to offer more employment and training opportunities across Thera locations.

### Supported Employment Pilot

Objectives of the pilot;

- support adults with a learning disability to find and secure meaningful employment
- help adults with a learning disability gain qualifications, providing a tailored pathway into employment that clearly identifies needs and goals
- work alongside employers and offer support and guidance around supporting a person with a learning disability into work
- research what employment opportunities are on offer and what support is available for adults with a learning disability

Achieved through the following:

- 82 Crafts and Creations
- Ely Allotment Project
- Engaging with potential employers



## 82 Crafts and Creations

The development of 82 Crafts and Creations – a craft shop in Whittlesey staffed by volunteers who have a learning disability, was featured in last year’s impact report. As the shop develops, Thera is working towards supporting the 7 regular volunteers to develop their skills and gain qualifications. Easy Read work books are being developed in a range of skills in employment and the retail environment:

The shop’s success:

- It now has a regular customer base, with customers “popping back to see and purchase new stock” - Jo Stebbings, Community Support Leader
- It has had many new suppliers since the shop opened and some of the suppliers also join the Craft Group held at Thera’s Club 82
- Steady sales have been reported each month
- 82 Crafts and Creations is also a member of the Whittlesey Business Forum and attend their monthly meetings

## Ely Allotment Project

Under development last year, the Ely allotment is now up and running and vegetables are being grown. As part of the allotment Thera East Anglia has partnered with Spice Time Credits<sup>11</sup>, Cambridgeshire. This will enable “payment” to be made to volunteers with and without a learning disability in the form of time credits to spend on social activities . Applications for community funding are also under way.

## Engaging with potential employers

Thera East Anglia has signed up to be members of the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) and a number of potential employers have been contacted.

3 people who are supported in their day-to-day lives by Thera East Anglia have been supported to start their journey with supported employment. All have a Vocational Profile and support staff are currently working with people to achieve their goals.

11. The Time Credits model works simply: for each hour that an individual contributes to their community or service, they earn a Time Credit. This Time Credit can then be spent on accessing an hour of activity, such as local attractions, training courses or leisure, or gifted to others.” [www.justaddspice.org/programme/cambridgeshire-time-credits](http://www.justaddspice.org/programme/cambridgeshire-time-credits)

In addition, Local Authority funding has been gained and a Thera Employment Co-ordinator is currently working with 2 people to develop their work skills:

*“Andrew, in the last few months, completed his first ever workplace trial that was paid! Although this was not the right post for Andrew we have since found a voluntary post working at a local nursing home. The plan for Andrew is to move on to a zero hours contact with the end goal being a part time post. It has been agreed with Andrew and the home that we will go in and support Andrew when he starts his mandatory training. For Andrew, this is the best route into work. It gives him the flexibility of picking his days to work, there’s less pressure in case it’s not the post for him and it will allow time to build up working the full shift that will be expected.”*

Terri Dumont, Employment Co-ordinator

## Training staff

10 staff completed a two-day training course in Training in Systemic Instruction. This is bespoke training delivered by Remploy to upskill staff and enable them to support people with employment. In addition, Thera Employment Co-ordinator, Terri Dumont, is in the process of completing Level 3 Certificate for Supported Employment Practitioners

## Update on My Better Lives Workbook

A precursor to employment support and qualifications is the My Better Lives Workbook, which helps people think about their goals in relation to a range of activities including work. Last year’s social impact report gave rise to the pilot of this initiative. This has now been rolled out to people who use The Meeting Place and Club 82, supported by Thera East Anglia teams. It is reported that people are enjoying using the workbook with many examples given of the positive effect it is having on people’s lives, e.g.:

*“CM started at Club 82 in January 2018 and wanted to gain more confidence, work in the shop and have a longer term plan to find paid employment. CM used the booklet to plan what she wanted to achieve and is now confident working in the shop and able to complete many tasks including safety checks, serving customers, using the till and recording new stock. She is now opening up the shop with minimal support (see below goal).*

*As CM was new to the area she also found the community mapping useful and has joined a number of local Clubs where she has made a lot of new friends. One of CM’s goals was to volunteer and started at a Girl Guide Association.”*

Lorna Weston, Managing Director.



## The Quality Company

The Quality Company has a **10-year track record** in sustained employment of Quality Assessors with a lived experience of learning disability and supporting them to develop in their roles and within the organisation. The Quality Company currently employ **26 people with a learning disability** and have started a project to measure the impact of being employed by The Quality Company.

Employees were asked how this work experience had impacted them, and especially their sense of responsibility, sense of community, self-confidence, loneliness, job aspirations, etc. Results to date indicate that The Quality Company is having a positive impact on the people we employ in some, if not all, areas assessed. A report will be produced to provide detailed insights into the impact the company is generating and will inform the support and further development of the induction and training programmes for staff.

## Community and Social Networks

### Equal Futures

Equal Futures' vision is to build "Circles" which will last for the lifetime of people with disabilities; providing friendship as well as support to overcome challenges and to have a better quality of life.

*"The Circle has helped me speak up more and to take things a step further, rather than just talking about them."*

Focus Person

We have Circles which have been supported by Equal Futures for a number of years and which continue to thrive. These tend to have common traits such as retaining the same Community Connector, a diverse mix of Circle members, and genuine friendships with the "Focus Person".

*"Having the formality of the Circle has provided a great deal of comfort to me in knowing that there are people who care for her who will be there when I'm no longer around. I have also seen her becoming more independent over the last year"*

A parent

Reaching more families in our work is an issue. Equal Futures are aware of certain key challenges:

- Affordability was a financial barrier to many families
- Life stage of the Focus Person can make it challenging to involve their peers
- How to support and manage Community Connectors more efficiently: the level of support for the role is often disproportionate to the hours worked

It has been a constant challenge to do this in ways which are financially viable for all concerned; families and the organisation.

To meet this challenge, we have had to think creatively and will look at how we can support Lifelong Circles differently:

- Identify traits and themes which make a Circle more resilient
- Support Circles who are ready to become self-sustaining
- Identify what is affordable for Equal Futures to offer to lifelong Circles

### Funding

Equal Futures received three funding awards in April:

- The Scottish Government, for Equal Future's core work and developing different methodology to delivering circles
- Tudor Trust, to support a pilot project with the East End Carers Hub in Glasgow; which was to have the same model using Volunteer Circle Facilitators
- Kennyhill Bequest Fund, Award being used for Autism training

### East End Carers Hub (Glasgow)

This project works with a group of parents and carers who attend the East End Carers Hub. The area is the fourth most deprived area in Scotland under the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (August 2016)<sup>12</sup>. When a family has a child with disabilities these factors exacerbate poverty and isolation.

A Project Coordinator was recruited in August and a Family Link Worker in November. Equal Futures actively sought to recruit from the carers themselves - being very keen to recognise the expertise of carers, and to offer a paid employment opportunity. We are also working with a training consultant in Autism, providing expertise and support to the project.

12. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. It allows effective targeting of policies and funding where the aim is to wholly or partly tackle or take account of area concentrations of multiple deprivation- [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Key relationships were established, such as with the Hub's training consultant in Autism. She provides expertise in Autism to our Volunteer Circle Facilitators as well as support and guidance to the project. She has a unique advantage in that she had a late diagnosis of Autism for herself, and she has children who have Autism.

Recruitment of Volunteer Circle Facilitators was slow, as expected, due to the complex nature of the role. One of our volunteers came to the project because he has Asperger's and wants to support people as he understands the challenges.

The Project Coordinator has developed a good relationship with the Head of Faculty of Social Care at a local university; he circulates information on our behalf. There is potential to deliver information sessions on Circles to the students.

### TEN – (Thera, Equal Futures and Neighbourhood Networks)

Last year saw the TEN project pause, take stock, resulting in a re-focus of the project.

Aiming to remove social barriers and show that people with a learning disability can be leaders and active members of society, TEN is working with people who are feeling socially isolated or who desire to 'do more' in their lives. Beyond having a learning disability, there is no set criteria for someone to be referred to TEN.

There are now 10 active members connecting with TEN to spend time with like-minded others and build a network of friends who want to spend time with them, be active and socialise more.

### Gig Buddies

Launched in August 2016, this project aims to link music fans who have a learning disability with other music lovers for gig nights, or whatever other activities they enjoy doing together.

*"Me and my Gig Buddy Colin went down to Durham for the day. It's the first time I've been out of Edinburgh in ages. I come into Edinburgh every day of the week for work and you start to want to go somewhere different. It was good to have that opportunity and be able to do that. It was just nice to go somewhere different for a change, rather than be stuck in the City of Edinburgh."*

Colin

Since our last report Gig Buddies has grown: we now have 25 pairings meaning 50 people are getting out regularly to events they love, with a particular expansion into West Lothian.

*"Being Gig Buddies with Jade is going really well and I'm really getting on with her!  
This year I'm hoping to get out to more concerts, but I'm mainly just looking forward to having fun!"*

Kerry

Some of the most successful events so far have been our 'Real Gigs in Real Venues' events. This is an initiative that aims to showcase musicians with a disability on a public stage, whilst working with venues to make them more welcoming to people with a learning disability. In February, Gig Buddies continued their ongoing relationship with national music festival 'Independent Venue Week', and held a show in West Lothian as part of their 2018 programme. The event was a fantastic success, was incredibly well received by the local community, and has given us another great relationship with a local venue.

In February Gig Buddies received a grant from Edinburgh Council to run 3 'Real Gigs in Real Venues' events in Edinburgh throughout 2018. These are going to be our biggest shows ever, utilising some incredible venues and bands. Gig Buddies are proud to say that this budget gives us the ability to pay all performers Musician Union rates of pay.

It's not just Independent Venue Week Gig Buddies been working with to get people out to local venues in their community. They have a brilliant ongoing relationship with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the biggest arts festival in the world! In 2017 they worked with them to help improve their access information, and in return all Gig Buddies members were given a £12 voucher to any show at the festival! This work is continuing with The Fringe in 2018. October 2017 marked Don's first year with his Gig Buddy. This is what he had to say:

*"My year with Gig Buddies has been good. It's been really helpful and I'm glad I got involved with the project. I feel really lucky to be involved with Gig Buddies as it lets me do more of what I really enjoy. I like how Gig Buddies matches other people, because I think it's important to go out with someone who enjoys the same things I do. Being part of this project has made me want to get out and do more than I normally would, and I mean that.*

*I really enjoy the socials as they let me mix with other people. I enjoy meeting other people, and I'd love to see that happening for others. I'd love to see other people enjoying themselves.*

*If someone was thinking of joining Gig Buddies I'd say 'Go ahead and do it, because it's fun and you meet other folk'. I've seen the things Gig Buddies can do, and I'd love to see them having fun with more people!"*

## Limits and challenges

We can demonstrate in this report the vast range of impacts achieved by our teams working alongside people with a learning disability. However, there were a couple of key areas where we will look to make improvements in future:

- **Quality standard – Leading Your Own Life:** reported a slightly lower set of results this year. We cannot yet confirm but expect that this is not an actual dip in overall outcomes achieved. From the narrative in the quality reports there are reports of “not enough evidence” being available and specifically a lack of visibility on Person Centred Plans (PCPs). PCPs have traditionally been paper-based and readily available for inspection. It is reported by assessors that due to the migration to online planning, although offering many advantages over paper, when assessors visit, people sometimes do not want to or are unable to log onto their plans and consequently cannot share them with assessors.
- **Quality standard – Controlling Your Thera Company:** also saw a slight downturn based on attendance numbers at two of the Group’s AGMs. Whilst we celebrate the achievements in implementing company membership, we are now learning of the work needed to maintain it. As a result, some experienced Service Quality Directors and Executive Assistants will deliver “train- the-trainers” sessions later in 2018.

Some programmes of activity have reported delays or external funding challenges. However, Equal Futures, with the support of Thera Trust, have found innovative solutions to such issues, for example, seeking to develop voluntary roles to support enduring Circles of Support.

## Financial Information

### Investment detail

Asset type	Bond
Coupon	3.5% fixed p.a.
Status	Senior, unsubordinated
Term	3 years
Issue date	28 April 2015
Maturity date	28 April 2018 (Repaid)
ISIN	XS1217934828
Primary Impact Area	Care of disabled and older people, wellbeing and social change
Investment size	£1,000,000
Denomination	£100,000
Security	Unsecured
Listing	Luxembourg Stock Exchange (Euro MTF)
Location	UK

Key financial information	2017/18 £'000	2016/17 £'000 (Audited)	2015/16 £'000 (Audited)
Total incoming resources	67,204	64,592	56,236
Total resources expended	65,981	61,562	53,690
Net gains / (losses) on investments	294	(389)	137
Net income for the year	1,517	2,641	2,683
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	9	(22)	(242)
Tangible and intangible fixed assets	2,881	3,153	3,184
Investment properties	7,118	7,544	5,730
Current assets (excluding cash)	9,517	9,628	8,152
Cash balance	4,918	1,269	2,503
Total assets	24,434	21,594	19,569
Current liabilities	7,510	7,541	7,583
Long term liabilities	6,337	4,992	5,543
Total liabilities	13,847	12,533	13,126
Net assets	10,587	9,061	6,443

Key financial information	2017/18 £'000	2016/17 £'000 (Audited)	2015/16 £'000 (Audited)
Net cash inflow / (outflow) from operating activities	918	513	(1,391)
Net cash inflow / (outflow) from returns on investment and servicing finance	(201)	(232)	(173)
Net cash inflow / (outflow) from capital expenditure	(271)	(1,166)	(999)
Net cash acquired with subsidiaries	0	0	818
Net cash from issue of bonds	2,546	0	3,000
Other cash inflow / (outflow)	1,118	8	337
Increase / (decrease) in cash in the year	4,110	(877)	1,592

Key financial ratios	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Net asset cover	240%	265%	206%
Requirement as per Covenant	130%	130%	130%
Interest cover	589%	471%	566%
Requirement as per Covenant	250%	250%	250%

Note: Whilst audited, all figures provided for 2017/18 are not finalised, and therefore could be subject to change.

## Financial Year in Review

Following a period of substantial development, Thera has continued during the year to provide the range of care, support and services to people with a learning disability, in line with its Vision to demonstrate that its beneficiaries can be leaders in society. There have been fewer major financial developments as Thera has focussed on supporting each individual to lead an independent and fulfilling life, as well as increasing the number of beneficiaries it supports.

The Group has continued to benefit from organic growth in most areas and turnover has also grown as a result of increases in the price of contracts. Group revenue has increased year on year by over £2.6m (4%).

On an accounting basis, the Group's overall net surplus has fallen from £2.62m in 2016/17 to £1.53m this year. However, after allowing for non-cash donations arising from property leases and revaluations, the underlying trading surplus before exceptionals has increased from £0.9m in 2016/17 to £1.0m in 2017/18.

Thera's total reserves grew significantly in the year by 17% to £10.6m. This is equivalent to approximately 2 months of operating costs cover. Thera's trustees continue to pursue a progressive policy of growing its reserves with the aim of reaching £13.9m by March 2021.

In 2018, Thera negotiated an additional £12.5m of funding from Cheyne Capital's Social Property Impact Fund to supplement the £15m agreed in 2015. This fund provides property by way of long-term lease to Forward Housing across the UK. Forward Housing works with individuals and their families and wider circles of support to identify and adapt a suitable property, purchased by Cheyne Capital and adapted by Forward Housing to meet individual need, which is then sub-let to a Registered Housing Provider (RHP). The RHP offers an assured tenancy to individuals with a learning disability, providing them with long term security of accommodation. During the year 8 people with a learning disability who are supported by Thera have benefitted from this facility. Properties for a further 10 individuals were found through housing brokerage. The relationship with Cheyne Capital has also continued to produce an increase from the previous year in rental income for the group of £397k, as well as a full year increase in revenue from care and support contracts in excess of £1.0m.

In February 2018, a further Thera Bond offer was offered to retail investors. By the end of March, Thera had raised approximately half of the £5m target, allowing for a partial close and £2.5m to be drawn. The accounts therefore show a material increase in cash and long term creditors. This was the first charity bond to be crowdfunded and the first to be eligible for an innovative finance ISA. A further £2.5m was raised after the year end and the bond closed in April, having been fully subscribed. This pioneering bond will play a key role in helping Thera to deliver its strategy by purchasing up to an additional 15 homes for 25 people and providing working capital. In addition, funds raised were also used in April 2018 to settle Thera's first bond, for which this impact report was originally produced.

Thera continues to recognise that its ability to recruit and retain high quality staff is essential in providing the high quality care, support and services to its beneficiaries and in fulfilling its overall Vision. Towards the end of 2017/18, therefore, Thera introduced a material increase in the rates it pays to its staff, which continue to exceed the National Living Wage.

## Governance

Each company within Thera Group has its own board of directors. Most consist of a Chairman, Chief Executive/Managing Director and a Service Quality Director, a paid executive director with a learning disability, supported by and working alongside a number of other voluntary directors. On each subsidiary company Board, Thera Trust's corporate membership is represented by a Thera Trust director appointed to that Board.

Thera's Group structure enables the individuals supported by local companies to have control of the company that provides their support, through being a company member and by appointing an independent director to the board to represent them. The structure allows local boards to get to know the individuals that they support, their families/carers and the communities in which the company works. As part of the Group, they benefit from being part of a larger whole, as well as having access to working capital and central corporate support services.

Thera Trust, the Group's parent charitable company, is governed by a Board consisting currently of twelve directors, who are also trustees for the purpose of charity law. Four directors/trustees are paid and make up the Group's Executive Team and a further eight directors are Non-Executive Directors. The Non-Executive Chairman is Bill Carter who has held the position for nine years and been a trustee for fourteen years. Thera has recently announced that he will be leaving the organisation later this year, having made a major contribution to the organisation's development. Thera will be seeking new trustees in the coming period.

Thera's articles of association state that there must be at least one person with a learning disability within each pool of Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors. The Group's Executive Team operate as an equal team without a Chief Executive.

A formal recruitment and induction process for all new directors is followed. A Nominations Committee of the board oversees appointments to company boards across the Group and also takes a lead on succession planning for the Thera Trust board.

Please refer to the Thera annual report for further details.

### Investor History

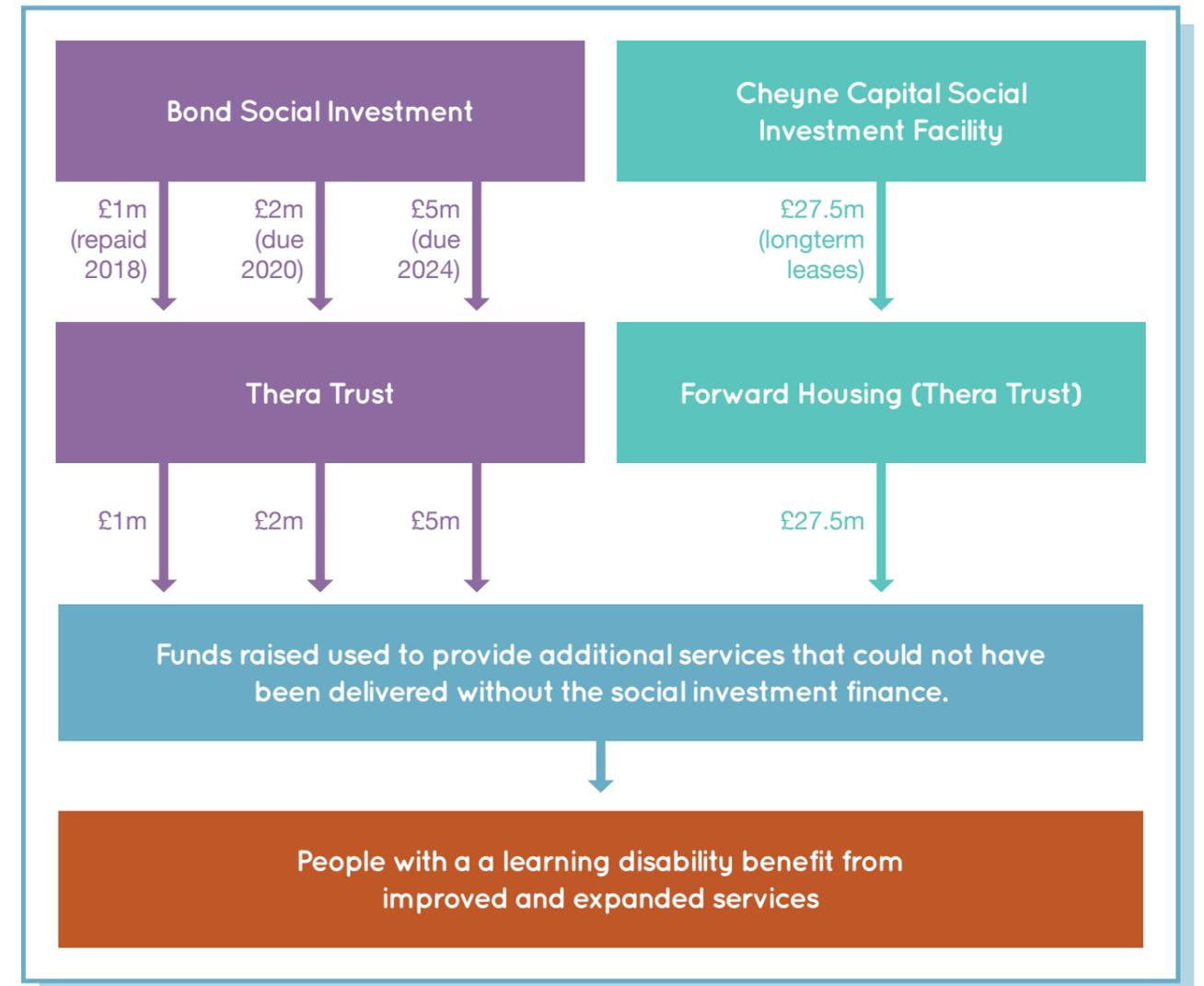
Thera has been a very active organisation in the growing area of social investment and has established a track record that has enabled it to benefit from new sources of repayable finance.

This report relates to the issue by Thera of an exchange-listed bond arranged towards its general charitable purposes, arranged by Investing for Good and which raised £1m in April 2015 under a £6m programme, offering a 3.5% financial return to investors and which was successfully repaid in full by Thera in April 2018.

In July 2015, an agreement was also concluded with Cheyne Capital's Social Property Impact Fund which made available up to £15m of property by way of lease to Forward Housing to enable more people with a learning disability to have a home of their own. An arrangement to provide a further £12.5m of repayable capital for the same purpose was agreed with Cheyne in 2018.

Other notable investment raised include the £2m that was raised through a bond in November 2015 arranged by Triodos Bank. This is intended to be used for the acquisition and adaptation of properties to provide homes for people with a learning disability and for Thera's general charitable purposes. This second bond pays a 5.5% return and is due to be redeemed in December 2020.

In April 2018, Thera Bond successfully closed a new crowdfunded bond, also arranged by Triodos Bank, that will help purchase up to an additional 15 homes for 25 people and provide further working capital. The bond raised £5m on a 6 year term, paying 5.5% interest. Some of the proceeds were assigned to settle the first bond. For further detail see the Financial Year in Review section above.



### Current Investment

Thera has used the proceeds of its first bond towards its general charitable objectives.

During the year, funds were used across a range of charitable and organisational activities and predominantly to provide additional support and services to individuals with a learning disability that will positively impact on their lives. These additional charitable activities could not have been delivered without the funds provided by the bond as they would not normally be funded by its contract income.

In the current year, Thera has undertaken a number of activities using proceeds of the bond, directly benefitting people with a learning disability, including:

- appointing a new Head of Development – a joint role shared by a leader with a learning disability and a business development professional - as well as the continued employment of service quality directors;
- continuing its company membership approach for people with a learning disability and their families/carers;

- finalising the project to re-provide residential care services in Oxfordshire to offer 11 people their own tenancy;
- providing additional social investment grants to both Dosh and The Quality Company, noting the increased number of people with a learning disability benefitting for their combined activities;
- providing a specific social investment grant to Thera East Anglia to develop their supported employment project, building on the Group's experience in London;
- continuing support to Gig Buddies Scotland who have broadened their activities and the number of people that they work with;
- continuing and extending the Dolphin's Den programme;
- conducting project work to develop iPlanit, which will require capital investment in future years.

## Marketplace: Position and Risks

### Sector Overview

The social care market in which Thera operates continues to experience significant funding challenges as commissioners attempt to reconcile increasing demand within an austere funding environment. Although limitations on public funding persist and are expected to continue beyond the life of the bond, this has so far had limited impact on Thera's own activities.

Thera supports people with a learning disability, in the main who have a substantial and critical assessed need. Accordingly, these individuals are at a much lower risk of having their support reduced because of funding challenges, with local authorities and commissioners prioritising this area of spending. Such impact as there has been from reductions in individual commissioned support has been more than overtaken by both organic and acquisitive growth. It is remarkable that, since publication of the offer document associated with the bond programme, Thera's turnover has increased 51% from £44.6m (2013/14) to £67.2m (2017/18) and reserves have grown by £5m from £5.62 (2013/14) to £10.6m (2017/18).

As is the case for all care and support service providers, Thera is exposed to a range of external factors that could put pressure on continuing the provision of care to a person with a learning disability. However, the specialist area of the market in which Thera operates benefits a significant reduction in these factors as it is in both the commissioning body and the individual's long term interests to maintain continuity of support, particularly of the high quality that Thera provides.

Within the UK, there is considerable geographical variability in commissioning practice, procurement methodologies and pricing. Thera continues to maintain an efficient and cost-effective organisational structure and is able to mitigate the risks of this variability from the diversity of its revenue streams.

Thera has been able to maintain and expand its market position in part due to its unique approach of both employing paid directors with a learning disability in furtherance of its Vision and from refusing to compromise on its values and the quality of its support. This has provided Thera with a competitive advantage over its sector peers in winning and maintaining contracts, leading to consistently strong ratings from the Care Quality Commission and continued organic growth.

### Risk Factors

Thera Trust's trustees assess the major risks to which Thera is exposed on an annual basis through a risk management strategy.

Key risks which are inherent in the nature of Thera's work include the abuse/neglect of vulnerable people, a failure by one of our companies to comply with CQC fundamental standards/other regulatory requirements and a failure to realise Thera's Vision.

The board continues to monitor the external regulatory and funding environment closely.

In July 2018, a judgement passed in the Court of Appeal appears to have removed the uncertainty about how the National Living Wage applies to sleep-ins and reduced the risk of having to make unfunded back payments which might otherwise have jeopardised the care of the people that Thera supports and the employment of Thera staff.

More broadly, risks to which Thera may be exposed may arise from the following areas:

- smaller companies in the Group continuing to make a loss as a result of supporting too few people;
- continued challenges in public sector funding alongside labour market cost inflation;
- not meeting financial covenants;
- damage to relationships with key customers;
- loss of key leadership and management;
- personnel risk and regulatory intervention either by CQC/CI or the Charity Commission;
- litigation risk especially in relation to developments in employment law;
- changes in legislation and investment performance related to pensions.

In 2018/19, Thera has agreed to re-structure The Camden Society better to focus resources on its different activities and geography. Work in Oxfordshire will be combined and led together with the work of Thera South Midlands, whilst work in London will be transferred to two new companies, Unity Works Social Enterprises and The Camden Society (London). This re-structuring is expected to see material costs of implementing this change during the year.

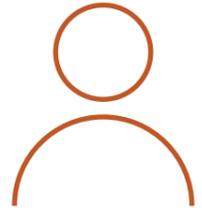
Other than those risks outlined above, there have been no material strategic changes within the organisation that are perceived to expose the organisation to additional material risk.

Trustees are satisfied that Thera companies have processes and systems in place to mitigate or minimise the incidence and impact of these risks, acknowledging however that some remain outside the organisation's control.

## Plans for next year



Continue to support and develop our existing and new leaders with a learning disability. In addition, promote and influence the inclusion of leaders with this lived experience in other organisations.



Continue to support people in their day-to-day lives to improve their opportunities for greater personal and social wellbeing, with a focus on:



Enabling better access to health services



Supporting our teams to work towards NHS England's STOMPwLD initiative (Stop Over-Medicating People with a Learning Disability)



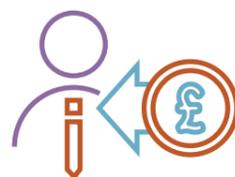
Improving people's housing environments



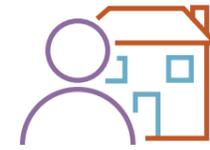
Promoting community access and inclusion



Whilst continuing to ensure the equality of support to people with complex behavioural needs.



Reach more people with a learning disability to improve their financial health and financial control.



Facilitate access to housing for more people that meets their complex housing needs, including a continued partnership with Cheyne Capital and bond finance.



Take forward the Dolphins' Den projects in Salisbury and Trowbridge enabling more people to develop their business ideas alongside mentors experienced in their field.



Continue to support people into employment through the Unity Works programmes. Further development of accredited employment training for people in the Cambridgeshire area and reorganise the way in which we focus on employment and training, to offer employment support in a range of ways, across Thera Group.



Expand TEN project and Gig Buddies to promote people's social opportunities and development of friendships.



Offer the opportunity to more people to have focussed circles of support through Equal Futures through the development and support of volunteer facilitators.



Develop and strengthen our Impact Management approach and practices.

## Appendix - Overview of methodology

### The Good Analyst

Investing for Good uses its proprietary methodology, The Good Analyst, to report on the key features of an organisation's impact. These factors are appraised differently by investors, depending on their investment strategy and targets.

### Social Impact

A measure of the investee's capacity to generate positive social impacts. It is based on a weighted assessment of two main criteria:

Mission Fulfilment, which looks at the organisation's impact in relation to its own stated mission, and its fulfilment thereof. We aim to determine that the organisation is fulfilling its mission in a meaningful, well-evidenced, and effective fashion.

Beneficiary Perspective, which considers the organisation and its impact with respect to the value to its beneficiaries of the impact it is creating. By analysing the beneficiary perspective, we can establish that the organisation works with its beneficiaries, and empowers them wherever possible to achieve their own personal goals. It ensures that the progress of beneficiaries, rather than the development of the organisations itself, remains at the heart of the organisation.

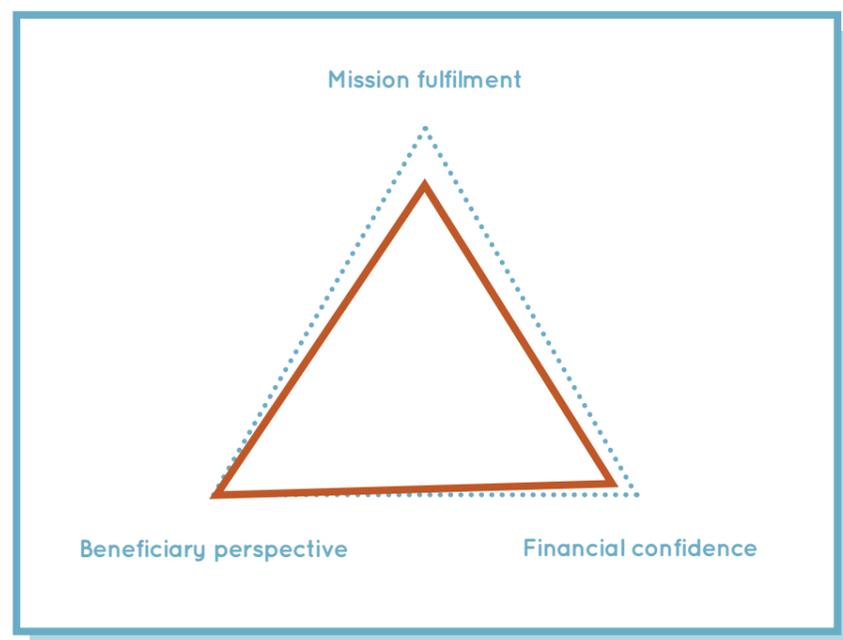
### Financial Confidence

Financial Confidence is a measure of confidence, or risk, in the investment and the underlying organisation. It is based on a weighted assessment of: size, structure, development, operational performance, financials, governance, management and specific risk factors. operations.

In the diagram to the right, the axes represent the key Good Analyst scores, showing the Financial Confidence score and the component parts of the Social Impact Score, Mission Fulfilment and Beneficiary Perspective.

### Thera Trust 2017/18: Breakdown of scores

The points of the inner irregular triangle provide the scores (scaled proportionately) against the different measures.



Report co-authored by Thera Trust and Investing for Good

To contact Investing for Good, please email Manon Desert: [mdesert@investingforgood.co.uk](mailto:mdesert@investingforgood.co.uk)

For any query on the content of the report, please contact Tracey Brooks [tracey.brooks@thera.co.uk](mailto:tracey.brooks@thera.co.uk)

Thera Trust registered charity number - 1090163

Design by The Space Room