

Staying true to our values

Impact Report 2022





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Foreword

Our last two Impact Reports have been published in the shadow of a global pandemic. While we have emerged from the worst of Covid, the cost-of-living crisis has reminded us of the increasing fragility of the care sector. 2022 has been a year in which we have relied on our values and resilience to give our best for the people we support.

Each year the Collins Dictionary announces a word of the year. This year, the chosen word was 'permacrisis' which Collins define as 'an extended period of instability and insecurity'. This phrase resonates strongly in social care. After all, what is a permacrisis if it's not years of underinvestment; ongoing recruitment and retention challenges; a pandemic; and now a cost-of-living crisis with potentially devastating implications for providers, care staff and people receiving care?

At this point last year, the Health & Social Care Levy had been announced by the government along with the first steps towards sector reform which is so desperately needed. A year on, the levy has been removed and the care cap postponed for at least two years. Any small initiatives seem focused on hospital discharge in a fragmented way, which make little difference to working age services in any case. There has been minimal progress in sector reform.

In a permacrisis, it's more important than ever to stay true to our values and remember what has transformed us from a struggling organisation eight years ago into a successful one. This year, we have reinforced our focus on quality & outcomes; we have continued to work side-by-side with people we support and their families; we have supported each other through tough times; and we have recognised and celebrated achievements of our staff and people.

This year there has been much to be proud of. We have created more much-needed new homes for people with learning disabilities, autistic people or those with mental health needs, including six new homes at a flagship new service in Horley. We had a positive CQC inspection of our supported living services. We have continued to innovate and collaborate despite the lack of new money entering the system.

Above all, this has been a year in which we have reminded ourselves of our 'why'. Despite the challenges and the worries about the future, we do what we do because we believe in the power of great care to transform people's lives. We know that the next few years will be highly challenging, but we know our fantastic staff and pro-active people we support together we have the resilience, the skills and the values to get through it.

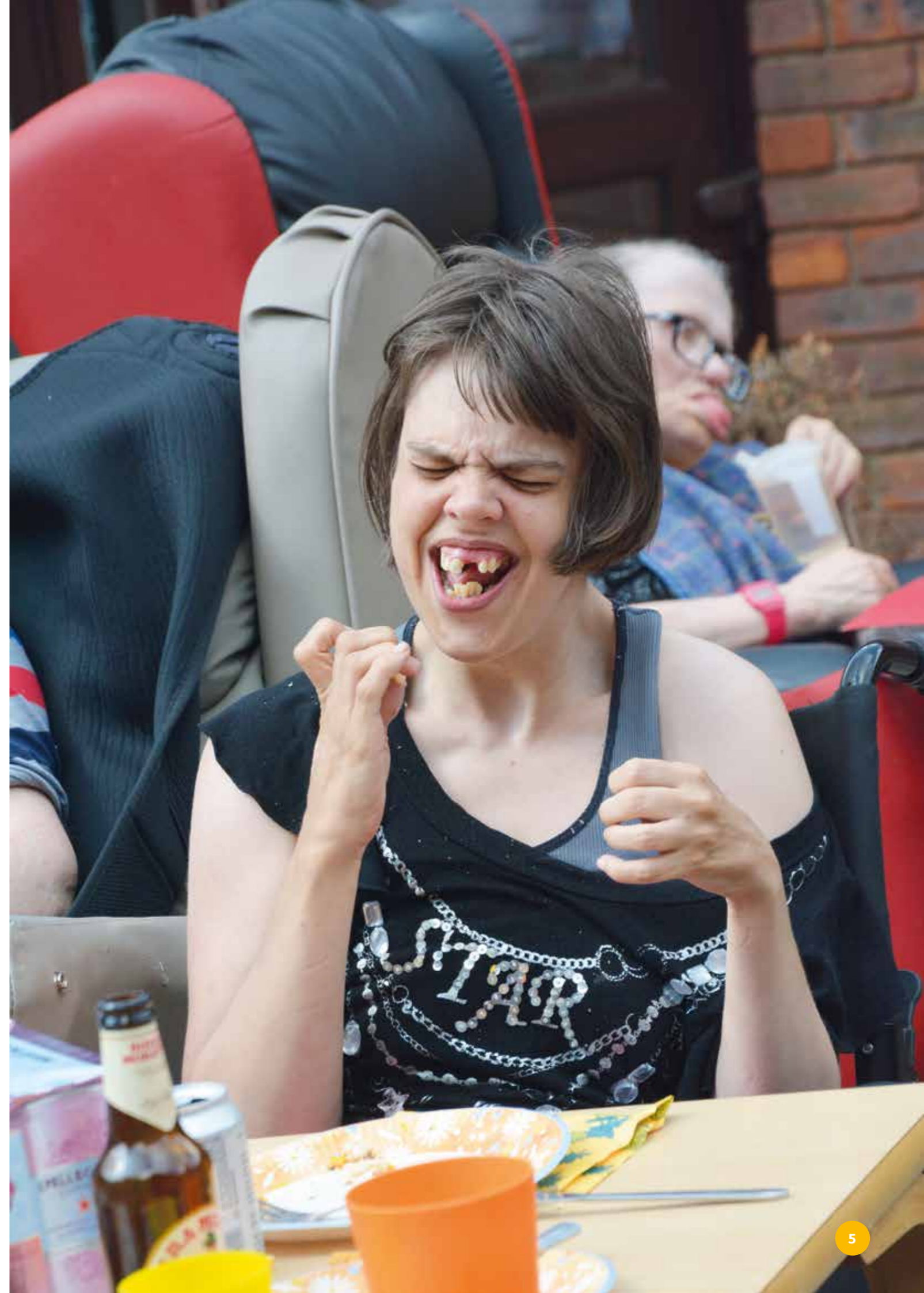
Finally, heartfelt thanks to Owen Vallis, who stepped down as Chair of the Board earlier in the year after relocating to the middle east for work reasons. Owen has presided over a period of enormous success and growth, and his calm advice and consensual style have been invaluable during that time. We are grateful that Owen will continue as a Trustee for a while longer.



Maria Mills
CEO



Chris Poole
Chair of the Board



Highlights of the year

Our **Supported Living services** received a 'good' rating from the Care Quality Commission, with an '**outstanding**' rating for leadership



We opened a new **flagship service in Horley**, which provides 6 brand new flats for people leaving hospital



We were provisionally **awarded NHS Capital funding** to develop new services in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. **This will create 11 much-needed homes** for people with complex needs.



We built the innovative **EASI Cooking webtool** in partnership with JP Morgan Chase

A team of staff and people we support **raised over £5,000** by climbing Mount Snowdon



We **completed** the landmark Whole System Approach to Obesity for people with learning disabilities - a Surrey programme with national significance



One of the people we support, **Leanne Yeo**, won **two cycling gold medals** at the **Special Olympics**



We won **four national awards** and three local awards this year

We achieved the **highly sought after certification as a Great Place to Work**, following a nationally benchmarked survey of our staff



We delivered an **innovative Peer Health Champions pilot** for people with Learning Disabilities in partnership with Surrey County Council



The year in numbers

100%

of our CQC regulated services are rated overall as **'Good'** with half achieving **'Outstanding'** ratings in individual domains.



20 new homes developed for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people.

94%

success rate of placements for 32 people leaving hospital/ in-patient care.



100% of people we support **achieved positive outcomes** in their wellbeing



90% of our staff agreed with the statement: **"My work has special meaning: this is not 'just a job'".** This is 15% higher than comparable employers.

97% of significant incidents have been de-escalated without the use of physical intervention.

100%

of **services now using** a digital care management system

64%

of people with high levels of behaviours of concern **showed a significant reduction** over the year



98% of people we support **rated the support they get** as either **'very good'** or **'good'**.

95%

of people we support thought that support staff helped them to do the things they want to do.

100% of people we support thought that their support staff were **'very caring'** or **'caring'**.

96%

of family members **would recommend Active Prospects** to a friend



29% year-on-year increase in sales at our charity boutique, Re.Work.It



97% of people we support said that they were either **'very happy'** or **'happy'** in their home

91% of family members thought that their relative received **'very good'** or **'good'** levels of support and encouragement to live a full and active life



Staying true to our values

This year we took a fresh look at our ACTIVE values. Our staff and people we support came together to explore how our organisational values could better reflect the changing times. We added two new values:

Vocal

This reflects how we use our voice to push for change. This year we ran the Care about Care campaign, to bring together providers and people receiving care to push for greater recognition of the essential role of social care within society. The campaign invited people to show their support by clicking on a heart symbol on our website and sharing supportive messages on social media. Over 1,000 different people clicked on the heart, and there were more than 10,000 impressions on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Our CEO Maria Mills is the Vice-Chair of the Surrey Care Association, and we have used our membership to push for fair funding from NHS and local government commissioners, and for sector reform through the Reinventing Social Care initiative. We fed into a House of Lords inquiry into Adult Social Care and published several articles in the sector press pushing for change.



We enabled people we support to use their voice to influence change. The Peer Health Champions pilot (p.14) was co-designed and delivered by a group of 5 people we support and Surrey County Council. People we support were integral to the two-year Whole Systems Approach to Obesity (WSOA) programme, which was concluded this year. And more recently, the University of Surrey have asked three people we support to join a project as paid experts by experience, looking at the experiences of people with a learning disability when holding virtual consultations with health professionals.

Ethical

This reflects our commitment to acting ethically in everything we do. This year, 60 % of internal promotions were for staff from ethnically minoritised groups. We also published our second diversity pay gap report, which showed that the ethnicity pay gap had narrowed, while the mean gender pay gap was only 1.3 %, where women are paid slightly higher than men for the average hourly rate.



We promoted equity, diversity and inclusion by leading the 'Ambitious for Equity' programme across the Surrey charity sector, and by celebrating events such as Surrey Pride, Race Equality Week and Black History Month.

This year we published our first Environmental Strategy, which set out ambitious plans to reduce our carbon footprint by improving all homes' EPC ratings to a level C over the next 10 years and aim for all new homes to have an A/B rating; reduce energy/water use by 10 %; and improving outdoor space by growing our own fruit and vegetables, improving biodiversity, and creating outdoor sensory spaces.



Focusing on quality and outcomes



We have significantly enhanced the quality of our services over the last five years as this is absolutely the foundation to our success and that of our people.

This year all of our supported housing services were inspected by the Care Quality Commission. We were delighted to receive an overall Good rating with Outstanding in the Well-led domain. This means that now 50 % of our CQC locations have Outstanding domains and we maintain 100 % of locations being rated at least GOOD.

We are confident in the quality of our services but it is heartening to receive such positive external validation, which demonstrates how our mission of enabling people to live aspiring lives is being put in practice, through our values, teamwork, and commitment to our people.

Some highlights of the Inspectors findings included:

“People and their relatives told us they were treated well by staff who respected them and knew them well. One person told us, “They are very kind and caring, definitely. It’s the greatest support I’ve had.” Another person told us, “They are friendly bunch of people.” A relative told us, “They’re all very kind and knowledgeable about [person] which is what it’s all about.”

“The culture of the service was open, inclusive, and empowered people to live independent lives. The service was exceptionally well-led from the top and feedback from people, their relatives, staff, healthcare professionals and the systems in place reflected this”

“Another relative told us, “I feel very fortunate because I am very reassured. I would recommend them.”

“We observed kind and caring interactions between people who used the service and staff. People appeared to be at ease and staff were polite, spoke in a respectful manner and supported people appropriately. One person told us, “I have shot up since they’ve been helping me. My next step is a studio flat.” One relative told us, “I’m constantly asked, ‘what do you think of this? Can we try this?’ by his key worker: Trying a bigger range of activities and introducing [person] to newer things.” Another relative told us, “I know [manager] wants to keep instilling that to try and encourage [person].”

“People and their relatives told us they felt staff had the skills, experience and training to provide effective care.”



“They’ve been brilliant with leading aspiring lives, because that’s what they do, and they do it well.” Another person told us, “The staff are absolutely outstanding. They are respectful towards your wishes and concerns. They are so understanding. It gives me the drive to do it.”

“Staff were encouraged by management to undertake training and were encouraged to follow a career path should they wish to. Management had worked exceptionally closely with healthcare professionals to achieve positive outcomes for people.”

Over the last few years, we have become Surrey’s number one provider for supporting people with complex needs to move from hospital care into community settings. This year we supported 34 people with complex needs who would have belonged to what used to be termed the Transforming Care cohort. 94 % of these placements have been successful.

Karen* was referred to Active Prospects as an emergency placement. Her previous placement had broken down and she was detained by the police following an incident of crisis behaviour. Karen spent a short time in our Short Breaks service, whilst we found out more information about her needs.

Karen has extremely sensitive hearing and found that certain everyday noises made her uncomfortable and caused her high levels of anxiety. Consequently, Karen did not want to live with other people and when anxious could be physically aggressive. Karen also highly values nature and several years ago enjoyed walking in wide open spaces. Karen had many great life skills, could cook up an amazing Thai or Mexican meal, and had several key interests, one of which was local history.

During the period Karen was at the respite service we were able to gain a good understanding of her communication and sensory needs, and understood that whilst there were challenges living with others, Karen also wanted friendships and social interaction. We developed a flat for Karen in a semi rural area, with additional soundproofing,

her own kitchen and living room, and views across fields and common-land. The service was small, but she had 4 neighbours who also preferred a quiet life. However, there was a large communal space and garden to allow for friendships to grow.

Karen has moved to her flat and has been able to spend increasing amounts of time in the shared garden, to expand her cooking skills in her own kitchen, and has a safe and quiet space to retreat to when she needs it. Karen also utilises an Alexa device for video support when she feels unable to cope with people in her space and receives weekly support from the Active Prospects clinical team. Recently Karen was able to go to the common; this took several weeks of practising with support staff, but is a remarkable achievement and step on her wellbeing journey.

This year we introduced a digital care management system (Sekoia) across our services, which means we are now better able to demonstrate impact and monitor quality and compliance.

“It has made the management of H&S checks, people’s health records and incident reporting much easier and more effective. My Assistant Service Manager and I can easily check notes and reports. Nothing can go missing, like it can with paper and checks/tasks are not easily missed. The team find it much easier to work with Sekoia and the system has also supported us with our eco pledge with using less paper.”

*not his real name

Working side-by-side with people we support



Our award-winning approach to co-production with the people we support is one of our strengths and this centres everything we do and continues to drive us forward.



We helped the Pro-Active Community to register as an independent charity in 2020, and since then have continued to provide support. This year, our staff supported Pro-Active Community members to relaunch their Quality Checker programme and run quality checks at Active Prospects services; run a workshop at the Learning Disability England conference; and fundraise over £20,000.

We collaborated with the Pro-Active Community and Surrey County Council to co-design and pilot a Peer Health Champions project. This involved designing a training course which gives people with a learning disability the knowledge and confidence to give help and advice to their peers to improve their health and wellbeing. After piloting the initial concept, a 'train the trainer' model was developed to enable similar courses to be rolled out across the county.

We know how important it is to work with people we support and their families to deliver bespoke accommodation and support to meet their needs.

Chris* is in his mid-20s and has autism, epilepsy and a severe learning disability. He moved out of the family home and into his new home in June 2020, at the height of the Covid pandemic.

This was a major adjustment for both Chris and his mum, as they had shared a home for all of his life. In advance of his moving in day, the team at Active Prospects made every effort to learn as much as possible about Chris and his transition needs. They listened to Chris, his mum, his social worker and health professionals to develop his 'This is Me' personalised support plan. This included making changes to Chris' living environment to ease his transition, such as recreating his old bedroom into his new home so that it was familiar, and working with his mum to create a bespoke sensory space in the garden.

Chris' mum was able to set goals for her son: "[The team] listened to me when I emphasised the importance of doing things a certain way, and worked on actively supporting him in important areas like improving his diet. After he moved in, his team sent me texts, photos and videos almost every day, they asked me questions to learn more about him, they kept him safe and they got to know him."

Before moving into his new home, Chris had resisted eating fruit and vegetables since early childhood. Chris' mum set his support team a goal of improving his diet. After much encouragement, "my vegetable averse son is now drinking a green smoothie every day! I couldn't wish for better people to be supporting him. I can see that my son likes his support workers, and that they enjoy supporting him. As for me, well, they provide such amazing support that finally, after what seems like a lifetime, I can sleep soundly at night."

*not his real name

This year we've continued to create opportunities for people to use their experience and expertise to improve their and other's quality of life:

Mimi Ghaith and Matt Leadbeater are two people supported by Active Prospects who use their experience to help improve the support and information that people with learning disabilities or autistic people receive.



Mimi: I'm employed by Active Prospects as a paid Expert by Experience Coordinator. This means that I help Active Prospects with:

- Quality checks of services, which look at services from the perspective of someone who receives care. I'm one of 8 trained quality checkers. We also provide quality checks of other care providers, not just Active Prospects.
- Annual plans for services: it really helps a service to hear from people when deciding on their priorities each year.
- Recruitment – I've helped Surrey County Council and Active Prospects with recruitment by sitting on interview panels.
- Induction and training - I explain to new starters how much of a priority co-production is for Active Prospects. I also help to strengthen training courses by giving the experience of care receivers.

Recently I visited some of Active Prospects' residential services with Jade Vallance, Director of Care. Jade and I did an audit of how people are now leading aspiring lives after lockdown and the impact of Zoom fatigue. I think it's



important that after two years of restrictions in care homes, services now find ways to support people to get back to living the same opportunities as everyone else.

The visits showed me how much people need face-to-face contact for their wellbeing. We've all got used to video calls, but there's nothing like meeting up in person.



Matt: I started out as a volunteer in the Fundraising team at Active Prospects in 2020 and this year I progressed into a paid job.

I've already organised a bake off, several raffles, street collections, and I even climbed Mount Snowdon! I think it's important for people and companies to meet people who their donations will help, and I love getting out and about and meeting new people, and explaining the work we do.

Last year I was named as one of the Dimensions Learning Disability Leaders, which made me very proud. This year I won a Mayor of Reigate & Banstead Volunteer Award, and I was also a finalist at the BBC Make a Difference Awards.

Supporting each other through tough times



It's tough working in social care and relying on public funding for essential services, and we know that in the face of rising costs of living and a new age of austerity it's going to get tougher.

Care staff and people receiving care are likely to be among the most affected by the economic turmoil. We know that pay is a huge issue across the care sector. The skill, value and dedication of those working in care have been underappreciated by government and local government and health commissioners for too long: in real terms, a support worker today typically earns 35% less than they would have earned 30 years ago.

Despite the dire financial climate facing the care sector, we have committed to raising the salaries of our lowest paid staff from £10.30 to £11 per hour, meaning we will continue to pay everyone above the Real Living Wage. This will cost us a significant additional sum, and means we will have to take some tough decisions, but when times are hard it's critical we look after our staff and people.

As the cost-of-living crisis dominates the news agenda, it is difficult to escape the seemingly never-ending stream of bad news and bleak forecasts. This can have a particularly



negative impact on some of the people we support, who may experience a spike in anxiety or challenging behaviours. We have raised over £6,000 from the Aviva Community Fund for the Pro-Active Community to run some cost-of-living workshops. These workshops will give people accessible information on topics such as budgeting; financial abuse; reducing energy costs; and healthy eating on a budget.

In October we ran our third annual Wellbeing Week. The organising team of staff and people we support showed great creativity in arranging activities on a budget such as yoga, chair exercise, healthy cooking, walk and talk, and relaxing art.



This year we have trained 28 staff as Mental Health First Aid Champions



Recognising and celebrating achievements

We believe it's important to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our staff and the people we support. This year we were delighted to hold our annual Star Awards at Hartsfield Manor again (we streamed the awards online for those who couldn't attend in person). There were over 100 nominations across the 14 award categories, and some incredible winners! Star Awards 1

These included Barry, who won a Most Active Person award. Before joining Active Prospects, Barry had very low self-esteem and would not leave the house; however, with support he has planned and organised a holiday abroad with friends, volunteers at a local shop, attends the allotment project and travels independently.

Another winner was Leanne Stammers, who won a Best New Staff Member award. Leanne joined Active Prospects as an Activity Co-Ordinator through the Government's Kickstart scheme. She settled in well and soon successfully applied to be a support worker. She quickly built a trusting relationship with the staff and people we support at the service, helping



them to live their best life. She may be the youngest in the team, however she is dedicated and successful and a great asset to Active Prospects.

Staff can also nominate their colleagues for a monthly Aspiring Staff award, with rewards given each month to the most Aspiring Support Worker, Manager, Team and Head Office staff member. This year we've had 60 winners from over 300 nominations!

This year staff members won 4 national awards:



Our **CEO Maria Mills** won the **NatWest SE100 Leader of the Year award** – plus Active Prospects was named in the SE100 list of top social enterprises for the third year running!



At the **Surrey Care Awards**, **Active Prospects** won the **Innovation in Practice award**.



Our **Director of Care Jade Vallance** beat off competition from 20 other finalists to win **Social Care Covid Hero award at the National Learning Disability & Autism Awards**. Jade also won a Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care award for her work promoting wellbeing among staff and people we support.

Our **Head of Learning and Organisational Development Vicky Marshall** won **Trainer of the Year at the Great British Care Awards**. Vicky was recognised for going the extra mile during the Covid pandemic to make sure colleagues were given the training and support they needed, despite the challenges of social distancing.



Matt Leadbeater, **Chair of the Pro-Active Community and member of Active Prospects' Fundraising Team**, was given a **Mayor's Volunteer Award** by the Mayor of Reigate & Banstead.

2022 was an amazing year for Leanne Yeo. She won two cycling gold medals at the Special Olympics, was part of a team which raised over £4,500 by climbing Mount Snowdon, and worked with Surrey County Council on a Peer Health Champions project. Leanne's year was capped off when she was named on the Learning Disability Leaders List, which recognises people with learning disabilities and autistic people who are taking a lead in their lives and making things better for themselves and others.

Despite her recent successes with cycling, Leanne experienced initial struggles when she first picked up the sport in her youth. She initially started with mountain bikes but found them hard to manage as she had to use special cleats. Not willing to throw in the towel, Leanne later found her niche in road racing which is the event in which she won both a gold and bronze medal during the Special Olympics in Bradford this year.

Witnessing her agility on a bike, you would be hard pressed to imagine that Leanne ever struggled with cycling. Yet, she professes she faced many challenges with getting used to the pedals and even fell off a few times. As someone with learning disabilities and anxiety, her determination to press on with a sport that she could have so easily given up is just one of the many reasons why Leanne is a rightful Leaders List winner.

Leanne has been able to successfully juggle her Special Olympic training with her many roles, and still finds the time and energy for charitable pursuits.

Her successes this year is only the beginning and Leanne has no plans of slowing down. Being a 2022 Leaders' List recipient has only given Leanne additional motivation to keep pushing herself to the next level. After all, as she shares, "no matter your disability, you can still achieve great things if you try hard and push yourself".



Financial summary

2021-22 Financial Statements

Income:

Care and support	£9,312,800
Property services	£2,763,940
Grants	£1,125,530
Other income	£68,170

Total £13,270,440

Costs

Staff costs	£9,564,030
Other costs and overheads	£3,363,280

Total £ 12,927,310

Turnover profile

2017/18	£ 7.6m
2018/19	£ 8.9m
2019/20	£ 10.8m
2020/21	£12.0m
2021/22	£13.3m

Our partners



Funders or donors

Aviva Community Fund	National Lottery Community Fund
Barclays Bank	Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
Community Foundation for Surrey	Reigate College
Dapper & Suave	Reigate & Redhill Round Table
Gardening Disabilities Trust	Social and Sustainable Capital
hush	Tandridge Together Community Fund



Associations and representative bodies

Charity Retail Association	Surrey Care Association
Learning Disability England	Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG)
National Care Forum	
Surrey Learning Disability Partnership Board	



Commissioners and other partners

Surrey County Council	NHS Surrey Heartlands ICS
Brighton and Hove Council	Surrey and Borders Partnership Trust
London Borough of Croydon	University of Surrey
London Borough of Merton	Voluntary Action Reigate and Banstead
London Borough of Sutton	West Sussex County Council
NHS England	



Professionals

A1 Fire Protection	PLMR Advent
AHP Architects and Surveyors Ltd	RWK Goodman
Citation	Sharp IT
Kreston Reeves	Smith and Byford
Marcon Construction	Surrey Fire
More Kingston Smith	Trowers and Hamblins LLP

Contact us

Active Prospects enables people with learning disabilities and autism, physical and mental health needs to live full and aspiring lives.

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We are a Community Benefit Society (26618R) with charitable status.