

Our next three years

Building back better

Strategic Plan

April 2021 To March 2024



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Building back better

Active Prospects' purpose is to enable people to lead aspiring lives, and our vision is to become an outstanding organisation delivering significant impact for our people and communities, through creativity, co-production and investment.

We provide high-quality impactful supported living, residential and community services, activities and employment, for people with learning disabilities and autism, physical and mental health needs across South East England.

We are ambitious for our people, staff and organisation to be the best we can, and we are so proud of the energy, commitment and achievements that are made by everyone, not least through the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19 became a significant factor in March 2020 and will continue to have both a direct and non-direct impact on our people, staff and communities over the next three years. Working together, we are prioritising peoples' and staffs' safety as robustly as we can, with our organisation remaining a resilient community provider. We are involved in campaigns to create a new and fair deal for social care, with people who are supported and for our social care staff.

There has been much talk during the pandemic about recovery, renewal and the sort of society we want to build post-Covid. This strategy outlines our plan is to build back better – to embrace our learning through the pandemic, to change what we need to IMPROVE, to develop Further our flexibility and Agility, and to increase our impact Together with our people and communities, now and beyond Covid-19.

This strategy highlights our plans for the next three years and our key developments, targets and goals.

Our strategy is focused in 5 key areas:

- Building our Covid-19 resilience
- Building support together with our people
- Building further opportunities and deepening our impact
- Building staff recognition, development and wellbeing
- Building our capacity, sustainability and equity

Our critical success factors for our new plan include:

- To minimise the negative impact of Covid-19 on our people, staff and organisation, whilst embracing opportunities to re-shape social care and address health inequalities going forward.
- To enable people to lead aspiring lives with 95 % achieving positive outcomes in the areas that matter to them evaluated every 6 months.
- To support an additional 30 people with homes, care and/or employment opportunities each year.
- To continue to have all our services rated by CQC as good or outstanding (with a third rated as outstanding in domains) and achieve two overall outstanding ratings by December 2022.
- To achieve a Sunday Times Best Employer Award for sector leading people engagement by March 2022 and deliver significantly better than average retention levels.
- To further increase our diversification of care income by 30 % by March 2024, becoming a provider of choice for 6 more local authority areas.
- To continue to support the Pro-Active Community to flourish, establishing user-led Networks in partnership in 3 further areas by December 2023.
- To remain financially robust, growing our net value by £500k each year and attracting suitable investment and fundraising to support our ambition.
- To significantly enhance our IT infrastructure and digital offer across all areas to support our objectives and people aspirations.
- To be an ethical organisation: championing equity, diversity and inclusion; improving our sustainability to become carbon neutral by 2030, and upholding the highest standards of corporate governance.
- To develop a bold PR and Influencing Plan with an annual strategic goals and delivery objectives from June 2021, with a particular focus on health inequalities, people's coproduction voices and stories, people leaving secure hospitals, widening opportunities and social care staff recognition.



Our strategic track record

Everyone at Active Prospects has contributed to transforming our organisation to become one of the highest quality, most responsive, creative and values-based provider of housing, care, support and employment services for those with learning disabilities and/or autism and mental health needs in South East England. We have grown from a turnover of £6.9 million in March 2016 to a projected turnover of £14 million expected in for the year to March 2022, based on confirmed developments, and onto £17 million at the end of period of this strategic plan.

We have focused on three key things - quality, impact and co-production.

Working together, is central to our purpose of enabling people to lead aspiring lives, establishing quality standards and approaches, with a drive to keep learning, improving and innovating. Active Prospects has increased its quality ratings through this period of growth, investing heavily in staff training, clinical leadership, coaching and quality assurance. All our services are rated as good by CQC, with a third having outstanding domains.

Our co-produced outcome model evaluates how people are meeting their aspirational goals. We are driven to enable people live their best lives and to have a full range of choices and opportunities, leading the lives they want and achieving the things that matter to them.

We have become a regional leader in enabling people, often with complex needs and behaviours of concern, to leave hospital to live in bespoke homes in their community, supporting 23 people in the last two years and saving the public purse over £2 million each year. We have also delivered a 68 % reduction in people's significant behaviours of concern through our specialist support programmes in the last year. Recognising our expertise and delivery track record, a number of Commissioners have approached us to extend our offer into new areas and help more people which we are making happen.

Active Prospects has an unwavering commitment to co-production giving people a voice at the very heart of our organisation. Our award-winning co-production body of people we support, the Pro-Active Community, is a user-led organisation which plays an important role in peer-led social activities and inclusion, community involvement and being active citizens.

Over the last couple of years, the Pro-Active Community has won both a national and regional awards for their innovative work, including The National Learning Disabilities and Autism People's Award and Surrey Care Service User Involvement Award. They facilitate the Surrey-wide People's Group with over 80 people regularly meeting to help shape local policy and inform their lives and services around what matters to them.

Our strategic planning process

To inform our strategic plan, we conduct many reviews with staff, people we support and our Pro-Active Community, meetings with Commissioners and key partners.

In November 2020, 120 members of the Board, Pro-Active Community and staff came together to consider our Covid-19 learning and key elements of our future strategy.

We utilise a wide range of tools to obtain feedback and intelligence, including SWOTs, PESTLE, horizon scans externally, strategic questionnaires, team reviews, meetings, key document reviews, KPIs and performance analysis and benchmarking, internal and external policy reviews, and risk reviews.

Our strategic plan covers three years and is updated annually each February. Our Board consider delivery of our KPIs monthly and delivery of the detail of the strategic plan every six months. Our Executive Management Team consider delivery in detail quarterly – with portfolio led areas incorporated in detailed annual plans.

Our five-year financial business plan is also updated every six months and tested for assumptions, actual performance and sensitivity tests to support key decision-making. This incorporates our projected growth and strategic ambitions, and challenges.

Our central support teams and individual services have annual plans to deliver their contribution to the Strategic Plan and local aspirations and improvements, which are updated continually to address quality assurance recommendations, learning from complaints and incidents, co-production developments, and new initiatives and requirements. There are supplementary strategies to support delivery of key areas such as marketing, equity diversity and inclusion, recruitment and wellbeing.

Our staff have individual targets and development plans as part of their appraisals, linked to the Strategic Plan, their relevant local plans as well as 'Being the Best I Can Reviews' reflecting their aspirations and development needs.

What makes us unique?

We are:

Local – we significantly invest in local people and communities and have a deep community anchor.

Responsive – we do everything we can to help and act quickly, with locally based senior managers highly involved in individuals' care, offering rapid decision making and ensuring deeply person-centred service design.

Creative – we create solutions, making things happen with innovation, drive and compassion. We have supported 23 people to leave hospital in the last two years outperforming many national players.

Co-produced – we are leading the way nationally on enabling people to shape our organisation and services together and to join up voices with others to improve opportunities and experiences, both locally and nationally.

Successful – we successfully support people to lead aspiring lives, including a track record of delivering transformative outcomes with people with complex needs and behaviours of concern to live successfully in their communities. We measure our outcomes and impact, demonstrating high levels of achievement and continuous improvement.

Active Values

These values have been developed with our Pro-Active Community (our people we support governance and advisory group) along with staff teams. We embed our values through everything we do including recruitment, development and appraisal, rewards and recognition throughout our approaches and practice.

Aspiring

We see potential in others and ourselves and strive to reach this

Caring

We care about others, and are considerate and approachable

Trusting

We act with integrity, and are honest and transparent

Including

We are inclusive, and recognise and celebrate difference and diversity

Valuing

We value others, and actively promote dignity and respect

Enabling

We shape our organisation and services together

Our underlying approaches to becoming an outstanding organisation

The key features required to develop an outstanding organisation are embedded in our culture and ways of working. They include:

- A focus on quality and outcomes – we have significantly enhanced the quality of our provision over the last four years as this is absolutely the foundation to our success and that of our people. We have a clear plan to deliver outstanding services over the next three years.
- Working Side by Side with our customers – our award-winning approach to coproduction with the people we support is one of our strengths and this centres everything we do and continues to drive us forward.
- Being resilient – it is tough working in social care and being reliant on publicly funded services, but we do it because we believe in the power of great care to transform people’s lives and widen opportunities.
- Problem-solving – we will always strive to make things work and overcome difficulties and challenges together. We are inspired throughout the organisation.
- Focus on improvement – we invest in robust quality assurance giving us feedback and analytical reviews across all our areas. We identify, address and learn from our mistakes and things that are not working, and we apply suggestions and adapt shared best practice.
- Creative – We don’t stand still: we constantly look for new ways to provide better care, and to help people to live aspiring lives through innovation.
- Entrepreneurial – we invest in our future and look at ways to generate income to deliver our objectives, meet the aspirations of people we support and enhance our communities.



Horizon scanning

Some key issues we have considered in our plan (These have been informed through NCVO's work in this area):

Political and Economic Drivers

We are monitoring and adapting to post-Brexit arrangements, which are having limited direct impact for Active Prospects but it is still very early days.

There may be a possible split in the UK - with the SNP seeking independence again and evaluating what that may mean for the rest of the UK.

Covid-19 appears to have created some splits in Conservative Party elements – with differences in views on lockdowns and economic policy.

Labour appears to be returning more the centre ground but have still limited impact in terms of power.

Covid-19 has changed politics and the ability and opportunity to influence, with more online platforms and the impact of social media.

The unpredictable nature of the Covid-19 emergency and the potential for future lockdowns means the financial outlook for 2021 remains volatile. This makes economic forecasting difficult.

Looking back to 2020 provides some indication of what the coming year will hold. Between February and April 2020, gross domestic product (GDP) fell by a quarter. While the economy bounced back relatively quickly from the first lockdown, the second wave of the pandemic has slowed the UK's path to recovery. By the end of 2020 the UK economy was predicted to be around 10 % smaller than before the pandemic took hold – the steepest decline in centuries.

If the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine goes according to plan, we could see the UK economy bounce back relatively quickly, particularly if people start to spend savings accrued during lockdowns. In parallel the National Audit Office (NAO) predicts there will be continued disruption following the end of the Brexit transition period in January. This means Active Prospects and the people they support should plan for an uncertain and challenging economic environment for the foreseeable future. The legacy of the crisis will impact on the public finances for some years to come.

This economic uncertainty led the chancellor to hold a single-year spending review in November 2020 – rather than the expected three-year settlement – postponing longer-term decisions until the economic environment becomes more certain.

The government decided to bolster the economy by increasing public spending in the short-to-medium term, particularly on health, jobs, and infrastructure. To replace money formerly provided through EU structural funds, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) will be launched this year. This will begin with £220m for local areas to pilot programmes before ramping up to 'at least match receipts from EU structural funds, on average reaching around £1.5bn per year'. The extent to which the UKSPF will focus on marginalised communities and the role Active Prospects may contribute to some of this work is yet to be determined.

Record levels of spending are in part made possible because of very low borrowing costs. These could become even cheaper if the Bank of England moves interest rates into negative territory in 2021. While this could make it cheaper for Active Prospects to borrow money, it could also reduce the return on investments, and impact on our pension schemes valuations. The likelihood of this happening hinges on how long coronavirus restrictions last and their impact on the economy over 2021 and beyond.

With a reduced appetite for austerity measures among MPs, longer-term tax rises might eventually be required to tackle the UK's rising debt. The questions for Active Prospects and the people and communities we support to consider are: when would this begin, how significant would any belt tightening be, what mix of spending cuts and tax rises would the government possibly opt for, and therefore which groups will the impact most likely fall on? We are hopeful that health and social care should be relatively protected.

Unemployment is rising and is likely to rise further. While more than half of those furloughed during the first lockdown had returned to work by September, 9% had lost their jobs. Younger people, low-paid workers, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities have been hardest hit, with 19% of workers aged 18-24 and 22% of BAME staff losing their jobs.

Disabled people are more likely to be facing redundancy as a result of the pandemic – 27% compared with 17% of non-disabled people. This figure rises to 37% for people with a condition or impairment that has a significant impact on their daily life, and 48% of those who are classified as 'extremely medically vulnerable' to the virus.

This may make it easier for Active Prospects to recruit for staff in the short-term. We are also taking part in the Kick Starter programme in 2021 to help support young people with paid work experiences. It also makes our wish to support our people to have sustainable work opportunities more necessary than ever.

The livelihoods of our beneficiaries have been hit hard

Covid-19 has increased the gulf between rich and poor, with worse-off households seeing savings drop and debts rise. Those who cannot work remotely have been hit hardest, both in terms of health outcomes and job and income losses. The livelihoods of BAME communities have been hit harder than their white counterparts. Disabled people are more likely to report household outgoings have increased as a result of the pandemic, with many covering the additional cost of PPE, safer travel options such as taxis, or more expensive food options to enable shielding.

The state of public services

Public services will continue to be significantly affected by the Covid-19 crisis, with many areas facing increased demand. Charities delivering public services relating to loneliness, mental health difficulties, educational inequality, homelessness, unemployment, and poverty will experience increasing demand. In parallel, the availability of funding is uncertain, particularly at a local level. In 2020, 59% of charities delivering public service contracts said they had to use other sources of income, such as fundraising, to successfully deliver contracts. Since the pandemic, local authorities have experienced increased financial pressure with several, for example, reducing social care packages in response. Many councils are warning of a risk of bankruptcy. The spending review in November 2020 announced a 4.5% increase in core spending, which is not enough to prevent the financial failure of councils. Without additional funding from government, public services will struggle to meet demand. At Active Prospects we see some councils such as Croydon really struggle at the moment and others very focused in maintaining their reserves position such as Surrey.

Trends in giving

In terms of giving for the year ahead, it may be instructive for charities to reflect on trends seen in 2020. According to CAF, public donations increased by £800m between January and June 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. This was driven by a large increase in the number of people donating or sponsoring 'hospitals and hospices' causes during the height of the pandemic's first wave, while around a fifth of people reported donating to charities which support the NHS.

Conversely, there was a significant decline in the amount of money donated to other causes. Meanwhile a decrease in face-to-face fundraising appears to have accelerated the trend towards cashless giving.

The year ahead could see a continuation of this trend, with donors increasingly giving via a websites, apps and contactless payments, particularly if social distancing measures persist, meaning Active Prospects fundraising approaches will need to continue to adapt.

Social and Health Drivers

Covid-19 may have been described as a 'great leveller' initially, but fairly quickly, there were signs that this wasn't the case – far from it. There is now more and more evidence clearly showing considerable inequalities in how people have been affected by the pandemic and by policy measures taken to address some of the consequences of the pandemic. This is true of health impacts but also of economic, social, and psychological impacts.

Mortality rates for the most deprived areas in England have been approximately double those of less deprived areas. People from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and this has sharpened the focus on structural race inequalities that have existed for a long time. Mortality rates have been significantly higher for men than women, however women have been affected by the disruption caused by Covid-19 in a way that reflects gender inequalities within society, particularly with regards to work and childcare. Lockdown has also seen a rise in domestic violence.

Disabled people make up two thirds of coronavirus deaths. This is not simply as a result of medical susceptibility, as campaigners highlight the rationing of healthcare, inappropriate use of DNR notices and lack of PPE. A recent review highlighted that people with learning disabilities were up to six times more likely to die from Covid-19 during the first wave of the pandemic. Mortality rates have been the highest for older people, especially for those in care homes. At Active Prospects addressing the health inequalities that people with learning disability, autism and mental health experience is one of the key areas we wish to highlight and address.

Some key issues we have considered in our plan continued:

Covid-19 and Black Lives Matter as a catalyst for change

Covid-19 has exacerbated racial inequalities and the need for change has never been clearer. Tackling racism and discrimination within the health and care system has become a priority, but addressing these issues is not the sole responsibility of current service providers. With health inequalities largely symptomatic of deeper inequalities in society, this is a much broader challenge. Covid-19 as well as the Black Lives Matter movement and protests around the world following the death of George Floyd have placed racial injustice in the spotlight. Both have prompted individuals to reflect on their attitudes and behaviours, and organisations on their practices particularly around leadership and employment. Both have given further momentum to the work of Charity So White, which drew attention last year to the underrepresentation of BAME people within the charity sector and the discrimination and racism that they face. The report Home Truths published by ACEVO and based on the experiences of over 500 BAME people working in the sector highlighted the extent of the issue.

Active Prospects launched its new Equity Diversity and Inclusion strategy in January 2021, and we are playing a key part in shaping sector approaches across Surrey.

Far-reaching changes in working patterns

Remote working is not new and over recent years more opportunities to work from home or on the move

had become more frequent. However, the pandemic made this a widespread practice. Almost overnight, many people in roles that previously seemed impossible to carry out remotely switched to operating exclusively online. However, this shift has also brought to the fore inequalities as jobs that can be done remotely tend to be higher paying jobs, while those that require a physical presence are mostly lower paying or lower qualified jobs.

The potential for remote working has impacted on people's views about where they want to live and whether they could move away from large cities to get more space for less money and avoid long commutes. The impacts of remote working on employers and employees as well as volunteers, beneficiaries and users are numerous and mixed. It can provide employees with extra flexibility helping them to juggle the demands of work and home life demands. However, it can also lead to people experiencing stress and poor mental health because of an inability to switch off in their personal time, and isolation through the lack of contacts with colleagues.

At Active Prospects head office roles have increased their level of home working, but clearly most roles in the organisation are working directly in services. We will enable a level of home working going forward but will be very mindful to ensure head office staff are present, accessible, and visible. We will need to keep working hard to ensure the dispersed nature of our work and services does not mean we are disconnected from each other, and people feel they are supported and fully engaged.

Community mobilisation in all its forms

The pandemic led to mobilisation across the country at a scale that had not been seen for a long time. Very quickly local initiatives were set up to respond to the needs of communities and many people formed mutual aid groups to self-organise and support one another.

The urgency of the situation encouraged greater flexibility, innovation and collaboration. Active Prospects has been working together with community groups, other charities and social care providers, infrastructure bodies and the local authority and health bodies to good effect. This level of collaboration will continue to be built on.

Shifts in volunteering

In addition to the hundreds of mutual aid groups that emerged as soon as the first lockdown was announced, over 750,000 people signed up to the NHS Volunteer Responder scheme within days of its launch. In both cases, we saw the role of digital technology in reaching out to people and getting them on board. We also witnessed a rise in what has been called micro-volunteering – people volunteering to do small, time-limited tasks that can fit around existing commitments, such as work or family life.

At Active Prospects we still need to work hard to fully translate and engage volunteers into our organisation at greater scale. Many of our services have been closed to volunteers during the pandemic to keep people safe.

Remote working and the importance of digital skills

The shift to online service delivery and remote working has highlighted a long-running digital skills gap within the charity workforce. The 2020 Charity Skills Report highlighted that two-thirds of respondents were delivering work remotely and 61% intend to offer more online services in the future. However, 83% rated themselves fair or poor at digital service delivery, 80% the same for developing digital products and 60% for low skills in AI. With Covid-19 accelerating the trend towards online services, charities need to find ways to invest in staff skills and digital infrastructure or risk being left behind, but lack of funding specific to digital is considered a major barrier (50%).

Active Prospects have adapted several of our activities and services to an online offer including the work of the Pro-Active Community, our activity programmes and some of Aspiring Prospects learning support. We have attracted funds for a lead practitioner Assistive Technology Role, and for increasing the number of digital devices for the people we support including Echoes and iPads.

We are looking to introduce a new Care System during 2020/21 through Sekoia which will give real time recording of care delivery, more responsive updating of plans and risks, recording behaviours, and driving and tracking of people's aspirations and outcomes. This will join Omni and Cascade as the key management systems for finance, maintenance, and HR.

Data protection poses challenges for online services

Data protection is proving an ongoing challenge for charities delivering services online - two years after the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

With Covid-19 and the increased adoption of technology such as remote working software, databases and CRM systems, there is a need for greater awareness of GDPR and other data legislation, as well as considerations on digital ethics, safeguarding and how to keep personal data anonymised during a public health emergency.

Compliance with GDPR and the NHS Data Toolkit compliance has meant this has become an even more important activity for Active Prospects, ensuring data safety, IT security, privacy statements and audits across all areas of the organisation fully meet requirements.

Digital technology as a means to empower civil society

In recent years, digital activities have become central to social action (for example, the use of Twitter during the Arab Spring). Lockdowns and social distancing have accelerated this trend. Online activism has been key to movements such as Black Lives Matter and Extinction Rebellion with, for instance, livestreamed events that people can follow and join from their own home.

Digital technology has facilitated a higher level of collaboration in Active Prospects work. For many people attending digital meetings and forums is easier through removing transport and some disability barriers. However equally some people have been unable to participate as digital forms often require physical support to enable some people to engage, which is not always available.

Charities getting the most out of data

For the first time, the UK government released a national data strategy which emphasises the importance of data to empower civil society organisations to better reach those in needs, decrease costs and make effective interventions for those in need. This could have implications for charities around data sharing and data quality especially in ensuring complete, unbiased, representative data to inform activities. The recent report by Danny Kruger MP also recommended that charities that benefit from public funds should be required to publish coherent, comparable data on their activities.

At Active Prospects we look to continue to understand our data and impact, to share our learning internally and drive for improvements, as well as provide information for our people and funders on how we are doing and our future actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS

Greater political and public traction

Protecting the environment has emerged as one of the top political priorities. The government has signed up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Accord, parliament declared a climate emergency, and the UK will be hosting UKCOP26 in Glasgow this year. The government's commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 has become broadly got cross-party support.

Equally, there is broad public support for climate change solutions. Polling from Ipsos Mori shows that two-

thirds of Britons see climate change as equally as serious as Covid-19 and support a green economic recovery built on moving towards net zero emissions. Another Ipsos poll shows that the public prioritises renewable energy as the most popular sector for job creation (46 % of respondents), followed by nature conservation (37 %) and energy efficiency (35 %).

In terms of political and public shifts on climate change, civil society continues to play a prominent role. Campaigns like the Climate Change Coalition have taken on the role of a ‘critical friend’ of government. Young people are also playing a major role setting the agenda. There has been a marked shift in tone and action for grassroots environmental activism within the last five years focusing and use of words like ‘urgency’ and ‘emergency’ – best seen with Extinction Rebellion and the Student Climate Network’s school climate strikes. The shift in tone and tactics including civil disruption will likely continue as key features of the climate change movement for the foreseeable future.

At Active Prospects we have seen much interest in green issues from our staff and people we support, with several initiatives being taken toward in the last couple of years, including a people’s Environmental Charter. With Covid-19 having such a significant impact in 2020 more strategic work was held but this remains a key part of our ethical approaches going forward.

The rise of sustainable consumption

As the environment and climate change grow as political issues, this will affect how charity activities are perceived by the public. Ethical consumerism continues to develop, with greater awareness and value of circular, repairable, recycled sourcing of goods, especially amongst younger generations. This will benefit charity shops such as Re:Work:It as recyclers of second-hand goods.

The lessons of covid-19 for climate change

With Covid-19 lockdown resulting in reduced commuting and air travel, carbon emissions have fallen locally and globally. With more people walking and cycling, local authorities have invested in schemes to boost cycling and walking space, including pop-up cycle lanes and pedestrianisation of city centre streets. These temporary changes may well last beyond the pandemic, and we will build upon these at Active Prospects.

Charities helping to ‘build back better’

Politicians and policy thinkers have been debating ‘building back better’ with an emphasis on a green economic recovery. Proposals include building and retrofitting infrastructure, retraining workers in those high-emissions industries which were hit with redundancies like aviation into green jobs, and redesigning the economy to become more circular and regenerative. However, concerns have been raised that any stimulus must be well-targeted, with the New Economics Foundation prioritising speed, job creation, regional equality and social distancing.

Civil society will likely play a crucial role in influencing any national green recovery package. On a policy level, there are calls to devolve decision-making. The Centre for Local Economic Strategies has advocated for a green, generative, place-based policy model that uses local charities and social enterprises. Active Prospects will continue to forge links locally to contribute collaboratively to local based initiatives, as well as regional and national strategies.



LEGAL DRIVERS

Legal drivers

To cope with the demands of the pandemic last year, the government encouraged contracting authorities, whether local councils or central government departments, to offer support and flexibility to organisations delivering contracts. This was particularly important for charities delivering public service contracts.

Although we know implementation has not been universal, guidance issued early in the pandemic has encouraged public bodies to, for example, relax key performance indicators and offer average payments for organisations struggling to deliver payment by results contracts.

Social Value has again been elevated as a key commissioner consideration for both Social Care and Health. Active Prospects need to continue to capture its direct and indirect impact across a range of health, community, work and learning indices to show the depth of its impact and contribution to local communities.

The role of the Charity Commission

One of the few certainties that charities have is that the current chair of the Charity Commission Baroness Stowell is standing down from her position in February 2021, after having served only one term. This opens up the process of recruiting the next chair of the Commission and will inevitably attract a lot of attention from charity trustees and leaders given the importance of this role in setting the relationship between the regulator and the sector. Whilst Active Prospects is not a registered charity (it is a Society registered under the Community Benefits Act with exempt charity status), the Charity Commission has a wide impact on how charities are perceived and governance standards.

Good Governance

Many charities are facing severe challenges in 2020 due to significant cuts in income due to the Pandemic, leading to closure or merger.

Issues such as ethics, integrity and diversity are central tenants of Active Prospects governance. Recent changes to the Charity Governance Code have provided some recommended outcomes and steps charities can take. Designed to help Trustees ensure high standards of governance, the code has been updated after a consultation involving some 800 charities. The 'refresh' has focused on the principles on 'Integrity' and 'Diversity' (now 'Equality, diversity and inclusion'). The revised code includes the importance of values and power dynamics in decision making, as well as the need for boards to take a systematic approach to inclusion beyond they own composition.

The National Federation of Housing of which Active Prospects is a member has also updated its Governance Code where again Equity Diversity and Inclusion are key components as well as the voice and role of tenants/ people we support to be central in governance matters. Again, we have taken great steps forward in the last five years to build these areas as key pillars of our work and look to strengthen these even more going forward.



Key trends in learning disability, autism, mental health and acquired brain injury

NHS and social care integration

The NHS long term plan commits that by 2021 all local health economies will become integrated care systems (ICS). Within the NHS, at least, an ICS brings providers of different health services closer together and blurs the boundary between them and commissioners of services.

Announcements in February 2021 by the health secretary confirmed a white paper to further support the integration process, proposing new approaches that will reduce bureaucracy and aid joint working. There is some critique that it has not addressed some of fundamentally separate legislative and governance pillars that the two systems sit on and sees community providers as minor players.

How ICS relate to local government has been more problematic in many areas, and their links with other public services are also yet to be fully developed. For ICS to bring about significant changes to community-based services, these issues need to be resolved and genuinely equal partnerships created to ensure that public health, social care, housing, and other relevant services are at the heart of these arrangements, not on the side-lines. Covid-19 has further raised the disconnect between the NHS and social care.

There will also be increasingly “expanded community multidisciplinary teams aligned with new primary care networks based on neighbouring GP practices”.

Learning Disability

There are 1.5 million people with a learning disability in the UK.

People with a learning disability are far less likely to have a job than the general population.

6 % of adults with a learning disability known to their local authority in England are in paid work (NHS Digital 2018).

17 % of all adults with a learning disability in England are in paid work (Emerson and Hatton 2008).

People with a learning disability have fewer chances to take part in leisure activities or socialise with their peers, and so may have fewer friends.

In a survey by Sense, over half of disabled people reported feeling lonely, rising to over three quarters (77 %) for those aged 18-34 (Sense 2017). Loneliness is associated with physical and mental health problems and poorer quality of life.

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) have smaller social networks, which consist mainly of family members. The friendship needs of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) are often ignored, perhaps due to their communication difficulties.

Over 1 million adults with a learning disability and/or autism in England accessed long-term or short-term social care support in England in 2017/18. Of the £5.5 billion that the government spent on support for adults with a learning disability in 2017/18, around 12 % was in the form of direct payments (NHS Digital, 2018).

People with a learning disability have worse physical and mental health than people without a learning disability. On average the life expectancy of a woman with learning disabilities is 18 years shorter than woman in the general population and the life expectancy for men with a learning disability is 14 years shorter than a man in the general population. Covid-19 has compounded these health inequalities with people with learning disabilities 6 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than the general population.

Relationships are very important to people with a learning disability. However, there are various barriers to people with a learning disability having the relationships they want.

Although some people with a learning disability may not be able to consent to having sex or a relationship, this is the minority. Generally, if they are given sufficient social support and accessible sex and relationships education, many people with a learning disability are able to engage in safe, healthy and happy personal and sexual relationships.

Key developments within the NHS

10-year plan for people with learning disability and/or autism:

Health checks in primary care will be improved in both uptake and nature, with the aim of reaching 75 % of people aged 14+ with a learning disability annually.

As outlined earlier in the Strategy Covid-19 has had a major impact on people with learning disabilities with people dying from the virus at a rate sixfold to the general population. This sits beside other significant health inequalities.

1. For the first time, autism-specific health checks will be trailed and then extended

People with learning disabilities and autism are more likely to be prescribed psychotropic medication inappropriately, so initiatives such as Supporting Treatment and Appropriate Medication in Paediatrics (STOMP-STAMP) will be supported.

Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme (LeDeR) will continue, with the aim of improving the lives of people with learning disabilities nationally.

2. Improve understanding of learning disabilities and autism within the NHS

NHS staff will receive training about how to best support people with learning disabilities and autism, with integrated care systems (ICSs) being expected to ensure all local healthcare providers are making reasonable adjustments.

Over the next five years, national learning disability improvement standards will apply to every NHS-funded service to promote greater consistency. Rights, the workforce, specialist care, and working more effectively with people and their families are illuminated as key themes.

3. Reduce waiting times for specialist services

The long waiting times for diagnostic assessments for children and young people suspected as being autistic is highlighted. Indeed, the next three years will see autism being included alongside mental health services to achieve timely assessments.

4. Increase investment in community support: reducing inpatient admissions

Care in the community should become more personalised and closer to home, with fewer people being subjected to preventable inpatient admissions. By March 2023/24, inpatient provision will have reduced to less than half of 2015 levels (on a like for like basis and considering population growth).

Every local health system will be expected to have a seven-day specialist multidisciplinary service and crisis care, and specialist community teams for children and young people will continue to be developed to limit institutional care.

5. Improve quality of inpatient care across NHS and independent sector

By 2023/24, all care commissioned by the NHS will need to meet the Learning Disability Improvement Standard, with a particular focus upon seclusion, long-term segregation, and restraint. Both the numbers of people in inpatient facilities as well as the length of admission will be closely monitored, with the aim of reducing inpatient admissions and supporting earlier transfers into the community.

Mental health

One-in-four adults and one-in-ten children experience mental illness during their lifetime, and many more of us know and care for people who do.

Improved mental health and wellbeing is associated with a range of better outcomes for people of all ages and backgrounds.

These include: improved physical health and life expectancy- better educational achievement- increased skills- reduced health risk behaviours such as smoking and alcohol misuse- reduced risk of mental health problems and suicide- improved employment rates and productivity- reduced anti-social behaviour and criminality- higher levels of social interaction and participation.

Again Covid-19 has had a huge impact of the mental health and wellbeing of people with there being a huge latent build-up of demand from living through the pandemic, lack of access to services, loneliness and a wide range of health and societal pressures and trigger points.

The NHS in England planned to spend £13 billion on mental health services in 2019/20 - 14 % of local NHS funding allocations.

Waiting times for NHS psychological therapy (IAPT) vary from 4 days to 61 days in different parts of England. Two-thirds of people experience improvement after IAPT, but this varies in different parts of England and between social groups.

Employers have a duty of care to their staff to support their mental wellbeing and to make reasonable adjustments, with requirements to ensure there are trained staff to spot and help signpost where people are having difficulties.

Key developments in the NHS long term plan for people with poor mental health need personalisation, prevention, and social prescribing.

As these networks and teams grow and become established nationwide, it is essential that the opportunity is grasped to embed mental health support within them and ensure that they meet the needs of people with mental health difficulties, particularly those also living with physical health problems.

Self-management - the NHS' role is conceived as being not just to treat illness but to support people to live healthily, with a particular focus on helping people with long-term conditions to self-manage and preventing emerging problems from worsening.

Prevention - the plan makes a number of significant new proposals under the heading of 'prevention'. These include the provision of smoking cessation support for new mothers and their partners and "a new universal smoking cessation offer for long-term users of specialist mental health, and in learning disability services".

Alcohol Care Teams - the plan proposes to expand the provision of Alcohol Care Teams in hospitals with high levels of alcohol dependence admissions. These teams will need to establish effective links with mental health services and with local authority alcohol treatment services if they are to meet people's needs effectively and bridge the gap that leaves too many people with inadequate help.

Health checks - the plan seeks to build on progress made through the Five-Year Forward view for Mental Health in offering physical health checks to people using mental health services by expanding this further. It pledges to invest in specialist mental health provision for people who are rough sleeping. And it proposes to expand specialist clinics for people with serious gambling problems.

Acquired brain injury

The brain, along with the spinal cord and network of nerves, controls the information flow throughout the body, voluntary actions such as walking, reading, and talking, and involuntary reactions such as breathing and digestion. It is vulnerable to injury and acquired brain injury can be caused by a whole variety of different means.

The major causes of head injury are road traffic accidents, falls and accidents at home or at work. In more recent years, assaults are increasingly a cause of head injury. However, it happens, the symptoms are caused because a part of the brain has either been damaged or destroyed.

Each year, around 1.4 million people attend hospital A&E in the UK following head injury.

Of those, only around 135,000 people will be admitted due to the severity of their injury. As many as 75 per cent of mild brain injuries go unreported and they are not assessed by medical professionals.

The brain is divided into a number of different sections each with a number of different functions. The combination of symptoms which a person with a brain injury experiences therefore depends upon the part of the brain that has been damaged. People with a brain injury have damaged different parts of the brain and that is why each one's condition is unique.

Key developments within the NHS 10-year plan for people with an acquired brain injury:

To build capacity and capability within primary care to support care planning, self-management, and independence for people with long term neurological conditions, especially those with complex care needs.

To demonstrate different ways of organising and delivering care and to support new care models, for example, by harnessing new opportunities offered by technology.

To exemplify how investment in well-coordinated community services can reduce pressures on the acute healthcare system by admission avoidance and through reduced lengths-of-stay, delivering better outcomes for patients and value for money for the NHS.

Active Prospects' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis

Strengths

The Pro-Active Community and sector leading coproduction. Sector leading on delivering new community-based Transforming Care services. Regional sector leader in Positive Behaviour Support. Good financial track record. We have secured investment finance with strong lender partnerships. Our values are real and embedded. We are ambitious, forward looking and make things happen. We are innovative and expert. We deliver truly person-centred approaches. Our staff are truly compassionate and caring. Our Commissioners really value us, and we have preferred provider status. Our training offer is good. We have good career pathways – 80 % of our managers are internally grown. We have strong CQC quality ratings. We have a desire to keep improving. We are open, transparent, and honest. We have developed robust impact tools. We have been extending our wider offer for people. We value our staff. We are award winning and nationally recognised for some of our work. Have invested in some key additional roles in all areas over last 12 months (digital/assistive technology/specialist support). We are a diverse organisation committed to delivering EDI outcomes. Salaries above Real Living Wage and terms better significantly better than statutory levels.

Weaknesses

We need to continue to invest more in IT infrastructure and training. Our staff turnover is too high (especially in the first year), and whilst improving, it is a waste of resources, investment and impactful on people. Many of our systems are bureaucratic, outdated and slow to change. Sometimes our task finish and complete is underdelivered. Messages on positive impact to all on growth and investment benefits is not always well explained and understood in all parts of our organisation. There is stretch and exhaustion in teams – reflecting the impact of funding cuts over many years and a year of managing Covid-19. Communication cascading up, down and across in some areas could be improved. Miss in-person meeting energy and dynamics. Project management skills need further improvement.

Opportunities

To become well known across the South East and nationally. To become more environmentally sustainable. To form more and wider partnerships with commissioners and other aligned organisations. To keep enhancing our training and development offer. To extend our geographical footprint further across London and the South East. To invest more in systems to enhance our offer. That assistive technology and communication tools are increasingly used. To enhance our digital approaches. To keep developing existing and more new homes. To help more people leave hospitals or institutions. To develop more opportunities for learning and development for our people. To improve our communication and influence key policy externally. To enhance resources and approaches for our people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. To develop more refined health approaches for people. To deliver our wellbeing strategy for staff and people we support. To increase our levels of fundraising. To utilise the intranet and extend visibility of key information. To develop more Acquired Brain Injury and short breaks/step-up/down services. To sell our training. To collaborate more both formally and informally.

Threats

To ensure salaries remain competitive when social care funding is not increasing at the same rate. We have an ageing profile of people in our residential services, and with commissioners less likely to place in residential services we may have increasing voids. The continued low funding of social care and dependency on public funding. There are potential risks on our reputation supporting more people with complex needs. There is a widening role of specialists NHS providers and lead commissioning roles. Cyber security threats. There are limited resources to support growth and stretch on teams. Staff resilience and wellbeing extremely tested after a year managing Covid-19. We are still very reliant on some key funders. Impact of Covid-19 on risk to life and public funds is extraordinary.

Key Risks and Mitigation 2021

Risk	Our Mitigation
Covid-19	Clear plan, policies and guidance updated regularly and signed off by staff Testing of all staff weekly, Lateral flow tests in care homes twice weekly Communication plan and regular updates. Extensive Infection Control systems and procedures
Cash flow : failure to maintain positive cash flow	Monthly Review of development costs Monthly cash forecasting and trend analysis Daily cash/income checks Weekly voids meetings Staff utilisation weekly checks Proactive relationship with Bank Good levels being maintained
Income growth & diversification	Flexing budget and overheads if development programme stalls/slows Pro-Active relationship management and development Systematic and rigorous approach to fee negotiations Use and development of relevant KPIs Ensuring quality standards and reputation is enhanced and protected Evaluation of services and their financial viability Strategic plan - growth through property strategy & geographical expansion
Lack of financial and budgetary control or delivering budget targets	Management Accounts Budgetary Control Use of KPIs Business Planning Reconciliation of control accounts Void management Appraisal of new business proposals Authorisation Procedures (all purchases and staff appointments) Up-to-date Internal Controls Income and debt reconciliations updated Residents monies procedures
Legislation & Policy changes - impacting on services	Environmental scanning through networks and membership groups e.g. SCA, VODG and LDE Annual strategic planning and business planning ensuring that political, economic, social and technological factors are covered Campaigning in partnership with relevant groups Property development and maintenance to meet required standards and expectations Provision made for Sleep Ins (Appeal)

Age Profile of PWS : (Approx. 20 people +65 years old)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus new business on younger client group Care Assessment Reviews Monitoring of profiles and strategic plans Working in conjunction with SCA to ensure costs fully covered by SCC Reassess people with more complex needs to ensure right level of support provided and funded
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Code of Conduct Recruitment policy and procedures including appointment checks Staff training & onboarding Safeguarding reviews Clear policy and procedures Incident reporting, follow up and (where necessary) investigation PR & Media Strategy
Business continuity (resulting from system failure, environmental condition, natural disasters, epidemic or terrorist activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Recovery Plan Information Technology - Security Regular Testing Use of new technologies and approaches: especially cloud based Information Technology Strategy Cyber essentials
Staff : loss or failure to attract key staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews of recruitment, rewards and retention Staff appraisal and development Organisational and Management Culture Effective communication Development of working environments Focus on first year project
Governance - failure to meet requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal & External Audit Functions Use of external advisors Senior staff with experience, knowledge & judgement Annual Board Profile HR Policies & Procedures Staff Management & Training Data Protection Policy Egress System
Health & Safety Management - system failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies & Procedures Staff Training Reviews External partners - Citation, Ellis Wittam, Pyrotech and regular audits Work with networks to ensure current practice Risk assessments Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
Commissioner Relationships : loss of contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder mapping and improvement plans Board Reports Personal Relationships Pro-Active use of events to develop links
Pension Liability : failure to provide for deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring through Pension Reports & Statements (SHPS DB Scheme): Revaluation Reports Use of external advisors Reporting in Statutory Accounts: Reserves Policy
Capital Development Plan: Non Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexing programme with funders, commissioners and internal budgets and overheads Thorough Investment Appraisals Professional Project Management Contract Construction & Management Management Accounts Staff recruitment plans Contingency Planning Impact on culture as organisation grows

Brexit arrangements	<p>Key staff working closely with relevant third-party organisations to monitor developments and plans</p> <p>Use of networks to assess how others are managing the situation and potential impact</p> <p>Close liaison with Commissioners/Authorities monitoring post Brexit arrangements</p>
Resilience and Wellbeing	<p>Wellbeing Strategy and awareness events</p> <p>Wellbeing Resources - EAP, MHFAs, signposting, Apps, coaching</p> <p>Team meetings and 1:1 support</p> <p>Regular Structure Reviews</p>

Building our Covid-19 Resilience

In March 2020 it emerged that Covid-19 presented a very serious risk to the lives of people living in the UK.

Our planning started immediately when the UK was looking at the rest of Europe and trying to understand what was to come. It was based on preparing for what might happen, the actions we might need to take as an organisation and planning for worse case scenarios.

Active Prospects took the decision to bring in lockdown policies quite early on, to protect the people we support, especially those who we knew had underlying health conditions. Through these measures it was established that people we support would be at risk of the virus through staff bringing it into their environment.

Active Prospects focused on risk-based approaches, making staff feel as safe as possible whilst at work, including practical and psychological solutions. The aim was to ensure a sense of reassurance though out the organisation that we were equipped to deal with the crisis, had the resources, and were communicating key requirement and listening to experience and concerns.



Active Prospects also positioned itself to be part of the wider conversation and ensuring we were one step ahead in terms of PPE supply's, testing and access to financial grants and support.

During 2020 and into 2021 we have experience levels of lockdown and intensity of Covid-19 infection waves. The level of work to ensure we are constantly evolving our practice to meet new guidelines and advice is extraordinary. Everyone at Active Prospects has remained focused, committed, kind and caring to ensure we have kept our people as safe as possible. Our approach has been:

- To minimise the impact on our staff and keep them safe and well.
- To ensure our service delivery models are adaptive and flexible, with more remote and digital service offers and interactions shaped by our people.
- To consider the impact on our finances, with swift forecasting to understand challenges to our income and costs supporting swift decision making.
- To advocate for sustainable funding arrangements with Commissioners.
- To support effective communication and engagement throughout the organisation, with our people and with our partners.
- To support peoples' and staffs' resilience and wellbeing now and on a long-term basis.
- To consider opportunities for collaborations and joint work with other organisations, as the sector and communities are challenged.
- To maintain good supplies of PPE, testing and vaccine take up for both staff and people we support.



Our goals for the next three years

- To regularly update our comprehensive Covid-19 plan, risk assessments and guidance (lead DC)
- To maintain good levels of PPE and ensure it is used fully in line with current PHE guidance (lead DC)
- To utilise frequent testing and vaccine take up to reduce levels of COVID transmission and viral impact to keep to our people and staff safe, reviewed weekly (lead DC)
- To ensure our assistive technology working group supports a wide range of digital approaches, coordinated monthly with high levels of people engagement (lead DBD / DC)
- To maintain risk assessments, particularly for higher risk groups and understand and apply data and learning to offer the best advice and support we can. (LEAD DC / DPR)
- To monitor all additional costs relating to Covid-19 and income impact, to enable robust forecasting and timely actions which maintain the organisation's viability (lead DF)
- To work with local and national membership bodies to ensure strategic decisions on Covid-19 support our people and organisation, as well as mutual support (lead CEO)
- To create and respond to opportunities for greater collaboration between organisations which maintain and develop rich support networks and social capital for people and their communities (lead CEO)
- To ensure regular communication to people, staff and families, as well as external voice on social media platforms - to provide timely updates, support pro-active engagement and influencing on hot topics (DBD/CEO)
- To deliver our wellbeing strategy to support people and staff stay well and resilient through and beyond the pandemic in stressful, fragmented, and demanding times (lead DPR/ DC)
- To proactively engage and lead conversations that help to shape Social Care going forward and support a fair deal for the people that use social care and for our staff (lead CEO)



Building support together with our people

Shaping Services Together

Active Prospects has an unwavering commitment to co-production giving people a voice at the very heart of our organisation. Our award-winning co-production body of people we support, the Pro-Active Community, is a user-led organisation in its own right and plays an important role in peer led social activities and inclusion, community involvement and being active citizens.

Over the last couple of years, the Community has won both a national and regional awards for their innovative work, including The National Learning Disabilities and Autism 'People's Award' and Surrey Care Awards Service User Involvement Award for innovative co-production work. They are now facilitating the Surrey-wide People's Group with over 80 people regularly meeting to help shape local policy and inform their lives and services around what matters to them.

Our Active Wellbeing (mental health) Group is growing strength by strength. Like the Pro-Active Community, this group of people we support helps to shape our Active Wellbeing mental health services, its events and activities. Through peer engagement and support people flourish and support change within each other.

Covid-19 has meant we have had to adapt to more remote and digital ways of engagement currently and it is as important as ever that we enable people to shape what and how new approaches are developed.

Recent highlights include:

- Learning Disability and Autism Leaders List
- Women's Health Project funded by the Tampon Tax
- Co-produced Charter of Outcomes
- Environmental pledge for Providers developed
- Quarterly presentations at Surrey Learning Disability Provider forum
- Guest speakers at Learning Disability England annual conference 2021
- Comprehensive programme of peer-led activities
- Involvement in health inequality research
- Citizen and political engagement
- Active programme of community participation
- Quality checkers across all services and for Surrey County Council
- Interviewing key staff for Surrey County Council

Our goals for next three years

- To support accredited experts by experience training and initiatives in terms of new policy, New Models of Care which includes both People We Support, families and carers, with a clear offer in place by September 2021(lead DC)
- To develop a digital support network and platform for families and carers by June 2021 (lead DC)
- To support digital inclusion through digital champions programme and fundraising for free digital devices (Lead DBD)
- To further support establishing the Surrey People's Groups as the key people's voice, facilitating it to make an impact on people's lives and opportunities locally, with strategic engagement with statutory and political structures, including more digitally through the pandemic (lead DC)
- To link with Kent and Sussex coproduction bodies to establish a network in the region by December 2022 (lead CEO/DC)
- To relaunch the Act Now: Our Planet environmental standards for providers and aim to have 50 organisations signed up by December 2022 (lead DC)
- To run Makaton sessions fortnightly for members and their staff from April 2021 (lead DC)
- To enable a wide range of activities both in people's homes (increased due to the impact of Covid-19) digitally and those that people can go safely in their communities (lead DC)
- To increase paid roles for people as staff, quality checkers and experts by experience, with 15 members being paid by September 2022 (lead DC)
- To deliver training to members in health and safety, safeguarding, being safe from harm and IT, from June 2021 (lead DC and DPR)
- To support further system wide initiatives that aim to address health inequalities, including research, peer-led workshops, and best practice recommendations, training, and service provision guides (Lead DC)
- To support financial inclusion and welfare benefits access through a range of workshop and peer-led sessions (lead DC)
- To support the effective governance of the Pro-Active Community as a separate charity and delivery of the service level agreement (lead DC)
- To further develop our accessible communication skills, approaches and tools with an annual plan updated every September (lead DC/DBD)
- To further develop coproduction competencies across staff groups to enhance the foundation of best practice and culture from September 2021 (lead DC)



Strengthening our quality and outcomes

100 % of our services are 'Good' overall and a third have 'Outstanding' in CQC domains as our journey to 'Outstanding' continues.

We have had limited CQC regulatory activity in 2020 and expect to see higher levels in 2021 and onwards.

Our aspirational outcomes measure people's achievements in the areas that matter to them.

We co-produced the outcome measures with people we support through our Pro-Active Community who specified the eight outcome areas that were important to them, and we measure progression every 6 months.

Over the past year, 90 % of people we support have made positive progress in their outcome goals. People chose the outcomes goals in the areas that matter most to them from one or Several our outcome areas.

Some of the measures introduced recently to support positive outcomes are:

- All the Senior Team in Care and Support qualified as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Coaches.
- Recruitment of Head of Quality to embed new initiatives and deliver creative support including digital inclusion.
- A new referral process and system which monitors the impact of the first six weeks of support to ensure smooth transitions.
- Recruitment of internal full-time trainer in Maybo techniques and manual handling assessments. Improving on the job coaching for staff and people we support.
- Roll out of the Supported Loving Tool and knowledge around sexual preferences and how best to support individuals.
- Recruitment of an assistive technology lead role to support people and teams in accessing applications, tools and equipment to support independent living.
- Quarterly Family and Carer feedback forms to gain on-going feedback not just from annual surveys.
- Extension of communication aids in services including switches, voice boards, talking books and books beyond words.
- Covid-19 has greatly impacted on people's lives, and some of their opportunities and community connections have become more restricted, as their safety is prioritised. We are having to proactively consider how lives are still rich and how people can be supported in their outcomes aspirations, in flexible and adjusted ways.



Our goals for next three years

- To produce a new Quality Assurance approach with the appointment on a new Head of Quality by September 2021 (lead DC)
- To roll out a new digital care management system support better systems through 2021/2 - enhancing real time data capture, performance, and outcomes information (lead DC)
- To achieve overall Outstanding CQC ratings – two by March 2022(lead DC)
- To maintain an overall standard of 100 % at least Good CQC ratings with a third with Outstanding domains (lead DC)
- To review and update our 'Journey to Outstanding' together with people we support by September 2021(lead DC)
- To further develop support for CQC inspections including a review of 'Time to Shine', reflection and sharing after inspections, CQC awareness training and a programme of the development and coaching of Service Managers by September 2021 (lead DC)
- To update our standards of care and support embedded in models of care, training, probation reviews and appraisals by September 2021 (lead DC)
- To continue to evaluate, disseminate and embed initiatives and new regulations, including the new liberty safeguards standards (lead DC)
- To develop a Residential Services Strategy by June 2021 regarding the Surrey County Council Strategic Reprofiting of services (lead DC/CEO)
- To rollout our Active Wellbeing Strategy in line with the Surrey Mental Health Frame- work outcomes and offer of move on within services (lead DC)
- To roll out the new wellbeing outcomes and policy including training of teams and Service Managers, by our Clinical Lead (lead DC)
- To undertake a health survey with people we support to provide a baseline on all health checks uptake and produce a Health Strategy for next 3 years by September 2021 (lead DC)
- To have clear health monitoring systems which capture outcomes and highlight gaps including access to screenings, including STOMP reviews, and reported quarterly (lead DC)
- To ensure staff are trained in extended infection control, soft deterioration health signs, barrier nursing, end of life care and enhanced infection control (lead DC)
- To provide a Clinical Audit report annually with clear continuous improvement objectives (lead DC)
- To further introduce assistive technology, such as virtual reality, apps, and devices within services to support independence, experiences and communication, evidence by an annual review and support by the new Assistive Technology role (lead DC / DBD)
- To further review and enhance our offer to People with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities by June 2022 (lead DC)
- To fully build relationships with specialist teams within West Sussex and Brighton and Hove and attendance at key forums to support new services and people (lead DC)
- To implement the QEF from Surrey PBS Standards in all Transforming Care Services by December 2021 (lead DC)
- For three further Managers to complete PBS course for coaches training annually (lead DC)
- To create a pricing model for PBS support and functional assessments for Direct Payments by September 2021 (lead DC)
- To further link with National Campaigns and Networks and speak at conferences promoting our expertise and insights on PBS (lead DC)
- To support key findings on behaviour analysis such as increase in quality of life and meaningful activity (lead DC)
- To further develop staff competencies in PBS, improving skills and values with person-centred training (lead DC)
- To further develop our Autism and Mental Health expertise and practice through a range of training, accredited learning and practice development by September 2022 (lead DC)

Building further opportunities and deepening our impact

We launched three social enterprises in 2019, supported generously by a National Lottery Community Grant. Our flagship Re.Work.It clothing boutique is located on Reigate High Street, and recycles high-end fashion to help people with learning disabilities gain work and life skills. Healthy Prospects was our pop-up café in Redhill, which is staffed by people we support. We have also launched a gardening project Growing Prospects, which we aim to grow into a small business serving the local community. Unfortunately, these enterprises were largely closed in 2020 due to Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions. We are evaluating the next period with our funder to reprofile delivering our objectives.

We recently launched our Aspiring Prospects programme to provide supported employment and learning to young people with SEND, working closely Surrey County Council, with the programme significantly widening in 2021.

Volunteers at Active Prospects

We were fortunate to benefit from several volunteers in the year supporting corporate and gardening teams.

Fundraising at Active Prospects

In 2020 we secured grant funding for:

- A woman's health and relationships programme
- An Assistive technology lead
- Numerous digital devices for the people we support to support digital inclusion
- A health and wellbeing specialist
- Support for people to gain the skills needed to secure employment or volunteer roles
- A range of new activities, including music, arts and crafts sessions
- We have been successful at securing a number of Covid-19 Specific funding pots

Health and Wellbeing at Active Prospects

We have worked hard to develop a strong focus on health and wellbeing amongst staff and people we support, through regular and one-off activities. These have included:

- Innovative coproduced Active Health Day for people we support and staff to have health checks and participate in a wide range of wellbeing sessions
- Drop-in Anxiety and Depression Support Group open to all
- Inclusive music sessions
- Weekly Mindfulness session open to all
- Comprehensive digital daily activities programme
- Digital App available to support access to events and activities from all providers across Surrey
- Regular healthy eating projects

Our goals for next three years

- To extend the Aspiring Prospects employment and skills programme from September 2021 supporting up to 15 (lead DBD)
- To secure funding to drive the expansion of the Pro-Active Community by June 2021 (lead DBD)
- To ensure sustainability of our social enterprises (e.g. Re. Work. It) beyond NLCF grant by June 2022 (lead DBD)
- To secure a sustainable model for delivering employment and skills support for people we support – July 2022 (lead DBD)
- To increase fundraising income to £300k a year from April 2021 (lead DBD) and continue to secure Covid-19 specific funds and other resources to support us through the pandemic period (lead DBD)
- To increase digital and legacy based fundraising approaches by December 2021 (lead DBD)
- To develop a plan for extending our Acquired Brain Injury offer by March 2022 (lead DBD)
- To have a key capital project plan developed by December 2022 (lead DBD)
- To expand the use of assistive technology within the business - reviewed annually and sector leading (lead DBD and DC)
- To develop an ongoing programme of community and corporate volunteering - April 2022 (lead DBD)
- To further establish Active Prospects as a provider of choice across the South East England winning tendered business in four more local authorities by April 2023 (lead DBD)
- Further deepen our representation and contribution with key strategic organisations and fora across social care, health, education and community and deepen our collaborations (lead CEO)
- To develop a bold PR and Influencing Plan with an annual strategic goals and delivery objectives from June 2021, with a particular focus on health inequalities, people's coproduction voices and stories, people leaving secure hospitals, widening opportunities and social care staff recognition (lead DBD)



Growing our homes

We are increasingly becoming known as a responsive and leading provider of health and social care services, and for our positive impact with individuals being referred under new care models which is receiving wide recognition.

We are one of the South East's Leading providers of new homes under the former Transforming Care programme and its successor, the priority Government Initiative for people with learning disabilities. We have recently enabled 23 people to be re-housed from hospital back into their local community after many years, far outperforming national players. We are developing new integrated models between health and social care for people with very complex needs.

In 2020 we acquired our first home in West Sussex after being sought by Commissioners for our expertise in supporting those with complex needs and behaviours of concern, with a project service now in development.

We also developed several bungalows which are bespoke to meet individual needs in small, homely environments.

Through a generous funding pot through our partnership with Social and Sustainable Capital we developed 18 more homes over 2020/21, including new services in West Sussex. Through new funding from Barclays, we have bought our first service in Brighton and Hove due to open in late 2021.

We are developing with an NHS grant a forensic complex needs service as the landlord working with our local health and social care partners.

We are replacing a redundant care home by recycling NHS grant with 6 flats in be ready early in 2022, and have also reconfigured a small house into two flats on an NHS converted property.

We have also invested significantly in our existing stock over the last 4 years with most being significantly upgraded.

Senior managers at Active Prospects are fully involved in local networks and the organisation chairs the Surrey Care Association Learning Disability Network and the Surrey Positive Behaviour Network, driving the sharing of best practice including health inequalities for people, reducing overmedication, and employment enabling.

Senior managers have also led national work with VODG on enabling properties with NHS covenants to be redeveloped or re-provided and good practice on addressing health inequalities. We are active members of STOMP and Gr8 Support/Change Makers.

Goals for the next three years

- To successfully deliver our development programme for 2021 – 4 (lead CEO/DPS)
- To increase our new homes by 25/30 each year for period of the strategic plan (lead DPS)
- To further consolidate our homes portfolios in key areas including Sussex, Brighton and Hove and Croydon, and look at our reach into other South East England counties (lead CEO/ DBD)
- To access further good social financing pots from September 2021 (lead CEO)
- Look at mortgage consolidation and/or refinancing options by September 2021(lead DF)
- To invest a further £500k in existing homes over the next two years (lead DPS).
- To identify and deliver our stock condition programme from June 2021(lead DPS)
- To consider options in relation to our leased properties with Metropolitan Thames Valley by March 2022 (lead DPS)

Building staff recognition, development and wellbeing

All our work is built on our values, developed together by all our 350 team members and 300 people we support. These feed into our recruitment, retention, rewards, induction, training and development, and engagement activities underpins all our behaviours and approaches.

Our CEO, Executive Team and Training Manager drive quality messages in induction, training and meetings and our philosophy, which is focused on our key purpose of enabling people to live full and active lives and valuing our teams.

In September 2021, we recognised the achievements and dedication of our staff and people through our annual Star Awards. We held the event via Zoom, which worked well and was a welcome opportunity to bring everyone together to celebrate what we have all achieved during such a difficult year.

We hope that the goodwill towards care staff we have seen during 2020 will be more than just a fleeting moment and will lead to a re-evaluation of the status of carers in our society. We pay our support workers above the Real Living Wage, and offer other benefits such as above statutory leave, sickness maternity, paternity and adoption pay. We believe our staff deserve more – but we are hamstrung by operating within a chronically underfunded system. During 2021 we will continue to campaign for a better deal for care workers: change is long overdue, and we hope the opportunity to ‘build back better’.

Our last comprehensive employee satisfaction survey, facilitated independently by Agenda Consulting and benchmarked widely with other similar organisations, produced results which were stated as ‘exceptionally good in a social care context’, with Active Prospects significantly above the benchmarked upper quartile.

We continue to develop our reward offer, offering above real living wage salaries for our support staff and extensive benefits, along with high quality developmental opportunities which help us retain our talent.

We are committed to training and developing our people, ensuring they have clear pathways in which they can progress their careers. 80% of our managers have been recruited internally and we proud to develop and retain our talented staff.

It is imperative our people feel valued and appreciated for what they do, they should feel empowered to deliver outstanding care.

We need to continue to support the wellbeing and resilience of our staff teams through and beyond Covid-19.

We have challenged our leadership in relation to Black Lives Matter and committed ourselves to the ACEVO principles to robustly engage, review and take actions to improve our equality impact. Our Equity, Diversion and Inclusion Group have helped shape a comprehensive EDI Strategy which was launched in January 2021.

Recent achievements include:

- We have developed a new in-house management leadership programme which was launched in February 2020 to grow our own talent, thus ensuring we have a succession of people who will be equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to progress their careers, when an internal opportunity arises.
- New talent, recruitment and retention strategies
- New in-house training team delivering bespoke high-quality classroom and people-based training
- Apprenticeship and accredited learning programmes at all levels
- Quarterly Employee Forum shaping key strategies and engagement
- Comprehensive Wellbeing Strategy focusing on good health initiatives and activities and underpinned by our Mental Health First Aiders programme started in 2020
- Joint Governance Conference for the people we support, employees and Board Members to jointly agree priorities and our future direction



Our goals for the next three years

- To become an employer of choice with sector leading engagement levels, attaining a place in the Sunday Times Top 100 Employers in the Not-for-Profit Category by January 2022 (lead DPR)
- To keep increasing employee engagement levels through a range of initiatives including CEO Active Engagement meetings to all services, enhanced staff forum and communication and involvement processes to maintain Active Prospects' inclusive and connected 'feel' – blending digital and in person approaches going forward (lead CEO / DPR)
- To deliver analytical data-based initiatives to drive up performance of our people, e.g. quarterly managers' meetings with their line management where they are able to demonstrate they are meeting their goals, KPIs (voluntary turnover in service, retention, training stats, completed care certificates of new starters) and other service related targets (lead DPR)
- To develop a further organisational cultural programme focused on Active Prospects behaviours and key approaches, within a growing organisation, with a cultural plan devised by July 2021 (lead DPR)
- To provide annual training and development plan, each September for accredited and professional development as well as inhouse training and development programmes (lead DPR)
- To further our digital recruitment and staff reward processes to attract and retain talent, using the most efficient technology (lead DPR)
- To improve staff retention in the first year by 50 % by March 2023 with enhanced recruitment and first year support approaches (lead DPR)
- To annually benchmark our rewards and salaries to ensure we are competitive in our offerings (lead DPR)
- To consider creative and streamlined ways to support delivery of competitive salaries and rewards for our staff, reviewed by the Board each February (lead DPR)
- To hold monthly recruitment, retention and rewards working group meetings and deliver identified actions, restated from April 2021 (lead DPR)
- To hold monthly decentralisation meetings, working group meetings and deliver identified actions, restarted from October 2021 (lead DPR)
- To deliver a comprehensive resilience and wellbeing offer for our people to promote a healthy life- style, supporting our employees' physical and mental health; giving them opportunities to maintain and improve their health while at work and beyond, and in particular deal with the stresses of managing through Covid-19 (lead DC/ DPR)
- To identify a clear succession planning programme to grow our own talent by December 2021. Identify critical roles and at-risk positions which would impact the business significantly should we lose key personnel. Plan should be formulated with short term and long-term successors linked to our talent management approaches (lead DPR)
- To become accredited Mindful Employer, Stonewall champion, and disability confident champion by December 2021 (lead DPR)

Building our capacity, sustainability and equity

The growth of our organisation reflects on the fact that Active Prospects is well positioned to increase its offering to people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs, with a high quality track record not only in-service provision but also from having significant experience in developing housing stock, having a £10 million new-build, replacement, and modernisation programmes in the last 5 years.

Growth has been funded both through the NHS's Transforming Care programme, Barclays Mortgages and social investment from Social and Sustainable Capital (supported housing fund plus mortgage). Active Prospects provision is also well positioned within the NHS Long Term Plan where boosting investment in out of hospital care is one of the key priorities.

As we have grown, we have been able to invest further in expert roles to support our ambition. This has included a Senior Clinical Lead, and new Director of Property and Safety, Heads of Quality and Financial Strategic Planning, digital communications and affective technology.

Together we continually look at resources, systems, and processes to ensure they support our strategic vision and goals and manage risks and enable opportunities to be realised.

We are committed to contributing a fairer world and the delivery our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy throughout our organisation to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

We aim to be an organisation that develops and uses its resources ethically - using them to make most positive impact on our customer's lives and for our communities. We aim to uphold the highest standards in governance through being transparent in our use of public funds and by using our resources in a sustainable manner.

Our goals for the next three years

- To be an inclusive organisation and employer who promotes a culture of diversity and equity in all we do, delivering our EDI strategy and improved outcomes in all areas reviewed annually (lead DPR)
- To deliver a new Active Prospects website by April 2021 (lead DBD)
- To further develop our intranet as a key part of our internal communications (lead DBD)
- To deliver the three-year marketing strategy with increasing digital/social media impact evaluated each September (lead DBD)
- To plan and deliver positioning and promotional opportunities to support a higher profile for Active Prospects (lead CEO/ DBD)
- To establish links with universities and research foundations, and deliver one research project each year from 2021 (lead DBD)
- To continually develop Active Prospects Impact Measurements so we can learn from our performance and improve and demonstrate externally our achievements (lead CEO)
- To produce with our external IT provider an annual plan to provide strategic support and improvement goals along- side our in-house resource, ensuring robust secure infrastructure, and improvements to key systems (lead DF)

- To achieve NHS Data Toolkit and Cyber Essentials standards from April 2021, and then Cyber Essentials Plus by December 2022 (lead DF)
- To continue to enhance the Organisation's data protection management (lead DF)
- To deliver a new approach for timesheets, rostering and payroll by June 2021 (lead DF)
- To deliver training on IT based systems from April 2021 (lead DF)
- To deliver continuous advancement in the IT systems we currently use, e.g. Cascade, Office/Micro- soft 365 (particularly SharePoint, Project and Teams), Payroll and Timesheet systems, care management (lead DF)
- To consider fully functionality of OMNI and software strategy ongoing forward for finance and maintenance systems by September (lead DF/DPS)
- To continue to enhance Business Continuity Planning and Risk Management (lead DF)
- To continue to support governance development, to ensure an effective Board shaping and supporting the delivery of Active Prospect's strategic goals, with a clear annual plan and meeting the new NHF and Charity Governance codes (lead CEO)
- To ensure health and safety is robustly complied with throughout the organisation, supported by annual audits from our external health and safety partner and annual improve plan each December (lead DPS)
- To provide an updated business plan every 6 months to ensure delivery of our financial goals and proactively manage risks and opportunities in the organisation's business (lead DF)



Our sustainability

Active Prospects is committed to become carbon neutral by 2030.

We have established an environmental champions group will meet every two months driving shared best practice, exchanges of ideas and improved performance.

The Pro-Active Community have developed Environmental Standards for providers and a kite marked accredited scheme to extend best practice sector wide.

We have a clear charter of environmental goals each service signs up to with both a staff member and person we support as Champions.

We are working with Surrey County Council environmental leads to link fully into joint initiatives and Pan-Surrey environmental plans.

We have a green energy supplier, recycle wherever possible, aim to reduce waste and purchase sustainably.

With the impact Covid-19 we reduced our carbon emissions through less travelling in 2020. We aim to restart our environmental working group in 2021 but ensure all foundation environmental issues are working well.

Our goals for the next 3 years

- For all services to have clear environmental goals agreed with their people from April 2021 and reviewed annually (lead DC)
- To maintain the bi-monthly environmental champion meetings for staff and people we support and deliver identified actions restarting again in May 2021 (lead DPS)
- To have 50 providers signed up to the relaunched Environmental Standards for Providers by December 2022 (lead DC)
- Identify and evaluate carbon footprint methodology by March 2022 (lead DPS)
- To have a transport policy by September 2021, supporting greener transport options (lead DF)
- To have a sustainable 'products guide' by September 2021, tested by people and services (lead DPs)
- To have our people linked into Surrey's Environmental Working Groups (lead DBD)
- To promote nationally our environmental strategies (lead DBD)
- To reduce paper usage by 90 % by March 2021, particularly in services and finance teams (lead DC/DF)
- To develop sustainable standards for new buildings and new homes by June 2022 (lead DPS)
- To facilitate the planting of wild gardens, more fruit trees and composting in homes as decided by people from April 2021 (lead DPS)
- To develop a flexible head office policy to lower transport costs and have more sustainable office use approach by September 2021 (lead DPS/DRP)
- To review suppliers to increase sustainability and ethical sourcing with an annual plan (lead DF/DPS)

Business plan 2021 - 2024

This plan assumes we deliver 25 new homes each year.

If this is lower, then our income and our expenditure reduce proportionally.

Figures to be updated when budget finalised and revised business plan figures projected.

	2021/22 budget £' k	2022/23 budget £' k	2023/24 budget £' k
Income/Edpendature			
Surplus			