



Supporting people with a learning disability

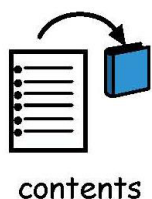


## Annual Social Impact Report 2021 - 2022



INVESTING FOR GOOD

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# Introduction to Thera



vision

Thera is home to a group of companies that support people with a learning disability to achieve their goals and live the life they choose. The group is led by Thera Trust and its charitable Vision:

## Thera's Vision



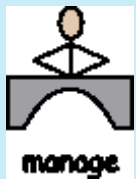
leaders

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



control

Thera will be controlled by people with a learning disability.



manage

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



choice

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



respect

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



quality

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

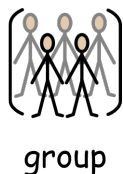


charity

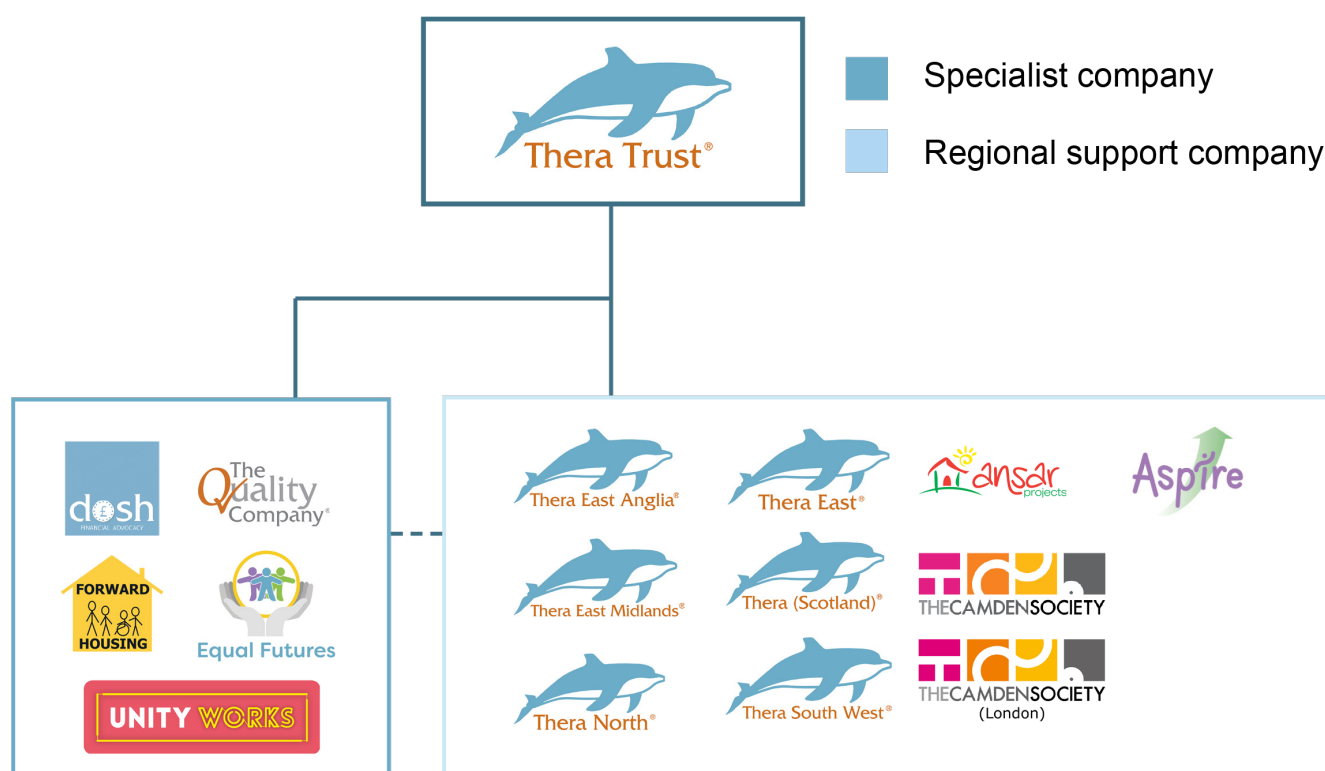
Thera Group will be led by a charity.



We make the Vision real through direct leadership by people with a learning disability in each company and through our culture and values that mean that each person designs and controls the support they receive from Thera. We believe that these things are at the heart of what makes Thera Thera.



Thera Group includes care and support companies who deliver day-to-day care in people's own homes and in the community, including activities and short breaks. Thera's care and support is checked by The Quality Company's peer quality checkers who have lived experience of a learning disability. In addition, Thera has a range of specialist companies that support people in different areas of their lives including housing, finances, employment, training and social connections.



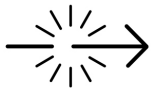




check

Thera strives to make a difference for the people it supports across all its work and so it is vital to us that we measure and report on how effectively we are doing this – so that we can keep getting better. We check the quality of our support in a number of ways and measure the impact this is having for individuals.

This social impact report forms part of this impact measurement and we are pleased to present this report for the year 2021-22.

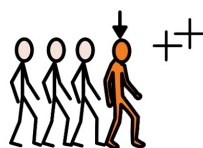


impact

Our current social impact framework sets out six goals and is supported by a theory of change that illustrates how we achieve these goals across the Group. This is used by Investing for Good to independently assess Thera's impact through the Impact Management Project framework. Their assessment results are presented in this report.



# Theory of Change



## Input

Motivated, well trained, experienced leaders and staff, who are experts in their field



## What we do

Full and equal integration of people with a learning disability within the governance of Thera and its teams

Individual direct care and support to people with a learning disability

Bespoke housing solutions

Financial advocacy

Employment and training programmes

Support to entrepreneurs

Community capacity building



## What we aim to achieve

- People with a learning disability are Company Members, Company Directors and employees in Thera

- People have ambitious life goals
- People with complex needs have equality of service

- People find housing solutions meeting their complex needs

- People have choice and control over personal money

- People improve skills and confidence to set up a business/get a job
- People gain and sustain employment

- People reduce reliance on paid support
- People have greater social opportunities and develop friendships



## Our impact goal

Demonstrate that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society

Increase personal and social wellbeing of people with a learning disability

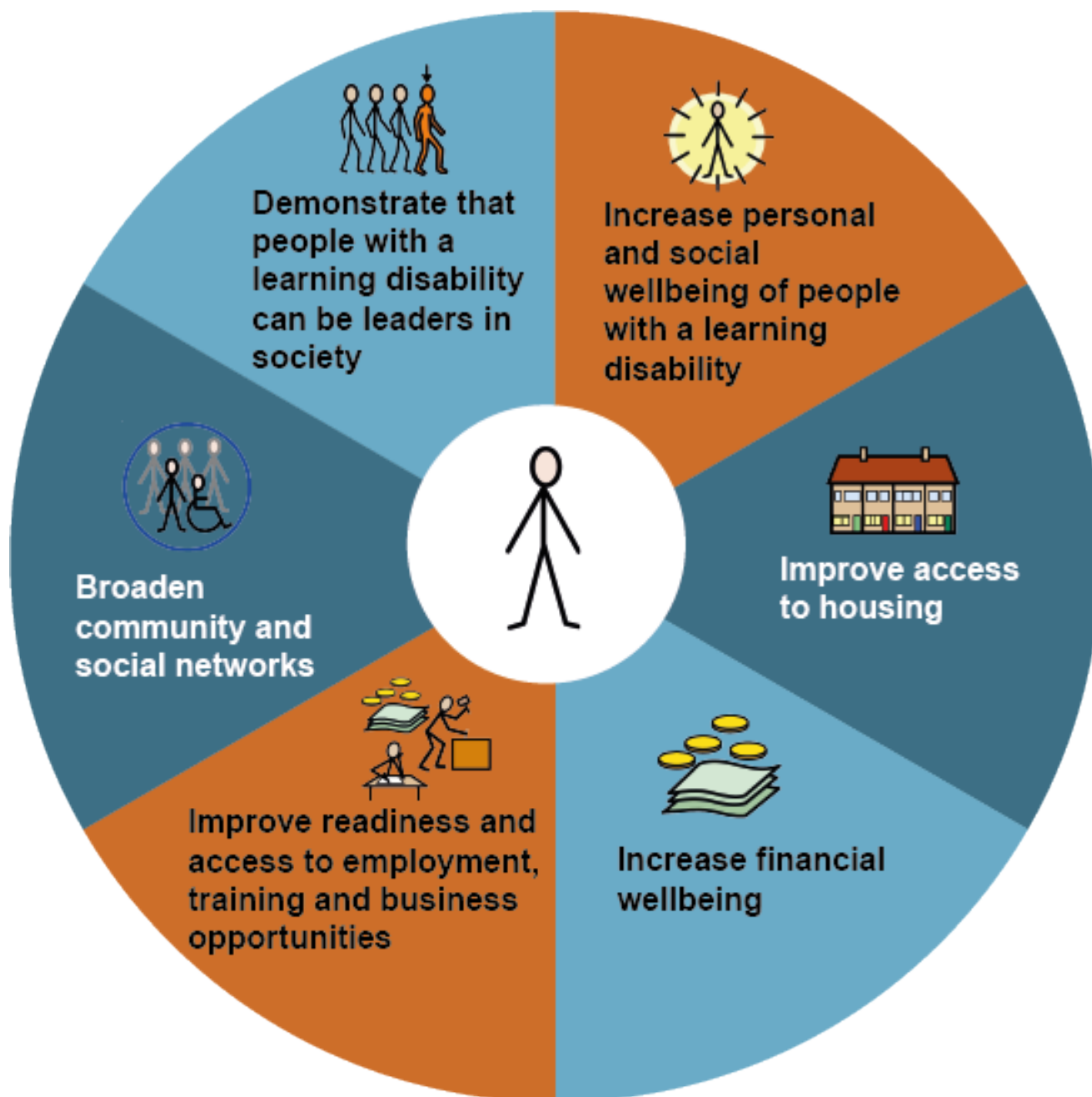
Improve access to housing

Increase financial wellbeing

Improve readiness and access to employment, training and business opportunities

Broaden community and social networks

## Our Impact Goals



report

Our report aims to measure **our** performance and the effect of our activities, rather than assessing and passing judgement on the people we support directly. In supporting someone to achieve their goals, it is important to us that we respect their individual choices and lifestyle, including their right to change their mind. As such we do not report on their progress against their individual goals, but on our actions to support their right to choose and act in the way they want.

# Introduction to the year



report

This Social Impact Report presents our impact for the year April 2021 – March 2022. This year was of course still dominated by Covid-19, as steps to return to more normal living were repeatedly interrupted by new Covid variants and the resulting lockdowns. This limited to some extent the services companies could provide, beyond what was essential, and the ways they could support people to achieve their goals.



confidence

Nevertheless, over summer 2021 and then again as we moved into 2022, confidence gradually increased, and people were able to enjoy new activities and renewed connections with family and friends. Gig Buddies' members got out to several events over the year, employment and training activity was able to restart and The Quality Company was able to launch its quality visits under a new structure, increasing the breadth and depth of checks both in-person and virtually.



thank you

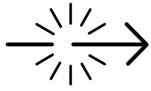
We would like to thank all staff members, volunteers and other supporters across Thera Group for their hard work in making a difference to the people we support. This report provides a snapshot of the results of their dedication, energy and commitment to people with a learning disability.

**Jenny Garrigan**

**Group Director – Learning Disability Leadership**



# Our Impact - The Highlights



impact

Thera has been making a difference across these 6 impact areas in 2021-22:



leadership

## Impact Goal 1: Show that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society

- **13 paid leadership roles held by people with a learning disability (+1 on 2020-21) including:**
  - 9 Service Quality Directors - each jointly leading a care and support company alongside the Managing Director
- **Leadership roles influencing company strategy and decision-making:**
  - 7 voluntary non-executive directors, covering 44% of our company boards, bringing their lived experience and perspective to key decision-making (as 2020-21).
  - 58 supported company members (+6 on 2020-21) across 8 companies (+1 on 2020-21) who vote at AGMs and influence how the company is run.
- **Local projects led by people supported**



wellbeing

## Impact Goal 2: Increase social and personal wellbeing of people with a learning disability

- **Direct care and support provided to 1,868 people of over 3,200 people supported across the Group.**

Within direct care and support:

- 522 people have behavioural support needs (as 2020-21)





wellbeing

- 773 people are supported for more than 30 hours per week (-32 on 2020-21)
- 93% overall quality rating, rated by assessors with a lived experience of learning disability (+14 % points on 2019-20)
- 92% overall quality rating for support to people with complex behavioural needs (+13 % points on 2019-20)
- 95% average quality rating for health and wellbeing (new measure)
- **Health, wellbeing and social initiatives run in local companies**
- **Training 343 staff in RESTORE2™ Mini to promote better early access to healthcare services for people who become unwell**
- **Positive Behaviour Support to promote individuals' wellbeing, control and quality of life through bespoke approaches to support**



home

### Impact Goal 3: Improve access to housing

- **Purchasing and adapting houses to provide safe, accessible and personalised homes for people to live as independently as possible:**
  - 5 properties developed (-2 on 2020-21) creating:
    - 12 new tenancies for people to live in their own homes (-6 on 2020-21)
    - 3 properties purchased with Social Impact Bond funding (1 developed in the year creating 4 tenancies (included above), 2 in the following year which will create another 5 tenancies) (-1 on 2020-21)
- **183 new tenancies over the length of the programme**



financial

## Impact Goal 4: Improve financial wellbeing

- **Providing individual financial advocacy to ensure people are as involved as possible in their money and have choice and control over how it is spent.**
  - 1318 people receiving financial advocacy (+146 on 2020-21)
  - 162 new referrals (-55 on 2020-21)
- **Financial savings after first year of support:**
  - £12.32 average increase in income (-£12.04 on 2020-21)
  - £4,738 average increase in savings (+£58 on 2020-21)
- **Advocating for better access to financial services more widely**



employment

## Impact Goal 5: Improve readiness and access to employment and training and business opportunities

- **Providing supported employment projects that enable people to get work ready, find and stay in jobs.**
  - 583 people engaged with Unity Works programmes (-198 on 2020-21)
  - 78 people supported on training programmes (-17 on 2020-21)
  - 6 people completed an apprentice programme (+6 on 2020-21)
  - 41 learners attended adult community learning courses (same as 2020-21)
  - 9 employment programmes (same as 2020-21)
  - 105 people entered employment (-110 on 2020-21)
  - 141 people sustained employment for more than 6 months (-12 on 2020-21)



employment

- 7 people supported to seek employment in Thera East Anglia (same as 2020-21)
- **Running social enterprises to provide training and employment opportunities**
- **Delivering employer training and engagement work to improve access to jobs**
- **24 staff with lived experience of a learning disability employed by The Quality Company, delivering essential quality checks and developing skills (-4 on 2020-21)**



community

## **Impact Goal 6: Broaden community and social networks**

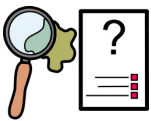
- **Supporting 21 people through building circles of support, befriending and social events with Equal Futures to enable them to access and engage with their local communities and achieve their goals.**
- **Running social events and supporting people to attend local gigs to develop social connections:**
  - 37 pairs of Gig Buddies fully accessing gigs in Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Lothians (-4 on 2020-21)
  - 84% of Gig Buddies members say it has helped them see their friends and 80% say it has improved their social life



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## Independent assessment: Thera's social impact and financial confidence scores

By Investing for Good



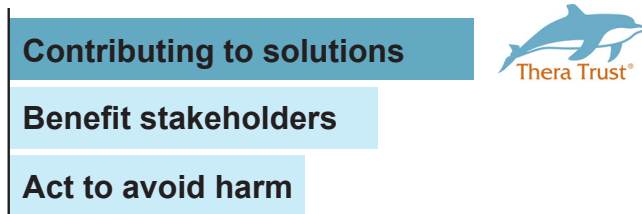
context

### Context

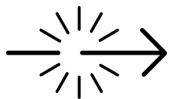
The findings of this impact report are based on social and financial data collected and provided by Thera. Investing for Good independently assesses Thera's social impact over the year as well as the organisation's long term financial outlook and assigns a score to each.

Thera has again been awarded the highest ratings:

### Social impact:



### Financial confidence:



impact

### Social impact

Investing for Good assessed Thera's social impact through the widely used Impact Management Project methodology, which assesses the organisation's impact goals against five different metrics (what, who, how much, contribution, and risk). One main indicator per impact goal is measured and compared to the past year's performance and external standards, to determine the effect Thera's work has had on people with a learning disability.



## INVESTING FOR GOOD



challenge

Thera's overall annual performance within its impact areas remains strong. Four out of six impact areas show strong year-on-year improvements and a consistently strong performance against external benchmarks.

The post-Covid-19 recovery process and the cost-of-living crisis continue to provide a challenging external context that has influenced performance within impact 3 (housing) and impact 5 (employment and training), unsurprisingly.

However, even in these impact areas, Thera's performance is above external measures.

Overall, Thera is contributing to solutions for people with a learning disability in the UK. This is the highest level of impact classification on the Impact Management Project's classification scale. 'Contributing to solutions' means that Thera's performance against its impact outcomes is improving the wellbeing of people with a learning disability. These improvements for people with a learning disability are sustainable and important, support those who most need these improvements and would not happen otherwise.

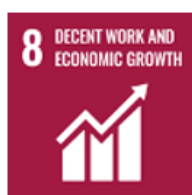
Thera's impact is also aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goals 1, 3, 8, 10 and 11.



Targets 1.3;  
1.4



Target 3.8



Target 8.5



Target 10.2



Targets 11.1;  
11.7





confidence

## Financial confidence

Financial confidence is assessed against ‘The Good Analyst’ methodology, as in previous years, which uses an assessment of 70 financial criteria to consider the long-term outlook for the organisation<sup>1</sup>.

**Thera has achieved the highest rating for Financial Confidence and has been awarded the maximum score of 1 (on a scale of 1 to 3).** This is the same score the organisation received last year and in each year since 2017.

Thera has recorded another surplus, total reserves are higher, rental income has increased, long term liabilities have reduced, and balance sheet assets have grown. Covenants linked to bond finance continue to be met.

Thera demonstrates robust financial management in another year in which Covid-19 posed significant challenge. Nonetheless there are numerous material challenges facing the sector, revenues did fall this year (albeit modestly) and to maintain its long-term strong outlook, Thera must continue to manage its finances with diligence and prudence.

Please refer to the appendix for further details on the year’s financial performance, market overview, governance and investor history; as well as the social impact assessment.

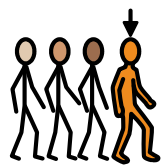
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<sup>1</sup> Financial Confidence is a measure of financial confidence in the underlying organisation. The confidence rating is not a snapshot of current financial performance, nor a relative measure to a previous financial year. Instead, it uses historic data to reflect the long-term outlook for the organisation. It is based on a weighted assessment of size, structure, development, operational performance, governance and specific risk factors.



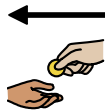
INVESTING FOR GOOD

## Investing for Good's Independent Assessment: Thera's Social Impact 2021-22



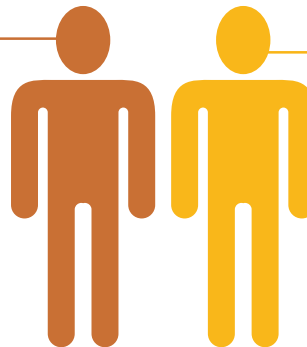
leader

1



13

People with a learning disability were in a paid leadership role in a Thera company



102

People with a learning disability were in a volunteer leadership role in a Thera company

Thera is contributing to solutions ✓



wellbeing

2

### Overall Peer Ratings



Thera 2019-20  
72%



Thera 2021-22  
93%

Thera is contributing to solutions ✓



house

3



12

Tenancies  
created by Thera  
in 2021-22



183

Tenancies  
created by Thera  
since 2012

Thera is benefitting stakeholders ✓



## INVESTING FOR GOOD



financial

4



**1,318** people with a learning disability supported to do what they want with their own money

**12.46%** more than the previous year

**38%** more than the annual average since 2015-16

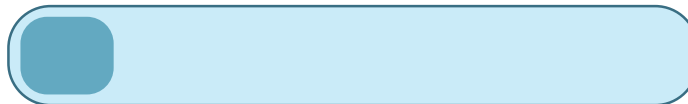
**Thera is contributing to solutions** ✓



employment

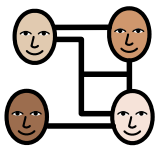
5

**People with a learning disability who find work with Thera programmes**



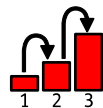
**14%**

**Thera is benefitting stakeholders** ✓



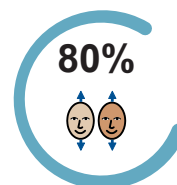
network

6



**41.5%**

Increase in people with a learning disability supported by Equal Futures and Gig Buddies



People with a learning disability said participating in Gig Buddies improved their social life.



**Thera is contributing to solutions** ✓

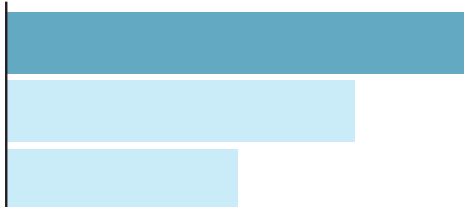
## Financial Confidence 2021-22

70 financial criteria assessed to consider the long-term outlook for the organisation.



finance

1  
2  
3



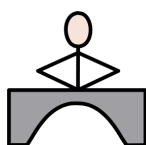
## Our impact – What we have done in 2021-22



leaders

### Impact Goal 1: Show that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society

People with a learning disability are not often in the public eye, although this is slowly improving, and they are absent from leadership positions in many companies and areas of public life. This limits aspirations and opportunities for many who could offer their valuable skills, experience and perspective in a range of ways. Thera was founded with the belief that things could be different and that people with a learning disability could be in charge in a real way. Thera achieves this through its employment and company structure, as well as through project roles.



director

### Senior leaders

Thera employs 9 Service Quality Directors and 4 other senior leaders with lived experience who embody the vision of people with a learning disability being leaders in society. They do this as directors of their Thera company, as well as through wider advocacy, representative and other leadership roles.

Kiran Kaur [joined The Camden Society \(London\) in 2021](#) as the newest Service Quality Director in the Group and has already brought her lived experience to delivering training, attending board meetings and submitting tenders to support more people with a learning disability.

In addition to the Service Quality Directors sitting on the board of Thera's care and support companies, there are 7 voluntary non-executive directors with a learning disability as board members of Thera companies. Eli Heathfield has been a trustee on the board of Aspire Living, a care and support company based in the west of England, for 5 years. In his role, he brings both his personal lived experience, and his broad professional experience, to benefit Aspire.



Talking about his experience so far, Eli said:

"I wanted to join the board because I believe all people should have the right to reach their full potential, whatever that may be, and I saw that Aspire and Thera had that vision.

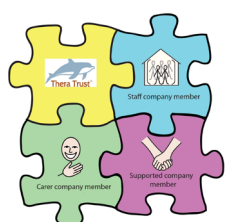
I would like to ensure people with a learning disability have continuity in their daily lives, especially by having their support provided by people they know well. On a personal level, I know how important and comforting continuity is. I also feel it is important for the people we support to have a voice at all levels.

Being on the board has been a positive experience. I have had the opportunity to raise questions and comments to help enhance the living experience of those with a learning disability we support. I accompanied the Chairman to London to deliver the Aspire business plan."

Ian Harper, Service Quality Director, said of Eli's contribution:

"He has made a tremendous impact on the board. He comes very well prepared, gives good advice and good challenges. He brings a tremendous amount of knowledge, enthusiasm and passion to Aspire."

Read Eli's full interview at: [www.aspireliving.org.uk/2023/07/21/an-interview-with-eli-aspire-trustee/](http://www.aspireliving.org.uk/2023/07/21/an-interview-with-eli-aspire-trustee/)

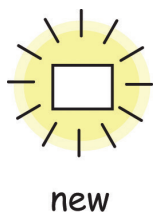


## Company members

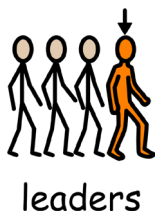
Company membership enables people supported by a Thera care and support company, their families and staff members to have a real say in how their company is run. This includes voting at Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and taking part in meetings to speak about what the company is doing.

Across the Group, Company Membership has grown in 2021-22 with an increase in supported company members across 8 companies. This is due in the main to Thera South West (TSW) recruiting 6 new members following a recruitment campaign led by the Service Quality Director and Independent Director and the inclusion of Equal Futures' 5 supported company members for the first time, plus other minor changes in other companies +/- 1 or 2 people.





Service Quality Directors continue to work to reinvigorate Company Membership after the pandemic lockdowns and are developing creative new ways such as videos to engage people, so that Company Membership can become a more impactful tool to hold companies to account.



## Other leaders

Aspire has also been promoting the voices of people with a learning disability as a member of the West Midlands Advocacy Network and by hosting the Herefordshire Learning Disability Week event attended by 600 people. Both events were co-led by a person with a learning disability.

Thera companies also welcome the more informal leadership and involvement of the people they support, for example as members of Thera North's events committees who organised their Summer Ball in Darlington and Sports Day, which happened later in 2022.

"It has been great being able to attend some of the Thera North Sports Committee Meetings to see the people we support in Lancashire taking a lead in what they wanted to see happen at the Sports Day and take true leadership over it with the support of the senior management team."

Andrew Bright, Service Quality Director, Thera North





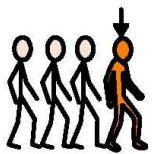
environment

Similarly, in Ansar Projects, the Ansar Champions of Excellence have created a new environmental project.

The Ansar Champions of Excellence (ACE) are a group of people with a learning disability supported by Ansar who meet regularly to discuss ideas and develop projects based on what is important to them.

Having closely followed the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow in November 2021, they were keen to discuss what they and Ansar could do to help tackle climate change. They have begun looking at recycling and reusing resources, as well as developing a garden and allotment in the 'From the Ground Up' project.

People supported by Ansar, with the support of their staff teams, have been involved not only at this ideas stage, but in organising and participating in the fundraising 'Wellie Workout Walk', preparing the garden and forming a Gardening Committee to lead the project going forwards.



leadership

This shows the power of people with a learning disability acting as thought leaders, raising the profile of important societal issues and influencing their company strategy and local community to effect real change.



opportunities

Looking forward, Thera Group aims to increase the impact of our existing leaders with lived experience of a learning disability by further developing opportunities for them internally and externally; and increasing the number of company members and non-executive directors with lived experience of a learning disability in the Group.



wellbeing

## Impact Goal 2: Increase social and personal wellbeing of people with a learning disability

Thera's care and support companies promote wellbeing through their personalised day-to-day support to people at home and in the community. This ranges from help with personal care and daily tasks, to support to get out, do activities and work towards their goals. It directly impacts a person's sense of wellbeing in themselves and their ability to connect with others, pursue interests and explore opportunities. This includes using Positive Behaviour Support to develop personal wellbeing by enabling someone to be supported in the right way for them, be understood and be in control of their life. Thera also promotes people's health and wellbeing through bespoke training and other wellbeing initiatives.



support

### Care and support

Care and support continued to be affected by Covid-19 throughout 2021-22, with new and amended regulation and repeated changes to Government and Devolved Administration guidance. This caused uncertainty for people supported and restricted their ability and confidence to get out and about. Staff teams were still under significant pressure during this time and the sector faced an extremely challenging period of recruitment, which showed no signs of easing. Nevertheless, Thera's support teams continued to step up to provide personalised support for people and enable them to enjoy some return to 'normality' as the year progressed.

Our staff members' extraordinary support during the pandemic was recognised with a [nomination](#) for a Department of Health and Social Care Honours Award for Sheraley Marks, Community Support Leader in Thera East Anglia, which also recognised the work of Sheraley's colleague Jen Cooper. The company was also regional winners and [highly commended nationally](#) in the Great British Care Awards in the Person-Centred Care with Housing category. Lorna Weston, Managing Director for Thera East Anglia, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List for services to people with learning disabilities.



check

## Quality checking our support

Thera Group's care and support benefits from peer quality checking by The Quality Company, led by Quality Assessors with lived experience of a learning disability. They assess whether the support provided is improving people's wellbeing and helping them achieve their goals.

This year, The Quality Company rolled out its new quality checking framework across the Group, which introduces an increased number of in-person and virtual visits covering support around one theme at a time, over a two-year rolling programme. In 2021-22, this has reported on 345 people's support through 557 Quality Checks, checking Quality Standards in 2 out of 4 themes:

- **Quality Check Theme 1 – Leading your own life and your home**
  - Standard 1: Leading your own life 93% (2019-20 53%)
  - Standard 6: Your home 98% (2019-20 92%)
- **Quality Check Theme 2 – Health and Wellbeing**
  - Standard 2: Your health and wellbeing 95% (new standard, no previous data)
- No data is yet available for the remaining standards in themes 3 and 4, as these will be assessed later on.



results

Results show an improvement compared to the results from the last available year of 2019-20 (before the pandemic forced quality visits to be suspended). Some of the difference may be explained by the change in format of visits and their gradual roll out, which has meant lower numbers have been visited under each standard. It is not known whether those interviewed are representative of all those supported and direct comparison with 2019-20 is therefore difficult.

This is also the first year of reporting specifically on health and wellbeing under the new standard 2. Encouragingly, this shows that the vast majority of people report are happy with their support around health and wellbeing.

Assessments will continue in 2022-23 as part of a rolling cycle of visits across all themes as The Quality Company continues to test this new method to ensure ongoing rigorous, timely and valuable feedback from quality visits that enables improvements to support.



assessment

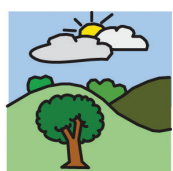
The Quality Company is also reviewing and developing quality assessment for other types of support such as activities and support during the day, short breaks and community support and will launch a pilot of this quality check in 2022-23.



behaviour

## Positive Behaviour Support

Thera's support around health and wellbeing includes Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). This is an approach to support that promotes overall quality of life by understanding each person's individual support needs, communication, behaviour and life as a whole. It includes supporting people with anxiety, agitation or behaviours that may be seen as concerning to understand the cause and function of any complex behaviour and introduce comprehensive and recognised methods for improving wellbeing.



environment

Rather than focusing on managing behaviour through restrictions and medication, PBS looks at how support teams can best work with the individual (and other significant people in their life) to create a positive environment in which the person can continue to develop and thrive. The impact of this approach, alongside Person-Centred Active Support (PCAS) and person-centred planning, can be transformative in enabling someone to be in control of their life, have more autonomy and thereby live the life they choose.



analysis

Analysis of The Quality Company quality checks for people with complex behavioural support needs shows a 96% rating under health and wellbeing (standard 2), 92% for standard 1 and 97% for standard 6. These are all within 1 percentage point of the overall Thera population, suggesting that the quality of support is similarly high.



success

Thera has invested in PBS support through a Head of PBS for the Group, alongside PBS coaches and leads in individual support companies. Some coaches now undertake bespoke work with individuals and their support teams to improve their wellbeing and thereby reduce concerning behaviours. PBS has been an integral part of the success of our support for Ethan. We shared his story last year and were able to catch up with him and his team again this year to see what he has been up to since:





story

## Previously

Ethan came to Thera through the Transforming Care programme with a range of complex behavioural support needs and restrictions. Thera East Midlands supported him to learn independent living, social and communication skills, with PBS and PCAS support central to their approach. Through this, along with adaptations to his home and personalised support, Ethan's wellbeing and coping strategies improved and staff needed to use fewer physical interventions and restrictions to support him.



## In 2021-22

This laid the groundwork for Ethan to be able to move into his own home. His support team worked closely with Forward Housing to find, design and develop a bespoke home to suit his needs and lifestyle. This included making the house robust enough to cope when he did become agitated and removing potential hazards such as hanging lights (these were recessed into the ceilings) and blinds (which were integrated into the window), so that the risk of injury and damage was minimised. It also included installing a large trampoline and swing in the garden, plus an outside sink for water play, which all help him to destress and enjoy life at home. This meant he could access all parts of his home and really make the most of it. It provides him with lots of space to move around and do what he enjoys, with everything being accessible and open to him.

He settled in exceptionally well when he moved in and loves having his own space, which he is in charge of! He has been enjoying walks and drives in the local countryside and has built good relationships with his neighbours and others in the local community. He has made himself at home and his family are able to visit him more regularly there. The impact of his PBS-based support and his house move on his wellbeing and life has been huge.



wellbeing

## Wider wellbeing initiatives

In addition to day-to-day support, Thera companies have been promoting people's wellbeing in a number of other ways in 2021-22, including Ansar Projects' fundraising walks and random acts of kindness initiative. Companies have also had a focus on promoting people's health through the RESTORE2™ Mini project, funded by NHS England and NHS Improve, which delivered training to 343 members of staff in total across the country (including the 80 from March 2021 reported last year). This training supports family carers, social care staff and people with a learning disability themselves to spot the early 'soft signs' of illness, communicate these effectively to a health professional and ensure the individual gets timely and appropriate treatment.



training

An independent study<sup>2</sup> of the impact of RESTORE2™ Mini found that carers (both paid and unpaid) often struggle to make themselves heard by medical professionals. Carers reported that the RESTORE2™ Mini training was useful in giving them the skills and confidence to spot soft signs, act on them and advocate for the people they care for with doctors, nurses, GP receptionists and others.



funding

Thera was awarded funding to extend this training from March 2022, under a new project alongside training on STOMP (Stopping The Over Medication of People with a learning disability, autism or both) and we look forward to reporting on this in the next report. Through the roll out of this training, alongside extended PBS work and person-centred planning with all people supported, Thera companies are committed to further increasing people's wellbeing in years to come, so that more people can live the lives they want.

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2 Jane Greaves, Alison Steven, Julie Alders, Meaghan Grabrovaz (2021) 'An exploration and evaluation of mechanisms to aid recognition of acute deterioration in people with learning disabilities: "What do I need to know?"', Northumbria University Newcastle.

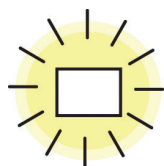
The study included Thera and other organisations delivering training on RESTORE2 Mini and other 'Early Warning Systems'.



housing

## Impact Goal 3: Improve access to housing

Access to housing continues to be a challenge for many people with a learning disability who require adapted homes to meet their needs. Having a home that is safe and accessible, in the community they want and living with those they choose can make a huge difference to someone's life. Forward Housing continues to source properties on behalf of people supported by Thera care and support companies, including those purchased with funding from Thera Trust's charity bonds and those leased through an agreement with Cheyne Capital.



new

In 2021-22, Forward Housing developed 5 properties, creating 12 new tenancies for people with a learning disability<sup>3</sup>. This is a reduction on the previous year, which is largely due a challenging housing market and shortages impacting on refurbishment work.

Whilst the ongoing challenge of sourcing and adapting these homes in the current housing market, and the intensive, personalised work that goes into each project necessarily limit the number of people reached at any point, the impact had on each individual on move-in day and far beyond is unmistakeable.



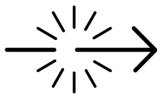
home

Those looking for a new home this year came from the following backgrounds:

- **8% were living in some form of institutional care**, such as a long-stay hospital or in residential care. Due to the complexity of their behaviour e.g. forensic history, most require self-contained accommodation that has been designed and adapted to meet their specific needs e.g. very robust finishes, low sensory environment etc.
- **6% were leaving education and have chosen to live independently** rather than return home after finishing their education, often choosing to share with friends they have been at college with. Their families are supportive of this and are involved in the process.

<sup>3</sup> Please note, 4 out of 5 of these properties were purchased in the previous year 2020-21, but not developed until 2021-22 and therefore only reported now. The other property was purchased in 2021-22 and developed in that same year, so is included here. 3 properties were purchased in 2021-22 in total, but the 2 others were not developed in the year, so are not yet included.

- **17% were living with their families**, but due to the parents' own declining health or, more frequently, following a decision to plan ahead for the future, they are choosing to plan a move to their own home. The parents are fully involved in the planning process throughout.
- **69% were people living in accommodation that no longer meets their needs**, usually due to age, declining health and/or mobility. Other reasons involved include poor state of repair or landlords choosing to sell the property in which people are living for financial reasons. Increasingly, a number are living in shared accommodation in large services where Thera companies have recently taken on contracts and find that people's homes are often not suited or personalised to them, and they have not chosen where they live or who they live with.



impact

The long-term impact of providing this housing can be seen in Ethan's story in the previous section of this report, where the purchase and adaptation of the home to his bespoke needs has enabled him to lead a much more independent life, reducing anxiety and frustrations to improve his wellbeing and help him to achieve his goals.

John is also enjoying the benefits of moving into a new home:



story

John<sup>4</sup> has been living together with his friend in their own home, supported by Thera East Midlands (TEM), for 14 years and they lived together in a care home before that. They are very close and care for each other a lot.

The home however was not in a good condition, so TEM worked with Forward Housing and the 2 gentlemen to find a new bungalow that could be adapted to them.

Their new home includes a level access shower and lower-level access bath to make it all accessible to them. Most importantly the house was decorated with red highlights – the colour of their favourite football team Nottingham Forest!



4 Name changed





story

They got all new furniture and decorations, with John picking out his new wallpaper online. Their support team think they have the best bungalow of anyone they support!

Since moving in, John is more content and takes pride in showing everyone around. He has also become very engaged in his new local community (as they moved to a different part of the city).

John loves transport, so he loves using local buses, going on tram and train rides locally and spotting planes flying overhead, as they live under the flight path for the local airport! He goes on local walks every day and is often out visiting local attractions or using his Nottingham Forest season ticket.

Everyone who knows John has seen the difference made by having a new home that is suited to his needs, that he can enjoy and be proud of. This has improved his wellbeing and is allowing him to enjoy life!



investment

With further investment, Forward Housing will continue to develop homes in partnership with support companies across Thera Group that meet people's individual needs and enable them to live as independently as possible in the community, and with the people they choose.





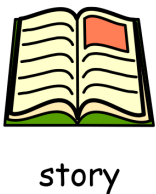
## Impact Goal 4: Improve financial wellbeing

Alongside housing, finances can be another key barrier to people living the life they choose, with an often-complex benefits system to negotiate and challenges in getting the support needed to manage payments for bills and services and even simple day-to-day purchases. This limits people's control over their money and thereby their choices in daily life and long-term plans.



Dosh provides support to people to enable them to manage their money with choice and control, through financial advocacy and appointeeship for benefits. Financial advocates work with individuals in their local areas on an ongoing basis to manage their money and plan for their future goals, as well as advocating on their behalf with benefit agencies, Local Authorities and companies.

The impact of this individual advocacy work can be seen in Jane's<sup>5</sup> story.



Jane\* moved into her own flat at the end of 2020, having previously lived in a residential care home. This meant a lot of new opportunities, but also lots of changes to manage and new things to learn. Her mum had previously managed her money for her. Being in her own flat meant changes to benefit claims and lots of new bills and financial decisions to deal with.

Dosh started supporting Jane soon after she moved in to help her manage this transition and get set up in her new life. She met her Financial Advocate Lisa and they began planning how to manage her money. As appointee, Dosh was able to manage her benefit claims and set up bill payments from a Dosh managed account, taking away a lot of hassle from Jane as she focused on getting settled in. Lisa then worked with Jane to write a budget and agreed regular transfers to her personal bank account for her food shopping and other spending money. These were initially twice a week to make it easier for Jane to budget, but within a few months she asked for these to change to just once a week as she had learnt to save her money and spread it over the week.

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5 Name changed at the person's request

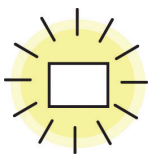




story

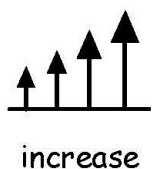
Jane has faced some challenges since moving in, such as a flood that meant she had to move out again temporarily. She has also achieved lots of new things as her confidence has grown, including getting a part-time job. Her Financial Advocate Lisa reports that she has a lot more understanding of money now than when they first met. For example, Jane used to top up her electricity meter every day as she was so anxious about running out but has now learnt to check the balance and only top up when needed, keeping more money for other spending whilst still keeping her in control and confident that she has the electricity she needs. She uses her review meetings with her Advocate to plan for future spending and is learning how to find out how much things cost and to shop around herself, so that she can make those bigger purchases. She is even managing her bank account online now, so she can check her balance regularly and stay in control of her spending.

Dosh's support has enabled her to learn more about how her money works, make decisions and control her spending, whilst having the Dosh account and support in the background to provide reassurance and help with things she finds more difficult like benefits and bills. This has enabled her to become less anxious about money and not panic each time a bill appears. Instead, she can be confident that she has the money and the support to pay it, without stopping any of her other spending plans. Her advocate Lisa says "It has been so lovely to see Jane become more independent and learn to manage her money so much better, all whilst having to deal with a flood in her flat as well. It's great to be a part of her journey."



new

Over 2021-22, Dosh began supporting 162 new people and developed a number of projects to improve the services it can provide in a difficult payments landscape, for example looking at FinTech and online payment options. This continues to be a challenge as financial services are not usually adapted for people who need extra support or have limited mental capacity around money. Dosh continues to advocate on their behalf with banks and other companies and work to develop creative solutions, available to all where possible or bespoke to Dosh where needed.



For those people that joined Dosh in 2020-21, they saw the benefit of Dosh's support 12 months on. On average their income increased by £12.32 and their savings by £4,738. This income increase is more modest than in previous years, which is believed to be due to changes in benefit rules and increased migration to Universal Credit for people supported. The increase in savings will however make a marked difference as they work with their Financial Advocates to make plans for their long-term goals, as well as providing some level of reassurance during 2022-23's cost-of-living crisis as prices rise.



Dosh also advocates more widely on behalf of people's financial wellbeing, raising awareness of the challenges faced and promoting better access. Building on an appearance on Surrey Hills Sunny Side Radio show in February 2021, Dosh has appeared on the [Clever about Cash](#) programme from BBC Radio Scotland in August 2021 and was quoted in [Enable Magazine's](#) 'Understanding your money' feature in the autumn<sup>6</sup>. This year, Dosh also updated its free online Money Plan Game, which enables people to create a budget in an interactive and accessible way; and created a new utilities factsheet to help people manage these important bills.

"Just wanted to say thank you to @DoshTweets for the amazing resources that sit on your website... Really helpful"

Macintyre Families 05/08/2021<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> pp. 68-9 (Sept/Oct 2021 edition)

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/MacFamilies/status/1423186652135137281>



employment

## Impact Goal 5: Improve readiness and access to employment and training and business opportunities

Only 4.8% of people with a learning disability were in employment in 2021-22 (down from 5.6% in 2019-20)<sup>8</sup>. Many people face significant barriers to access the training and support they need to get and then hold down a job. Several Thera companies support people with education and training, both working with individuals in their day-to-day support and through projects and social enterprises, to try to break down these barriers.



success

Thera East Anglia's supported employment project has engaged with 13 individuals in 2021-22, including providing direct employment support to 7 people. Through this, one person has secured new employment and another maintained their employment in an existing role. In addition, one person has secured a new volunteering placement, and another has extended her volunteering hours to 3 days a week, from initially just 1-2 hours.



employ

Thera also contributes by directly employing people with a learning disability across the group. This includes Quality Assessors in The Quality Company, who use their lived experience and professional skills to assess the support provided by Thera care and support companies. The Quality Company has been supporting Quality Assessors to develop their wider employment skills, including presentation and communication. This will enable future career development both within and beyond the Thera Group.

**UNITY WORKS**

Another specialist company - Unity Works Social Enterprises – is dedicated to increasing employment and training opportunities for people with a learning disability. Unity Works worked with 583 people in 2021-22, mainly within the London boroughs. This represents a reduction from 2020-21, which saw a large increase in short-term work, but is more on par with 2019-20 figures. Unity Works is currently also expanding to other areas of the UK in partnership with regional Thera support companies, including Aspire and Thera East.

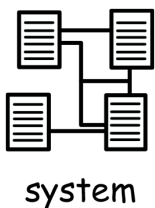
<sup>8</sup> Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Measure 1e for period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-outcomes-framework-ascof>

Unity Works runs a number of social enterprises which provide training and employment to individuals with a learning disability. These include:

- Mail Out distribution and warehousing, which has grown in this period due to increased demand and is looking to expand to a second site.
- Mill Lane garden centre, which has also grown its sales in the year with, in particular, a successful Christmas period selling trees online.
- Cafes in various locations across London, which have been returning to business after pandemic closures. This has come with mixed success as customer habits (such as working from home) have changed footfall at some locations. Unity Works continues to develop these cafes and review how they can continue to be a success.



Last year's report included the much-anticipated Unity Pies, created by a group of people with a learning disability supported by Unity Works during lockdown. Development is ongoing, although it has had to cope with some delays in the period as it continues to look for the right facilities to build its baking operations. Overall, Unity Works has managed to maintain its support whilst working in a challenging job market as the rate of employment for people with a learning disability has again decreased and funding for supported employment and training programmes is more limited.



Unity Works has developed a new system for tracking trainees' learning in the social enterprises against their own individual goals, which will enable greater impact measurement going forward. In addition, Unity Works is delivering DFN Project SEARCH supported internships and building its work with employers, delivering online disability awareness training (reaching 170 employers) and other partnership work, to improve access to employment for more people with a learning disability.



story

## **Working with Bartlett Mitchell**

We first began working with Bartlett Mitchell, a contract caterer, in 2019. They were really impressed upon visiting one of our cafes and offered one of our trainees a role as a breakfast chef, keen to help him develop in his career. We provided job coaching and talked to the team on site about the best ways to help their new colleague integrate and feel supported.

When the pandemic hit, their team were keen to use their time on furlough to develop their awareness of disability, and we ran several online training sessions.

In 2021, with their sites now open, Bartlett Mitchell reached out again as they were looking for staff for a new location. We matched 3 suitable candidates and arranged a site tour and informal interview. Our candidates really impressed the team and were invited to do a work trial (a good reasonable adjustment for them to really showcase their skills). Two of the candidates were successful in being offered a job!

We provided job coaching to help them settle in, and Bartlett Mitchell even invited one of the candidates' parents to visit, understanding how this would make her feel supported as it would be easier for her to describe her day to them once they had seen where she worked and met her new colleagues. We are in regular contact and continue to offer advice and guidance, such as attending reviews.<sup>9</sup>

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9 Taken from Unity Works Annual Report 2021-22 pp. 20-21



community

## Impact Goal 6: Broaden community and social networks

The importance of community and social networks has become even more apparent during the lockdowns we have seen since 2020, in particular their value for people's mental wellbeing. People with a learning disability can often be more isolated and lack friendships and connections beyond family and/or paid support. Thera supports people to build their networks in their day-to-day support at home and in the community. Thera also does specialist work supporting people to develop social skills and networks, including through events, which has a significant impact on their wellbeing.



opportunities

As reported last year, the closure of traditional building-based support during the day during the pandemic, whilst challenging, opened up new opportunities for people to do something different with their days. Thera has always been committed to supporting people to be part of their local communities, beyond just exclusive activities and groups. In 2021-22, where the easing of lockdown restrictions allowed, Thera companies have been supporting and enabling people to get back out into the community in different ways.



support

Thera East Anglia have been working with individuals requesting changes to their traditional daytime support to become more community based and Aspire have been undertaking community mapping with individuals and support teams to look at how people can build connections with their local community. This builds on the existing community and daytime support that Thera companies already provide to many individuals. This will be further strengthened through Thera's Thrive project in future years, which aims to reimagine support provided through more traditional day services contracts to look at the whole support people receive in their communities both during the day and night.



focus

In Scotland, Gig Buddies with Thera Trust report that a lot of their focus was on getting people comfortable to go out again, building their confidence and renewing skills to get out and attend gigs. People began returning to in-person events through the second half of 2021, in groups and as individuals with their volunteer Gig Buddy.



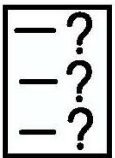




This included [TRNSMT Glasgow](#), [Rosie Jones](#), [King Tut's Wah Wah Hut](#), [Killer Instinct @DreadnoughtRock](#), a [Singalong at Purple Orange](#), and [gigs for independent venue week](#).



online



survey

Alongside these, Gig Buddies is continuing online events for those not yet comfortable going out, or who have enjoyed socialising online and want to keep this going alongside in-person sessions.

Gig Buddies' members' survey in January - February 2022 showed that the biggest barrier for people getting out to in person Gig Buddies events was still the pandemic (29% of responses); however, 93% of respondents said they wanted to get out to more events, so it is hoped that more and more people will continue to build their confidence to come out. The survey showed the continuing need for Gig Buddies' work, with 47% of respondents saying that not having anyone to go out with was their biggest barrier to going out overall, with 84% saying Gig Buddies helped them see their friends and 80% saying it had improved their social life.



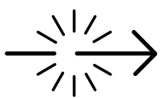
accessibility

Gig Buddies is also building relationships with local venues and increasing awareness of how to make venues and events accessible. In May 2021, they published a [free resource for venues](#) to help them achieve this and are building partnerships with several venues to create more opportunities for people in their network.



volunteer

Similarly to Gig Buddies' volunteer pairings, Equal Futures match up volunteer befrienders, benefiting 21 people with a learning disability in this period, as well as providing emotional support, information and advice for family carers. Equal Futures also facilitated 4 circles of support, which bring together a group of local volunteers, family, friends and community members around an individual with a learning disability to support them to achieve their goals. Demand for these services continues to grow, with Equal Futures expanding into North Lanarkshire this year, as well as delivering 3 transition programmes for school leavers in East Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and Glasgow.



impact

The story on the next page shows the wide-ranging impact of Equal Futures' support on someone's wellbeing and ability to plan for and achieve their goals.



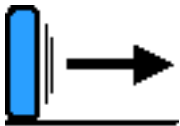
story

### Liam's story

Liam lives in his own home with his dog Murphy and has paid carers that visit him each day. He joined Equal Futures in April 2021 and told us he wanted a befriender, circle of support and to be involved in our events. Liam has paid carers that he gets on really well with, but he was hoping to make some friends to go out and do activities with. We advertised on different platforms for a volunteer befriender for Liam, however the applicants were not suitable for him.

Liam came along to some of Equal Futures' events and later that year, at a Halloween High Tea in Glasgow, he got chatting to one of the Glasgow volunteers. They both hit it off straight away and Liam told Donna, the Glasgow Project Coordinator, that he thought they could potentially be a good match. After the event, Liam and Donna met with the volunteer to talk about him becoming Liam's befriender. Everyone agreed that this was a match and Liam made plans to meet up with his befriender for a coffee the following week. They now meet up on a weekly basis and do different activities like going to the cinema and out for meals, as they have found they both have a lot in common.

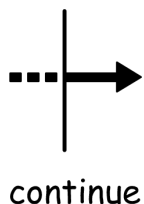
Liam has been a great ambassador for Equal Futures and in December 2021 took part in a show at Pulse Radio in Glasgow, promoting what we do and advertising for volunteers. Liam has leadership ambitions too as he would love to be part of Equal Futures' board in future.



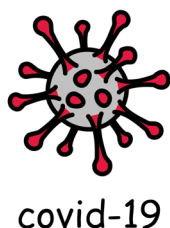
forward

Going forward, we will be looking to increase the impact of Equal Futures and Gig Buddies by expanding the number of people they work with. In addition, our care and support companies will continue to support people to get back out into the community and build the skills and confidence they need to make connections and achieve their goals.

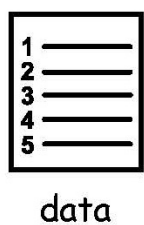
## Limits and Challenges



We continually strive to increase our impact and strengthen our measurement and reporting of this. Inevitably, this comes with some challenges, which in this period have particularly included the following:



- Covid-19 continued to have a significant impact throughout much of the period, with repeated lockdowns creating uncertainty and affecting people's confidence to get out again. Social care continued to maintain very high standards in health and safety, but this came with some restriction on people's activities and the services all companies could offer.



- Impact data that could not be collected during the initial lockdown (in particular quality standards), has begun to be collected again, however with a change of approach in some cases. For quality visits, this allows for more frequent visits to each person, but will take time to rebuild results across all standards and return to the levels of data previously seen.



- It is a core part of Thera's Vision for Thera to be controlled by the people it supports. Some of the ways Thera does this, including through Being Heard and Company Membership, had to be limited or paused during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Now that they are restarting, Service Quality Directors are taking time to review and develop these to ensure they are as effective and impactful as possible. This includes considering how to make the process and information even more open and accessible, particularly for abstract and unfamiliar subjects such as company accounts, to enable more people with a learning disability to take part and have a real influence. They will be working with the Communications Team and the new Group Lead Directors for Quality and Involvement to embed this going forward.



- Social care continues to experience significant challenges in funding across all services, as well as recruitment and retention difficulties in many areas, which makes it hard to always have the consistent, full staff team needed to provide the very best



individualised support. Thera is grateful to the many staff who continue to go above and beyond and find creative solutions to enable them to deliver the care and support people need. We are working with statutory and other funders to obtain the right support hours and services for each individual wherever possible and are developing a new People Strategy to support retention and recruitment of staff members across the Group.



- The hospitality sector faced many struggles during the Covid-19 lockdowns as people no longer went out to cafes and other venues. This has impacted on Unity Works Social Enterprises cafes, which are being reviewed carefully to ensure they can re-establish themselves effectively post-lockdown and diversify in their social enterprise offer where necessary.



- The housing market in 2021-22 saw significant increases in housing costs, with property prices reaching a historic high in January 2022, in particular in the non-urban areas where Thera mainly operates.<sup>10</sup> Housing has been in high demand and, although house building did increase, there were still shortfalls in new housing<sup>11</sup>. Labour shortages have impacted how quickly properties can be refurbished and increased the cost of those works, along with increased materials costs. Finally, getting the rent amounts agreed to cover these costs continues to be a challenge, although the vast majority were agreed after negotiation.



- The jobs market has become even more challenging, with the proportion of people with a learning disability in employment reduced to 4.8% in 2021-22 as we came out of lockdown (down from 5.6% in 2019-20)<sup>12</sup>. This is in part due to the impact of Covid-19 being more strongly felt by people with a learning disability, perhaps due to their own health concerns making it difficult to maintain a job at that time or insecure jobs being made redundant. Employers currently appear to be less confident about employing people with a learning disability. There has also been a reduction in funding for services to support employment,

<sup>10</sup> HM Land Registry, UK House Price Index for January 2022

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-building-stats-show-continued-increase-in-starts-and-completions-despite-pandemic>

<sup>12</sup> Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Measure 1e for period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-outcomes-framework-ascof>

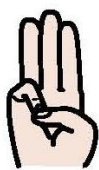
such as those provided by Unity Works, preventing more people from being supported to enter the jobs market and successfully hold down a position.



- Thera's current theory of change and measures for this impact report are in need of revision to incorporate newer data sources and a deeper understanding of our impact, as well as benchmarking against external measures where possible. This is being reviewed through 2022-23 ready to launch a new social impact framework in 2023-24.

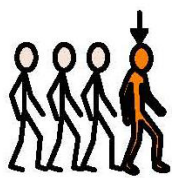


## Plans for next year (2022-23)



committed

We are committed to continuing to develop the quality, reach and impact of our support across all areas of activity, as we believe in the value of what we do and want to benefit more people. This development will come alongside some remaining challenges from Covid-19 and the wider challenging state of the social care sector. Nevertheless, Thera Group companies will continue to be resilient and creative in making a difference for people through day-to-day support and projects:



leadership



wellbeing



home

Goal	Next steps
<b>Show that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss opportunities to strengthen company membership and the wider Being Heard strategy to allow more meaningful and impactful involvement by more people supported.</li> <li>• Develop other opportunities for leadership and engagement within and outside Thera Group.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase social and personal wellbeing of people with a learning disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out our second RESTORE2™ Mini project, alongside STOMP<sup>13</sup>, to deliver training on access to healthcare to staff members, family carers and other professionals.</li> <li>• Plan with people as they come out of lockdown to see what they would enjoy doing with their days going forward.</li> <li>• Consider opportunities to develop the strategy for the Thrive project to reimagine the support people receive in the community in the day and at night.</li> </ul>
<b>Improve access to housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop bespoke housing solutions.</li> </ul>

13 Stopping The Over-Medication of People with a learning disability, autism or both. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/improving-health/stomp/>



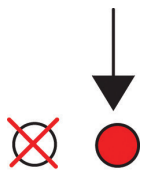
finance



employment



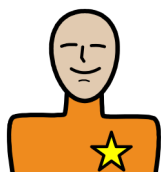
community



other

<b>Improve financial wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support more people with financial advocacy.</li> <li>• Continue external advocacy and awareness raising.</li> </ul>
<b>Improve readiness and access to employment and training and business opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue delivering supported employment and training programmes to enable more people to achieve their employment goals.</li> <li>• Develop our Path to Jobs project to support the career development of colleagues with a learning disability.</li> <li>• Connect with other organisations as a first step to supporting the development of roles outside of Thera, for leaders with a lived experience of learning disability.</li> </ul>
<b>Broaden community and social networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build people's confidence to go out in the community again post-lockdown.</li> <li>• Increase the reach of social and community projects and social support.</li> </ul>
<b>Other organisational development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue our consultation on new impact goals to create a draft framework of goals, outcomes and measures.</li> <li>• Roll out the information strategy to begin improving our capacity to collect accurate, timely data.</li> <li>• Introduce new Group Lead Director roles for Operational Support and for Quality and Involvement. The Quality and Involvement role will continue our leadership approach by being held jointly by a person with lived experience of a learning disability alongside another professional. They will be working alongside the Service Quality Directors to further develop their roles and the involvement of people supported in Thera, including through Company Membership.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion



proud

Overall, we are proud of the impact Thera Group has had over 2021-22, particularly in the context of ongoing restrictions from Covid-19 and a challenging social care environment. We will continue to develop our impact in line with the Thera Vision and our commitment to leadership by people with a learning disability, so that the people we support across the Group can live the life they choose.

Further information can be found in appendix 1: Investing for Good Assessment of Social Impact and Financial Confidence

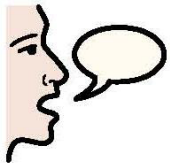


report

Please also consult Thera Trust's Annual Report<sup>14</sup> for more information on the company and visit [www.thera.co.uk/impact](http://www.thera.co.uk/impact) to view our previous impact reports and other information.

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<sup>14</sup> Available online at: <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/03593418/filing-history>



reporting

## Impact reporting framework and measures

In this report we are measuring our impact against the social impact framework established in 2014-15 and revised in 2018. This is summarised in the theory of change presented in the introduction. Our evidence comes from a variety of data sources across all Thera companies. This ranges from data for statutory and contractual reporting though to stories and conversations with individuals we support, their loved ones and support teams.

The data collected includes:

### Quantitative

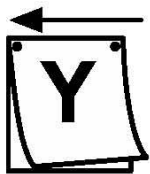
- Regular reporting from operational teams covering staff input, key outputs such as person specific plans developed, activities undertaken and performance against key indicators
- Regular and responsive operational assurance audits from support teams and managers
- Data provided through analysis by experts such as Thera's behavioural specialists.
- Data available through contracts monitoring, HR and finance systems.
- Dosh analysis of people's individual finances
- The Quality Company's quality assessment data measured against Thera's quality standards

## Qualitative

- The Quality Company Quality Assessment reports (virtual and in person)
- Service Quality Director visits checking in on people's wellbeing, quality of support and satisfaction.
- Bi-monthly Service Quality Director reports.
- Project specific surveys and feedback as needed.
- Stories and testimonials as they arise or on request.
- Case studies delivered through support staff working alongside individuals with a learning disability to tell their story.
- Engagement, consultation and feedback events.

## Measures paused due to the Covid-19 lockdown:

- Quality surveys of family carers from The Quality Company
- Annual Customer Satisfaction surveys by Dosh



last year

In last year's report we noted the changes necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown. In 2021-22, many measures including The Quality Company's visits were able to restart. They adopted a revised approach with both online and in-person visits to allow more regular check-ins with each person, reviewing one theme (one or two standards) at a time. With lockdowns continuing through much of the year, completion rates were still lower than we would like in 'normal' circumstances. Nevertheless, we are encouraged to see these returning, particularly the peer quality checking which is such an important and distinct part of our impact measurement and quality assurance.



development

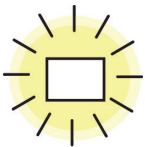
## Future development

Thera Group is undertaking a wide-ranging consultation and review of our impact management goals and framework, with people we support, their families, our staff members, Company Members, board members and trustees. This aims to co-produce new impact goals and a new approach to impact management.



review

This will include a review of the above methodology and data sources. The aim will be for data to be even more relevant, accurate and timely, to enable enhanced reporting to teams 'on the ground' and support continuous learning and improvement. This will then enable better impact reporting externally; through this Social Impact Report; online in our new impact pages: [www.thera.co.uk/impact](http://www.thera.co.uk/impact) and in other ways.



new

The next, 2022-23, report will be based on the current framework but will incorporate elements of the draft new framework where appropriate. From 2023-24 reporting will then be done under the new framework, and further measures will be developed then and in future years, as we embed this approach to impact management.



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