



Annual
Review

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Letter from Chair of the Board

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Words cannot express the sheer pride I felt being elected as Chair in October 2023, for an organisation that means the world to me. Since that time, I've had the immense privilege of visiting several of our services and seeing first-hand the amazing work that our staff do and hearing the positive impact our services have had upon those we support.

I've also had the pleasure of speaking to some of our supported people, hearing their stories of how they ended up with Blue Triangle, but more importantly, about the help, support, love, care and independence they received while with us. We don't have a magic wand that will eradicate homelessness, addiction, abuse or any of the things that our supported people face. What we do have though, is an army of people who care, who support, who dedicate their lives to helping others rebuild theirs. I couldn't be prouder to be a part of that.

This time last year, I was welcoming Gary Meek (CEO) to Blue Triangle, as we started a new chapter with a new leader. It's safe to say that Gary hit the ground running, and the Board & I have been greatly impressed by the work that he, and his senior team, have done over the first 12 months with us, and I look forward to continuing our partnership over the coming years.

I'm delighted to be able to report again that, in the face of continuing sector challenges, where cost pressures have been significant, Blue Triangle has continued to deliver high-quality, trauma-informed support services. We also implemented our new strategic plan with refreshed commitments and targets identified, which we will continue to embed across all services in the coming year.

Our focus on diversification has also continued, with the successful renewal of awards for addiction and recovery innovation funds through the CORRA foundation. We also entered our 10th local authority at the tail-end of 2023, when we delivered our newest service in Falkirk, providing support to young people aged 16-21 who are care experience or asylum seeking.

We step into 2024/25 with ambition and enthusiasm, with plans to support more people, helping those who need it in their darkest hours, continuing to be that kind, passionate and creative light that Blue Triangle has always been.

On behalf of our Board, I want to express our gratitude and thanks to everyone that is part of making Blue Triangle what it is today. Everyone, whether based in a service, floating support, or in Central Support has a key part to play and, as a Board, we're lucky enough to hear about the incredible things happening out there – which reminds us all why we do this!

I also want to extend thanks to our clients and the many organisations we work alongside, all of whom increase our ability to make a difference. Finally, I'd like to personally thank Gary and his senior team, as well as our highly skilled and committed Board, for their help, support, dedication and love for this organisation throughout the year. I look forward to another year working alongside you all.

Jonathon McNaughton
Chair of Blue Triangle's Board

Letter from CEO

Overview

As I reflect on last year, against the backdrop of a deepening housing emergency, I am proud to say that Blue Triangle is in a stronger position than ever. We are not immune to the changes and challenges that have been witnessed over recent times including cost of living crisis, adult social care spending cuts and war/conflict across the globe but have proven our resilience in continuing to focus and protect the people we support when these challenges do arise. A huge aspect of our work will continue to empower the people who we support and connect with, addressing challenges faced by those who come through our services, specifically stigma, discrimination, exclusion, and exploitation. We want to be courageous, tactful, and tackle these issues in the right way either through our campaigns, or simply by designing solutions through the lens of our supported people.

Key Achievements

This year, Blue Triangle launched our new Business Plan, charting the path for the next five years of our organisation. By setting out our new commitments, our aim is to enhance and improve on the great work that we already do across all our communities, and perhaps work with more people across Scotland where there is opportunity to do so. Annually updating our business plan will allow us to both measure progress, but more so ensure we have an agile plan that is both relevant and reactive to the present time.

We also took an opportunity to review our financial plans to ensure we maintain a resilient business, one that has proven to be successful for 50 years and build upon this with a service operating model that is sustainable, allowing us to reinvest. As a slightly unique RSL, our desire is to offer more housing solutions in the coming years through investment in both affordable and supported Housing. We will work with the regulators and housing teams to align our investments with local housing and strategic plans.

Looking Ahead

This year, Blue Triangle will launch our first dedicated Recovery Housing service in Ayrshire. The objective of the project is to support the recovery pathway for individuals who are either exiting residential rehabilitation or community recovery programmes, who are in need of additional support within a housing support environment.

Supported people will enter the service post detox with a view to re-connecting with family, friends and their local communities. They will explore options around education, training, employment and health. We are grateful to the CORRA Foundation for funding this project, and for continuing to support our Intensive Peer Recovery Support services in Argyll & Bute, South Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

Blue Triangle has also received a £5m boost from the Social and Sustainable Housing fund (SASH) to invest in new properties. In line with SASH's Sustainable Development Goals, Blue Triangle will utilise this funding to tackle poverty, reduce inequality and build sustainable cities and communities. These new properties will increase the capacity of stretched resources during a housing crisis, ensuring that Blue Triangle becomes part of the solution to the current climate.

Finally, Blue Triangle will launch its first counselling service - a dedicated support system designed to provide compassionate and professional mental health services within our communities. As the demand for mental health support continues to grow, Blue Triangle aims to offer a sanctuary where supported people can find solace, guidance, and the tools they need to navigate life's challenges. Staff will be able to refer our

supported people to the counselling service, which will operate across our ten local authorities.

Thank you

Without our hardworking staff, Blue Triangle cannot maintain our frontline 24/7 services across Scotland. I am delighted that our teams' passion and dedication was recognised during a recent Care Inspection, where our Millhill service was awarded a Grade six for "How Good is Your Team." I know our staff go the extra mile, and I want to thank all of you for the excellent support you provide. We see the impact you make every day - as the people we support move onto their own tenancies, succeed in their recovery journeys, and reconnect with their communities.

Gary Meek
CEO Blue Triangle



Highlights of 2024

Blue Triangle has launched a **new five year strategy**, against the backdrop of a national housing emergency.

Blue Triangle's new strategy includes three commitments:

We commit to improving the lives of the people we support
We commit to enhancing the communities in which we work
We commit to ensuring resources are reinvested to support future developments and as a sustainable organisation

Blue Triangle aims to support 600 people over the next five years, to achieve Care Inspectorate Grade 5 across 95% of Blue Triangle services, and to become a leading campaigner in the sector. Blue Triangle also has ambitious aims of achieving £20m turnover during 2024-2029, reinvesting £700k of surplus, and securing 20% income from other funding.

In 2024, Blue Triangle was recognised by **EFQM as an outstanding organisation**:

"Well done on this excellent achievement, which is just reward for all at Blue Triangle in their pursuit of the highest levels of performance."

Blue Triangle has also received a **£5m boost** from the Social and Sustainable Housing fund (SASH), which will allow the organisation to secure 60+ new properties over the next 18 months. The SASH fund aims to improve the lives of vulnerable individuals by increasing their access to safe, stable and appropriate housing, and to make charitable organisations financially stronger by helping them to buy housing in a low risk way.

Our Milhill service in Musselburgh scored an amazing **grade six from Care Inspectorate** for 'How Good is Your Staff Team'. The dedication and passion the staff have for the young people is unmeasurable. The whole

staff team goes above and beyond every day to support and nurture all the young people who are accommodated in our services.

Some quotes from the report:

"There's a clear strong vision for the team and young people, the nurturing environment with a clear culture of trust and excellent work being done to offer a wide variety of experiences, strong culture of learning. Seeking out learning to develop knowledge & a staff team with a variety of lived experiences and backgrounds really shows through."

"Staff are proactive, tenacious & responsive to the young people, they are warm, genuine and adapt their response to each young person."

Blue Triangle has also been finalised for the Partnership and Collaboration category in South Lanarkshire Third Sector Awards 2024 alongside GIVIT.



Stats from 2023-2024

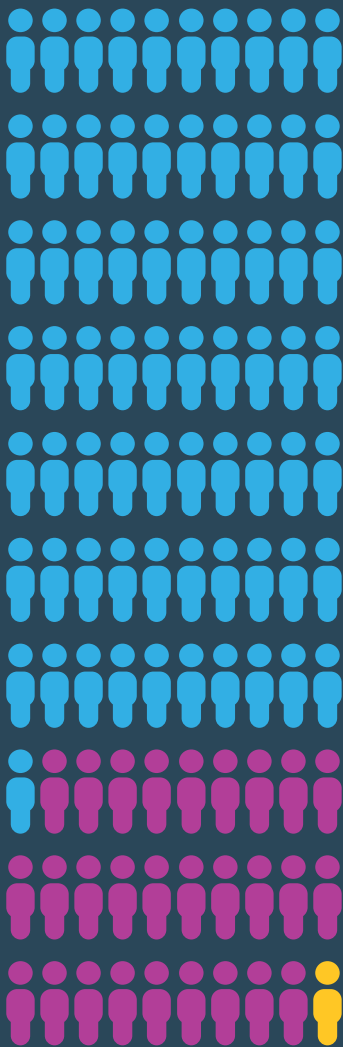
Blue Triangle supported a total number of 1270 people from September 2023 - 2024.



43% of people we supported last year moved onto their own tenancies.



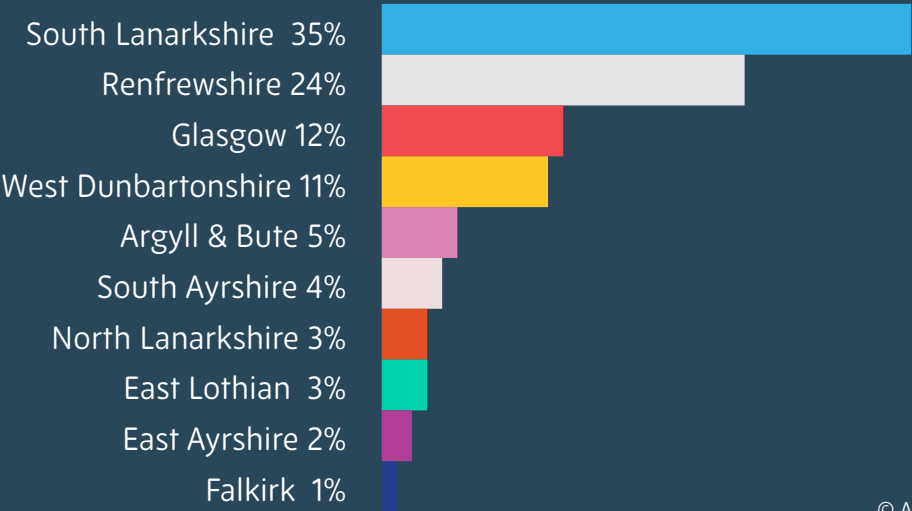
41% of those admitted to our services were aged under 25 years old.



71% men
28% women
1% other



Breakdown of local authority admissions



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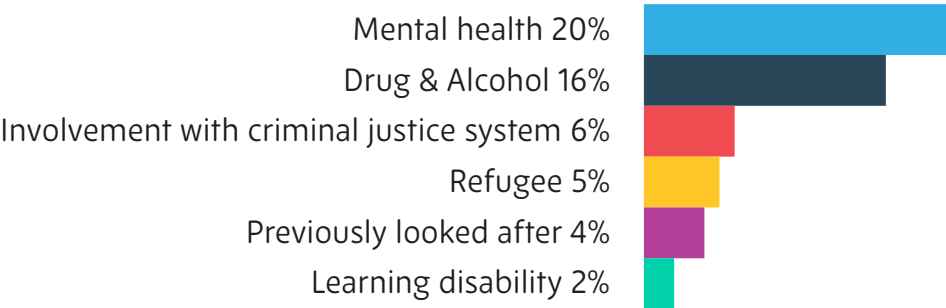
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Reasons for homelessness*



*Please note some supported people had multiple reasons

Issues impacting the people we support*



*Please note supported people can have multiple issues impacting them

Harley's Story: You Give Me Hope



(Featuring staff Lian and Richard)

Harley is a young person who entered our Whatriggs service several years ago. She received support from the Assistant Manager at the time, Richard.

Harley: "It was my first time meeting someone that is so positive - that has stuck with me. If I need someone to build me up when I'm rock bottom, or if I need someone to cry on, I know Richard will give me a pep talk. One thing he told me since he first met me is **'I'm bright, I'm clever, I'm capable and that's the truth'**. It does mean the world to me knowing that there's someone that genuinely means that."

Richard: "First impression of Harley in Whatriggs was just a wee ball of energy. A young, vibrant woman that had appeared in our service."

When Harley found out she was pregnant, Richard was there to give support.

Harley: "Richard told me I was going to be okay, and I was so resilient, and that was part of the reason I was able to go through my pregnancy."

Lian joined the Whatriggs team and took over as Harley's key worker. They developed a strong bond after Harley learned that **Lian had also been a supported person at Blue Triangle when she was sixteen.**

Lian: "First impressions of Harley was just - wow! She's larger than life, she has an amazing personality. I was a staff member but Harley took me under her wing - she

was always clued up about rules. I think we just clicked straight away."

Harley: "It was really nice to have a keyworker that I could sit down with and go 'I'm going through a rubbish time at the moment, this is what's going on' - and rather than someone telling me I'm fine, Lian could relate and say 'You know what, this is a sad time and I know what it's like. **'It was really refreshing to have someone understand, for the first time in a while.'**"

Thanks to the work of Whatriggs staff, Harley was able to move into her own place. She continues to receive ongoing support from Blue Triangle:

Lian: **"When you need us, we're here - you know that you belong."**

After being encouraged by Lian, Harley joined Blue Triangle's Participation and Engagement Committee.

"I was anxious at first but everyone was very welcoming. I was able to put my own input into the meeting - not only about myself, but how things might be viewed by other supported people. It's been interesting hearing about the plans for the future of Blue Triangle, and also the ideas from the other supported people in the room."

"Both times that I left Blue Triangle services, I've always been welcomed back. **The door is always open. I've never been turned away - no matter what time it is. It's probably the biggest support I could ever ask for.**"



"The door is always open. I've never been turned away - no matter what time it is. It's probably the biggest support I could ever ask for."



Harley with her keyworker at the time, Lian



Harley with Richard, Assistant Manager of Whatriggs at the time

Partnerships

Supported person Paul learning bike maintenance before a cycle to Strathclyde Park with Support Worker Ricky



Cycling Scotland

Blue Triangle have been successful in securing Cycling Scotland funding through their Social Housing Partnership fund. Thanks to this, we have secured bikes for our Falkirk, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire services.

Our Hamilton service has recently been running a bike maintenance and safety programme with staff and supported people.

Feedback from supported person Paul:

"The service is helping to address my personal challenges. Staff and the other people at Hamilton are the best and it feels homely."



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Connecting Scotland

Blue Triangle was also successful in securing funding from the Connecting Scotland Housing Devices and Connectivity. Thanks to this, Blue Triangle was able to create a lending library of over 40 devices including tablets, chrome-books and mifi units. The project aims to support those who experience digital exclusion to thrive and improve their wellbeing.

Feedback from supported person Madhi:

"I want to thank Blue Triangle for the chromebook, which allowed me to get into Medicine at University."

Digital Lifelines

Blue Triangle recently ran a Connected Recovery project, funded by Digital Lifeline through the Early Adopters III Funding Programme. Thanks to this funding, we were able to give out over 100 devices including phones, tablets and laptops to the people we support. Staff also attended Digital Harm Reduction Champion training in order to better support those receiving the devices. The project aims to improve confidence in digital skills, help people connect to services and find opportunities in their community.

"We have been able to support a number of our young people and community supported people with digital devices from mobile phones through to laptops and MiFi dongles."

This has helped people to stay socially connected and for some the mobile phones have been their only means of accessing online services and crucially staying up to date with their Universal Credit claim. Not to mention the academic and employability benefits that come with being digitally connected and thus enabling our service users to achieve their potential."



Supported person Danielle from our Abercorn Paisley service with Support Worker Sharon

Supported person Shallom from our Bruce Court Paisley service with Housing Support Worker Adrian

What Our Supported People Say About Blue Triangle

"Staff have gone above and beyond with supporting me to get a job and day to day support. I couldn't fault the support and staff and management are always making time for us. Really enjoying my time at the service."

Hamilton Service Supported person

"I have had a brilliant time. I get on with the staff and have met other people living in the accommodation and have become friends. The accommodation is amazing, and I have great memories of the service I thought would be rough, but it was great. The staff have been very supportive and kind to me and I can't thank them enough."

CB Blantyre Service Supported person



Supported people from our Hamilton Service

99% of supported people believe that staff are trained and have enough knowledge to carry out their work.

97% of supported people believe that staff keep the service safe for them.

On average, **88%** of people we supported felt very welcome when they first moved in.

When asked, how did the staff team manage and assist you with any basic necessities when you moved in, **86%** replied very well and 10% replied well.

88% of those asked said they felt very safe and supported in our services during their stay.

76% felt very involved in preparing their support plan/care plan with our staff. **78%** said their opinions and choices were listened to very well, and 19% said their opinions and choices were listened to well when creating their plan.

When asked, how well are you supported in accessing other services, e.g. housing, health, leisure, etc, **85%** said very supported.

88% said 'very good' when rating the support they received assisting them, and 11% said 'good'.

77% of those asked said they felt very encouraged to join in on activities and events within their service.

When asked, how well do you feel the support workers carry out their professional duties in supporting you, **86%** said very well and 13% said well.



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What supported people gained the most from staying at Blue Triangle



Chris' Story: It's a Team Effort

I will be forever grateful to the Blue Triangle and their staff for what they have done for me.



"When I arrived at the Blue Triangle, I was severely depressed. I had fled an abusive relationship and had lost everything. I had lost me. Three stone underweight and my whole body posture was gone, my shoulders were bent and pointing in. My back was sore and I had my head down, anxiety through the roof. I had been using cocaine seven days a week, ended up 3k in debt all for cocaine. My teeth were in bad condition – that for me was the killer as it took my confidence and social life away. I felt destroyed. I was destroyed. At that time I wanted to end my life. I was caught in the act. I thank God now I was stopped. I felt I had no one. I realised I didn't want to die. I wanted to be here and be a somebody.

After this it was all plus points and positives. Blue Triangle staff were amazing. I can't put this into words. The care – a chat in the morning. It made me feel good again. The staff took me out and about and I was sociable again. I began battling against my anxiety. Staff helped me to attend dental and hospital appointments. I am now in the process of getting my teeth fixed, which has already given me some of my confidence back.

Massively- huge. My physical health is better and I am in less pain. This is night and day. I don't have to crawl out of bed head first in the morning. **I feel if it wasn't for Blue Triangle I would still be going round in circles trying to get health care.**

I recently moved into my own tenancy thanks to support from staff. My ultimate goal is to have my own house and get my kids back. I want to stay free of addiction. I know with help from staff I can move on, on my own. I know this will be hard but with the right support I can do this and achieve my goals. I believe the staff and the support will still be there after I move on.

I will be forever grateful to the Blue Triangle and their staff for what they have done for me. The staff say I have done it, but I believe we have all done it as a team effort – a joint effort. Together."



I feel if it wasn't for Blue Triangle I would still be going round in circles trying to get health care.

Intensive Peer Recovery Support

Ben's Story



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Blue Triangle currently runs four Intense Peer Recovery Support services (IPRS) in Argyll & Bute, South Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire. ROOTS is based in Ayr, supporting people in the community to sustain their own tenancies and access recovery services.

ROOTS was alerted to an individual called Ben, as there were serious concerns raised about his immediate safety in his own tenancy within Ayr. IPRS Worker Jim met Ben alongside his support workers from addiction services and criminal justice. Ben disclosed that someone he knew had arrived at his home and claimed himself and his partner were fleeing local drug dealers and needed a safe place to stay for a night till they could move away from the area in the next few

days. Ben agreed, however around 3am, he was awoken with banging and loud voices and he witnessed both persons injecting drugs. Ben asked them to not do this, as he was trying to stay away from heroin himself, and felt he was being disrespected in his own home.

The situation escalated to the point that Ben was assaulted in his own home and threatened to stop him calling the police. The couple took over the property and began to sell drugs from there. Ben was coerced to take drugs and eventually his bank card was stolen and items from his flat were sold by the couple. Ben was completely humiliated and made to sleep in the small room, where he was locked in. There were also other people using the flat who were active in prostitution.

After learning about the situation, the IPRS Worker made sure Ben was safe in a local Blue Triangle supported accommodation and was encouraged to report the couple to the police. Jim supported Ben three times a week, provided one to one help such as helping him attend addiction service appointments. Blue Triangle worked with the local council to secure Ben's old flat so he could return for his belongings.

In the following months, Ben was able to maintain his methadone prescription and attended all appointments. The ROOTS service supported Ben for over 150 hours, helping him to build a relationship with his parents and getting visiting access to his daughter.

Ben is now waiting for his new home and has been four months opiate free. Ben said **"The wee things really matter. Getting up in the morning and spending time with my family and not being handcuffed to a chemist is the best thing that's happened in ages". Ben is awaiting his own home and has said that he is now ready to start "living a life".**

Accounts

To view our Audited Accounts, Annual Assurance Statement and more, scan this QR code to visit our page on the Scottish Housing Regulator's website.



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