



# Driving Up Quality Self-assessment 2016



great

Thera East strives to deliver great support to people with a learning disability. We have a strong vision and are driven by a set of values that are based around the principles of equality, dignity, choice and independence.



achieve

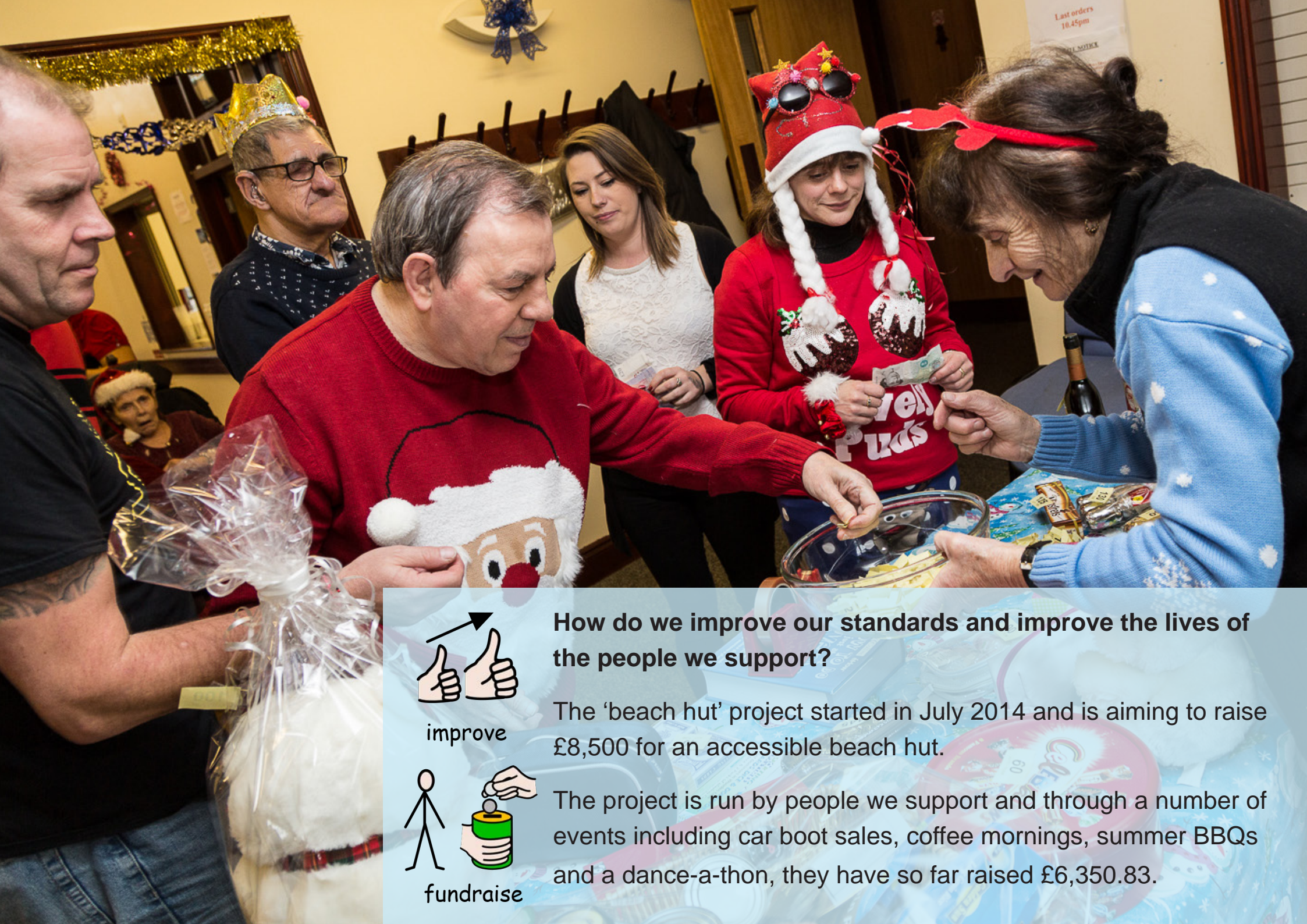
When we looked at the Driving Up Quality Code we felt that we already worked towards the standards in the ways in which we support people and it therefore fitted well alongside our existing quality checking processes.



summary

We always strive to do even better so here is a summary of some of the things we are doing to continually Drive Up Quality!





improve



fundraise

**How do we improve our standards and improve the lives of the people we support?**

The 'beach hut' project started in July 2014 and is aiming to raise £8,500 for an accessible beach hut.

The project is run by people we support and through a number of events including car boot sales, coffee mornings, summer BBQs and a dance-a-thon, they have so far raised £6,350.83.

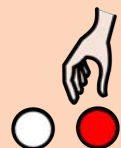




## 1. Support is focused on the person



support



choice



plan



individual



reviewed

- Each person supported has their own assessment of needs when initially being introduced for support.
- The people we support have the control on what they like and what they want to do; this is clearly evidenced in their homes. One gentleman we support loves anything to do with the army and his bedroom is decorated in an army theme. He loves animals and has a cat, a budgie and fish. The staff team support this gentleman to ensure all of his animals are well cared for and receive veterinary treatment or check-ups when needed.
- Each person has an active Person Centred Plan which has things the individual wishes to do. These are things like visiting specific places of interest, for example, live music events, pantomimes, theatres. People are supported by familiar, skilled staff and people have been involved in choosing their support team.
- Individual Support Plans are prepared, based entirely on the abilities and areas of need of the person. Incorporated in this, are the person's wants and wishes of how they want to be supported and where ever possible, by whom.
- Ensuring support plans, Person Centred Plans, Health Action Plans, risk assessments and communication passports are reviewed with the person supported and kept up to date.



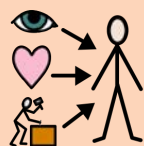
meeting



internet



staff



experience



voice

- At regular intervals, the person will hold a PCP/Circle of Support meeting, and in some instances, Best Interest meetings with the person we support. This ensures that the support is always focussed on the individual and records will evidence what opportunities the person has been involved in and what we need to do to successfully support the individual now and in the future.
- Thera uses a person-centred planning tool called iPlanit that is used over the internet. iPlanit enables people we support to have control over their life and plans.
- The staff members go above and beyond what is expected of them, the Thera Vision is what the company and its employees use to guide them on a daily basis.
- Staff supervisions are held regularly and training is based on the needs of the person being supported.
- Our Service Quality Director (Graham Skidmore) has a lived experience of having a learning disability. This demonstrates to the world that people with learning disability can be leaders in our society. Graham uses his experience of having a learning disability to make sure the people we support are at the centre of everything we do.
- Graham leads on the local 'Being Heard' forums which enables people we support to have a voice and tell us what they think. Graham also visits people to check that they are happy with their support and to listen if things go wrong so that we can do something about it.





## 2. The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life



life



house



football



gardening



stable



concert

**Thera supports people to have ordinary and meaningful life and this is evidenced by the following exciting and successful stories:**

- “David” was left a house in his parents will but lived in a care home. With support from a team of staff in Thera East, “David” was able to move out of the care home into his own house where he has thrived.
- “James” is a keen sports enthusiast and particularly likes football. As a keen Colchester United FC supporter he was delighted to get an opportunity to be part of the ‘Essex Healthy 4 Life’ project. “James” was even more excited to be invited along to the annual awards ceremony this year and then very proud to receive a medal in recognition for his contribution to the five a side team throughout the year.
- One of the people we support loves gardening and has recently grown carrots and tomatoes. He planted his carrots from seeds and watering them regularly with staff support and the outcome was great.
- “Tessa” wanted a job in a stable and was really excited to be supported to get the opportunity to work one day per week helping out. “Tessa” is now getting used to be around the horses and is enjoying so much the opportunity of being outdoors and doing a worthwhile job helping out at the stables.
- “Jill” went to see Cliff Richard in concert. This is something that she had always wanted and said that it was a “dream come true”.



12



AGM



party



communicate



award



staff



community

Our AGM will take place in February. This is where people we support, their families and staff can come together to learn what we have achieved over the last year, what we aim to do next year and to celebrate our successes.

We have a great party at the same time, which everyone is looking forward to!

### **Thera has also introduced people supported to technology.**

- One person supported recently bought himself an iPad and has been regularly skypeing his sister who lives quite a distance away and finds it difficult to visit. Prior to getting his iPad, "Ricky" had to rely on support from staff to make phone calls but now finds it easy to Skype whenever he wants.
- IPlanit was recognised at the GEM Awards 2015. The presenter spoke about the IPlanit project in Suffolk and the tremendous work Thera are doing with supporting people with their Person Centred Plans, making them truly individual. The Iplanit project was Highly Commended in the category of 'My life, My fun' for how Thera are supporting people and helping them to record their lives and activities, in and outside of the home.
- We ensure we have adequate staffing levels to meet the needs of the people supported within the contracted hours.
- People we support are encouraged to utilise the resources of the local community, rather than specific Learning Disability services etc. Going to local shops, pubs and other resources or social settings builds up a community presence and a knowledge of what is going on around them where they live. It also opens up the opportunity to build friendships with people locally.





community



village



interest



activities



individual

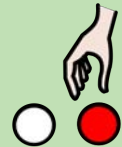


family

- We support people to maintain their homes and tenancies, to be an integral part of their community.
- A gentleman we support who lives in a village has built up a great relationship with his neighbours, they invited him round for a firework party on Bonfire night and they regularly call to see him. This man likes to go to all the events held in the village and he is well known in his community.
- We support people to spend their time participating in activities that suit their own personal interests, encourage links and have regular contact with friends.
- Each individual is supported to do the things they want to do in their life. This might be attending local social clubs, leisure and recreational activities, for example dance, music and swimming. It's also about enabling people to have real choices about taking up employment opportunities, looking at furthering their education at college or setting up their own business. Where people have chosen to, we will encourage and engender positive family relationships to ensure people keep in touch with people who are important in their lives.
- We treat everyone as an individual and endeavour to meet individual wishes and dreams of the people supported according to the support plan in place
- We encourage individuals to visit families and to welcome their friends into their home where they choose to do so.
- We promote inclusion by supporting access to local community facilities, offering choice to people supported to make community connections and get involved in their local communities where they choose to do so.



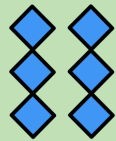
skill



choice



independent



match

- We have set up a project called 'Skills Around The Person' which has enabled people to develop community maps and find out what they want to get involved in within their local area. This has meant people have been seen as valued citizens in their local communities and are able to develop their self-confidence.
- People we support are encouraged to be in control of their lives and will indicate what they want to participate in. This ensures that support is led by the person and they are able to direct their own support as much as possible.
- We also provide community support to people, enabling them to remain as independent as possible living in their own home.
- When planning with people we find out how we can communicate with them by effectively using a 'communication passport'.
- We look to 'skill match' as far as possible to ensure that people get the right support. Staff have to have the right skills and qualities as well as good local knowledge, to enable people to have really positive support.





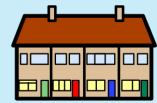
### 3. Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life



listen



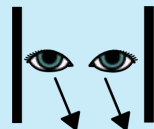
reviewed



housing



encourage



monitor

- We always listen to people we support and respond to their unique needs and aspirations. We always provide opportunities to enable people to choose what they would like to do. Each person develops their own support plans to ensure that support is carried out the way the individual likes. These are reviewed every 6 months or when necessary to meet the ever changing needs/wishes of the individual. Risk Assessments are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the person whilst also encouraging 'active risk taking' so that people can experience things that allows them to strive towards greater independence.
- We have set up a housing project team and we are reviewing compatibility and housing for all people supported. Their families, advocates and wider circles of support as well as commissioners, care managers and housing providers are fully involved in this housing project and this will enable people to make real choices about where they live and who they live with.
- People we support are encouraged to try something new and we are not risk averse, we try to support the individual in any new activity/ experience.
- Support and activities of the people we support is monitored regularly to ensure that the individual is happy with what they are doing, and how they are supported.
- Any changes to support or health needs are acknowledged promptly and support adapted accordingly or medical assistance sought.



listen



home



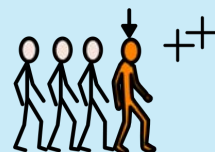
believe



recruitment

- We provide the right amount of support and listen to what the people we support tell us. For example two of the people we support in one of areas have had their support hours decreased and this is really positive news.
- One gentleman we support moved into his own home after living for 17 years in a residential home. This gentleman has so many skills that he is improving on daily basis around his home and he has now build his confidence and he now reduced his sleep-ins from 7 per week to 2 as he wants to have more privacy and be on his own alone.
- We believe that no one should be excluded from getting great support. For some people who may sometimes experience complex and challenging behaviours, we ensure that there is positive support with skilled staff teams who can respond positively and proactively ensuring people are supported in a way that always maintains their safety and dignity.
- We have also been improving our recruitment processes – enabling a variety of tools and process to be available for different support situations, rather than a ‘one size fits all’ approach.





leadership



together



information



promote



staff



learning

## Learning, leadership and management

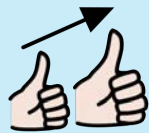
- Thera continues to deliver ILM accredited level 5 certificate in Leadership and Management to their management staff and Learners find the course a great learning and career development opportunity.
- Thera has introduced learning together – the staff learn together with people supported about the aspects of their lives they need support with and have now changed the rules around refreshing our learning modules and we are learning each year so that we can focus more on learning how to work with people we support on a day to day basis and then focus our annual learning around people's needs and learning together how best to support them.
- Thera have introduced a magazine for people supported by Thera and their staff. It contains useful information, updates and news about learning and development activities that people supported and their staff can get involved in.
- We promote Thera to attract staff, support more people and tell people about the work we do to improve people's lives. We also link in with other organisations, schools/colleges and universities that offer health and social care qualifications.
- Staff development – we have internal talent programme that trains and recognises talented staff and enable them to gain the knowledge and skills to apply for a post from a Support Worker right through to Operational Manager - skilling people to be able to competently complete their present role and train staff in specialised areas.
- Staff go through a comprehensive induction, including completion of the Care Certificate and then ongoing learning and development which improves their knowledge and skills so they provide the best possible support.



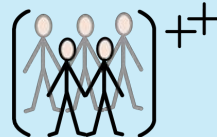
course



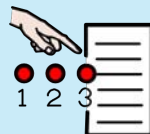
recruitment



development



teams



audit

- Managers complete leadership and management courses to ensure they are effective at ensuring teams work well together to provide the best support.
- We implement recruitment 'wish lists' which encourages people we support to be involved in staff recruitment and tell us the sort of staff they want.
- We have policies and procedures in place which ensures there is consistency and everyone knows what they have to do at work
- House development plans are used by people who are supported and their teams to look at what's working well and what needs to get better.
- Each staff member has matrix with a year worth of supervision dates so they can plan the discussions about their work
- In some places teams have agreed to have 'best support worker of the month' award which encourages best practice.
- Operational Managers carry out observational audits to check on the quality of support, highlighting areas of good practice and recommending where things need to get better.





## 4. A good culture is important to the organisation



vision



expect



culture



staff



voice



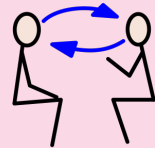
quality

- Thera's vision sets the scene and everyone knows and understands that the culture is about putting people first, and treating people with the utmost dignity and respect.
- We have a 'Blue Card' which clearly says what is expected of everyone in the organisation and how they should behave. It says that we should always 'do the right thing'. This helps to clarify the positive and empowering culture of Thera East.
- The culture of the organisation is written into every Strategic Plan and every Business Plan, so it is very clear for all stakeholders
- Our Service Quality Director shows that people with a learning disability can be leaders in our society.
- New staff are all given the Thera Blue Card when they join us. This helps to explain what is important on a day-to-day basis.
- Policies are made available to all staff that seek to maintain a positive and professional culture.
- Thera strives to encourage the Being Heard group for people supported, and actively promote how people can express any comments, complaints and suggestions
- The Service Quality Director is responsible for checking the quality of support and visits people to hear from them what is good and what is not so good so we can do more of the good things and improve when things haven't worked out.
- Staff learning and development reinforces the vision and ethos of Thera.



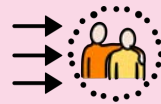
meeting

- Regular meetings are held to ensure we can talk about work. We can share good practice as well as deal with any issues that may come up.
- We have a Health and Safety Committee and an Employee Consultative Committee so important issues can be discussed across Thera East.



discuss

- Employee Consultative Council is a staff forum that meets regularly to discuss ideas about how to make working at Thera East even better. Representatives attend that cover the whole organisation to ensure that all staff are represented.



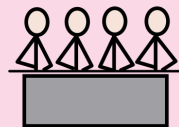
protect

- We encourage whistleblowing in cases where things might go wrong. This is so that we know we can protect people from harm.
- We have colour coded cards to encourage people we support to make a complaint or comment on their support such as:

**Green Card** – “things that make you happy” with happy face

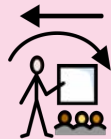
**Red** – “things that make you unhappy” with sad face

**Orange** – ideas and comments



management

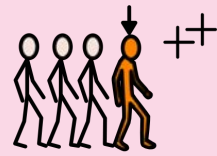
- We have senior management on call and local on call to ensure that there is always someone available to offer advice and guidance 24 hours per day.



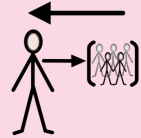
trained

- Staff are trained as ‘health at work champions’ and encourage people we support and colleagues to participate in active lives so we all remain fit and healthy!





leadership

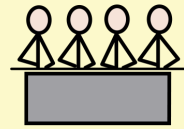


involved

- Leadership days and training events are arranged to ensure we get a chance to talk about important issues and understand better what's happening across Thera East and in the wider world of social care. This helps to develop a sense of ownership and belonging to Thera East.
- We are also rolling out Company Membership in 2015 so that more people we support, their family members and our staff can be involved in running Thera East.



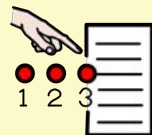
## 5. Managers and board members lead and run the organisation



board



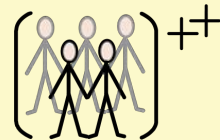
staff



audit



strategic plan



teams



AGM

- The Thera East Board meets regularly to look at how the company is performing, and what we need to do to get even better at what we do. The operational management team meets every six weeks to ensure we talk about important issues.
- We hold monthly staff team meetings where we work through and evidence our outcomes that relates to what people say they want support with as well as the Care Quality Commission's Fundamental Standards.
- Managers carry out observational audits as well as finance and medication audits.
- Operational Managers, Community Support Leaders and Team Coordinators have skills and qualities which enable them to support staff teams to connect people we support to their local community.
- Thera East has a three year strategic plan and a business plan which sets out what we are going to do. This is also informed by what people we support tell us they want and ensures that day-to-day we are 'doing the right thing'.
- Thera East held its latest 'Leadership Day' in January 2015 and this helped to ensure everyone was clear about what people we support want and how we are going to lead teams to achieve this.
- Thera East will hold its next AGM in February 2016 and everyone we support, their family, friends and staff teams will have an opportunity to come together to celebrate the success that is Thera East!





Thera East  
The West House  
Alpha Court  
Swingbridge Road  
Grantham NG31 7XT



teoffice@thera.co.uk  
0300 303 1253  
[www.theraeast.co.uk](http://www.theraeast.co.uk)

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