



# Creating A World Where Everyone Matters



**ANNUAL REVIEW**  
**2019/2020**



# WELCOME

A warm welcome to our 2019/2020 Annual Review. This publication marks our second as Inspire North, and our first full year since the merger of Community Links and Foundation in late 2018. Inspire North was created in response to an increasingly complex world in which we support our clients in multiple ways, from housing and domestic abuse, to substance misuse and mental health. Bringing together our expertise allows us to provide the high-quality, well-rounded services our clients deserve.

This year saw many outstanding achievements of which we are incredibly proud. In October 2019 we held our first Employee Conference as Inspire North, bringing more than 400 colleagues together to work on our new strategy. We celebrated the passionate and people-centred work of our colleagues and enjoyed a performance from mental health theatre project Men's Talk.

In February our first group application saw us placed 29th in the Sunday Times list of 100 Best Not-for-Profit Organisations to Work For in 2020. At the ceremony we were given a Special Award for Learning and Development in recognition of our commitment in this area. A major pillar of our strategy is being a great place to work, so we are very proud of this recognition.

We continue to run excellent services, retaining all of our contracts this year. Community Links gained Customer Service Excellence Accreditation again, with many areas highlighted where we go well beyond the accreditation standards. Community Links also placed 15th on the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employer list. Foundation received accreditation from SafeLives for our domestic abuse work, in recognition of the high safety and support standards at our refuge. We won various new contracts to provide services, including a new young people's service in Leeds.

Though the world-changing events of 2020 will be covered in our next Annual Review, we feel it important to say that we have set out our intention to make ending racism everyone's business, and we look forward to updating you on our progress.

There is so much more to talk about, and much more featured in this year's Annual Review, which we hope you will enjoy reading. We are beyond proud to have come to this point in our first full year post-merger, and look forward to realising our bold and ambitious new strategy for the benefit of the clients we serve across the north of England.

**Ruth Kettle**, *Chief Executive*

**Claire Vilarrubi**, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*



*Ruth Kettle, Chief Executive*



*Claire Vilarrubi, Chair of the Board of Trustees*

# INTRODUCING

## the Senior Leadership Team



**Donna Gooby**  
Director of People  
and Culture



**Faye Oldroyd**  
Director of Operations



**Caroline Watson**  
Director of Finance  
and Corporate  
Services



**Sinéad Cregan**  
Director of  
Development and  
Innovation

---

## Board of Trustees

**Claire Vilarrubi**  
Chair, Inspire North

**Cielo Cartwright**  
Inspire North

**Cornelle Parker**  
Inspire North

**Richard Parry**  
Inspire North

**Damian Pocknell**  
Inspire North

**David Strachan**  
Inspire North

**Philip Turnpenny**  
Inspire North

**Jacqueline Hallam**  
Independent Trustee of Community Links

**Fawzia Mir**  
Independent Trustee of Community Links

**Anne Worrall-Davies**  
Independent Trustee of Community Links

**Lisa Bradley**  
Independent Trustee of Foundation

**David Powell**  
Independent Trustee of Foundation

**Chris Welch**  
Independent Trustee of Foundation

# OUR PURPOSE, VISION AND VALUES

Our purpose is to **Build Brighter Futures** with our clients, in pursuit of our vision, **Creating A World Where Everyone Matters**.

**Our four values are:**



## People

We will always treat you as an individual



## Integrity

We will always do the right thing



## Collaboration

We will always achieve more together



## Passion

We will always go the extra mile

## WHAT'S NEW



### 2019-2024 Group Strategy

We launched our new group strategy this year, setting out our aims for the next five years. The strategy came out of many roadshows and workshops we conducted with colleagues following the merger. Our four aims are: Create Together, Be a Great Place to Work, Innovate and Influence, and Build Sustainable Futures. Our strategy summary is available to read at [www.inspirenorth.co.uk](http://www.inspirenorth.co.uk).

### Communications and Development Champions

As part of our commitment to learning and development, this year we launched two new schemes across the group: Development and Innovation Champions, and Communications Champions. The Champions work within services and specialise in developing new funding areas (Development) and representing their service (Communications). The Champions will attend meetings and training sessions with the Development and Communications Team at Head Office. As well as providing learning opportunities the Champions schemes will allow us to share best practice across Inspire North, and help colleagues get to know and support each other in their roles.

## Employee Conference

In October 2019 Inspire North colleagues met as a group for the first time at our Employee Conference. More than 400 colleagues across the group met at Emerald Headingley Stadium in a suite overlooking both the famed rugby and cricket pitches.

Bob Bowman, Chair of the Leeds Rhinos Foundation, welcomed Inspire North colleagues to the venue. The Rhinos Foundation provided free match tickets for our clients and gave away a signed ball for our raffle. In the morning colleagues worked together on our new strategy and intranet. At lunch there were workshops on social media and bids, with disability awareness sessions provided by BID Services. In the afternoon, following a performance from mental health theatre group Men's Talk, we presented awards to outstanding colleagues and launched our recognition and reward scheme to champion excellent practice.

Colleagues across the group received new Samsung Galaxy A10s at the conference as part of our new, more cost-effective group phones package.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive for our first get together, with many colleagues saying they enjoyed the venue, and felt inspired and motivated by our collaborative approach.



*Inspire North colleagues take part in a workshop at the first Employee Conference*



## Best Companies and Special Award

Inspire North placed 29th in the Sunday Times list of 100 Best Not-for-Profit Organisations to Work For in 2020. This was our first application as a group, so we were incredibly proud to be placed 29th. Not only that, we won the Special Award for Learning and Development in recognition of our commitment to training and developing our employees.

The awards ceremony took place in London, presented by the BBC's Dan Walker. CEO Ruth Kettle and Director of People Donna Gooby attended the ceremony and accepted the award on behalf of Inspire North. Ruth said: "This award is for all of us. It is testament to the hard work of everyone in the last 12 months, and I am so proud of each and every one of our employees. It's all about the teamwork."

## Quality Achievements

It has been a fantastic first full year for group recognition of our commitment to high quality services and being a great place to work. We are very proud to have received our ISO 14001 Certification, in recognition of our commitment to reducing our environmental impact. We received our Investors in People accreditation, as well as Living Wage Employer status across the group, in addition to our recognition as Disability Confident Leaders, Mindful Employers and Stonewall Diversity Champions. Community Links ranked 15th in the Top 50 Inclusive UK Employers list, with plans to extend this recognition across the whole group.

We are a great place to work, and with our new strategy our aim is to be even better. We are delighted that this commitment continues to be recognised, and so proud of the hard work our teams have put in to make this happen in the first year after our merger.

## Merging platforms, reporting and accounting systems

A significant amount of effort behind the scenes has seen our working platforms merged this year, with everyone across the group now working on Office 365. Our finance accounting systems have merged, and internal reporting is now standardised across the group. Bringing a group together is no mean feat, and we are proud to have achieved this in our first full post-merger year.

*Ruth Kettle and Donna Gooby at the awards for the Sunday Times list of 100 Best Not for Profit Organisations*





## WHAT'S NEW

### 35 Years of Foundation

Foundation celebrated its 35-year anniversary this year, with colleagues receiving commemorative badge pins. Foundation was founded in 1984 in Leeds, set up by a small team of probation officers who were determined to provide homes and support for those leaving prison. Since then we have expanded to provide services for young people, homeless adults with complex needs and those suffering domestic abuse, all with the same belief that people need a firm foundation on which to build a brighter future.



Commemorative badge pins to celebrate 35 Years of Foundation



### SafeLives Accreditation

Our domestic abuse refuge in the north east received accreditation from domestic abuse specialist quality mark SafeLives. We are now a Leading Lights service, which means we meet the criteria for good quality service provision, multi-agency working, well-supported staff and robust governance. The accreditation is in place for three years, from 2019.

### New Horizons for Vulnerable Ex-Prisoners

Foundation is leading a Ministry of Justice pilot scheme to reduce reoffending and homelessness in West Yorkshire. The Horizons programme, which launched in late 2019, supports vulnerable ex-prisoners to find accommodation, and provides tailored support to help them manage their tenancies, get into employment or education, and engage with probation services.

Government research shows that ex-prisoners who are in stable accommodation are much less likely to reoffend within a year than those who are sleeping rough. The scheme, which works with people leaving HMP Leeds, is open to men serving less than two years in custody and who are at risk of homelessness.



### Our Way Leeds (OWL) to Take Flight

We were successful, alongside partners GIPSIL and Turning Lives Around, in winning a new contract to provide a comprehensive young people's service in Leeds. The Our Way Leeds service will support young people aged 15-24 with a variety of needs, from housing and education to mental wellbeing. The service launches in July 2020 and replaces the previous Flagship service for the city.

## Children's Worker for Domestic Abuse Refuge

This year we were successful in receiving Children in Need funding to support a Children's Worker post at our refuge. This will provide vital activities for children who have fled domestic abuse, and give their mums the opportunity to attend support programmes while the children are doing activities.



*Kira and Emma in Redcar have a visit from the local mayor*

## Providing Housing in Barnsley

We were successful this year in an application to become registered housing providers for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. This means we will be able to provide accommodation and support services for clients in Barnsley.

## Positive Choices for Domestic Abuse Perpetrators

Our new domestic abuse perpetrator service Positive Choices launched this year, offering targeted interventions across North Yorkshire to people who want to change their domestic abuse behaviour. Support is available for anyone aged 16 years and over who is a perpetrator of domestic abuse, including repeat offenders and adolescents violent toward parents, who wish to voluntarily address their abusive behaviour. The service is open to all genders, and regardless of sexual orientation.

## Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership (KBOP)

Alongside Community Links and seven other third sector organisations, we joined the Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership (KBOP), providing housing, health and wellbeing services for vulnerable people in Kirklees. The partnership aims to help people in Kirklees live independent and fulfilling lives in their own homes. KBOP launched in September 2019.



## Action Towards Inclusion

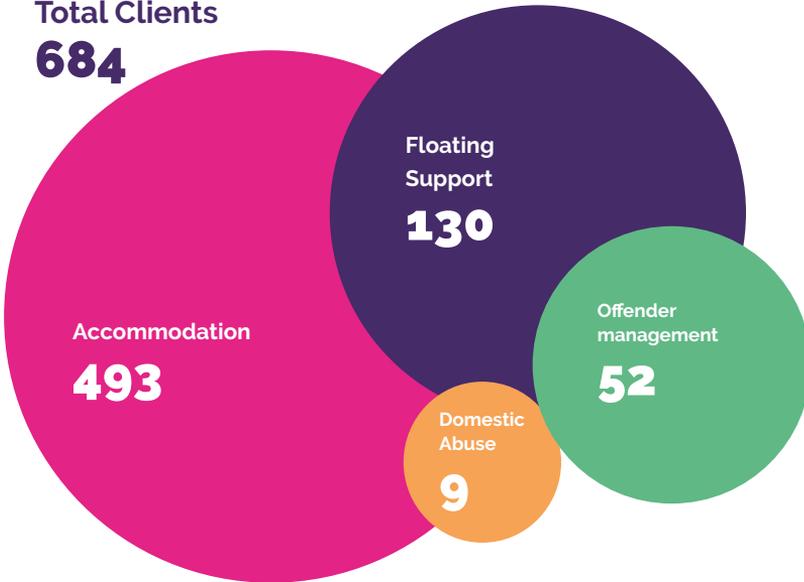
Our Action Towards Inclusion service helps vulnerable adults move towards the job market, and this year we were able to expand our offer to support people in housing crisis across North Yorkshire.

# OUR CLIENTS An Overview

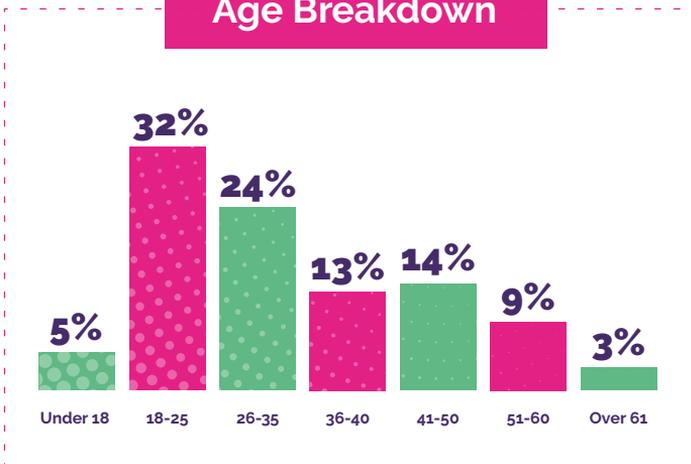
As of 31/10/19

Total Clients

**684**



## Age Breakdown



## Sexuality

HETEROSEXUAL

**65%**

LGBT

**4%**

NOT ASKED

**20%**

NOT STATED

**2%**

OTHER

**9%**

## Ethnicity

**WHITE**

**81%**

**BLACK**

**3%**

**ASIAN**

**1%**

DUAL HERITAGE

**4%**

OTHER

**2%**

NOT KNOWN

**9%**



**6%**  
of clients  
identified  
themselves  
as having a  
disability

# Foundation Annual Satisfaction Questionnaire 19/20

## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT US?

**91%**

I feel that my story is shared appropriately so I don't have to repeat myself

**96%**

I make my own choices and feel supported through the choices I make

**93%**

I believe that workers go the extra mile - no one gives up on me

**98%**

I value the relationship with my worker and feel listened to when I have ideas

**100%**

I am treated as a human being and with dignity and respect

**95%** of clients said they were **likely to recommend us** to their friends and family.

"I don't feel alone, whenever there is something wrong I know that I can ring my worker and she will **provide me with the best care and help.**"

"You **learn life skills** at Foundation."

"Foundation are **always prepared to listen.**"

## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY?

**97%**

I am happy with my personal contribution to my accommodation

**95%**

My repairs are done in a timely manner

**97%**

My accommodation is at a high standard

**93%**

I am happy with my heating and insulation

**93%**

I feel safe and secure where I live

Data based on 315 responses; response rate of 40.8% of total service users. Percentages based on positive responses ('Agree', 'Great', 'Good', 'OK', 'Extremely likely' and 'likely').

# CO-PRODUCTION

We aim for co-production right across the organisation, working on projects and initiatives with our clients, and supporting clients to develop their own projects. We are featuring here a magazine made by young people with the North Yorkshire Young People's Pathway in Harrogate.

Young people who attend the weekly Progress group in Harrogate wanted to promote the group and its activities to other young people on the Pathway scheme, so began to discuss the possibility of making a magazine.

They developed the magazine with support from Foundation colleagues, planning out the number of pages, content, publication frequency and look and feel. Young people on the Pathway contributed advice, recipes, activity ideas, songs and raps, and workouts to the first edition, before laying out and proofreading the pages. The young people wanted to share their views and experiences, and felt it was important that all young people with the service received a copy, especially as it dealt with such topics as mental health and wellbeing, budgeting, housing and activities.

The young people and Foundation Harrogate team applied for funding from Foundation's internal grants scheme, the Woodland Fund, and were awarded a grant to print the glossy magazine. Copies were distributed by colleagues to all young people with the service.

Young person 'A' contributed to the magazine and helped bring it together. 'A' said: "my involvement in the young person's magazine gave me something to do, a daily structure. I found it motivational."

There are plans for another edition to be published in 2020, with features on debt, domestic abuse, homelessness, bills, drug/ alcohol misuse, meal planning, loneliness and county lines, based on some of the issues the young people are facing. Young people and Foundation colleagues hope for the new magazine to be a way of engaging with some of the more vulnerable clients on the Pathway.





This is Cheryl's experience of working with Foundation Wakefield. The Wakefield Access to Housing Pathway provides accommodation and support for vulnerable adults who are at risk of homelessness, building on their strengths and moving towards a long-term, secure tenancy.

### **Can you tell us about your experiences before you came to Foundation?**

I had served over two years in Newhall prison. Prior to being in Newhall I had a breakdown, my father had recently died, I had separated from my husband and was losing my home. Due to all these factors I had some serious mental health issues, including manic depression, and I was feeling suicidal. I had a psychiatrist in prison who helped save me, he was wonderful. Unfortunately, I lost contact with my children during this time. At the end of my sentence in prison I felt as though I was walking out into the unknown. I often cried about this and how frightened I was to go back to the outside world.

### **When did you first start working with Foundation, and what was it like at the start?**

I moved to my Foundation property in February 2019 after being referred from Ripon House in Leeds. I met two workers, who explained the service and how the support worked. I had to put my faith in Foundation as I was homeless and had no other choice.

### **What did you and your support worker do to help improve things?**

I met Sue, my support worker, when I went to the Foundation office. I arrived at my supported property with my Ripon House worker and I had nothing but three suitcases. Foundation gave me basic furniture and I began to rebuild my life. Emotional and psychological support was amazing from Sue, she was fantastic. Sue helped me with managing money and budgeting - she helped in lots of practical ways. Recently I have been getting letter contact with my child. Sue has been supportive and is very understanding, she listens and is very empathetic.

### **How are things now?**

I am feeling more settled. I am in a happier, more stable place due to Foundation's help. I now feel safe and settled. Last year I volunteered with Ripon House as a music teacher - this helped my confidence. I currently volunteer at the Women's Centre helping other women on a songwriting project, using expression through music therapy. I am very proud to have become a blood donor on the 12th August, I booked this particular date as it was my wedding anniversary, and I wanted to give this day the meaning it deserved. Now, I feel, is my time for giving back to others.

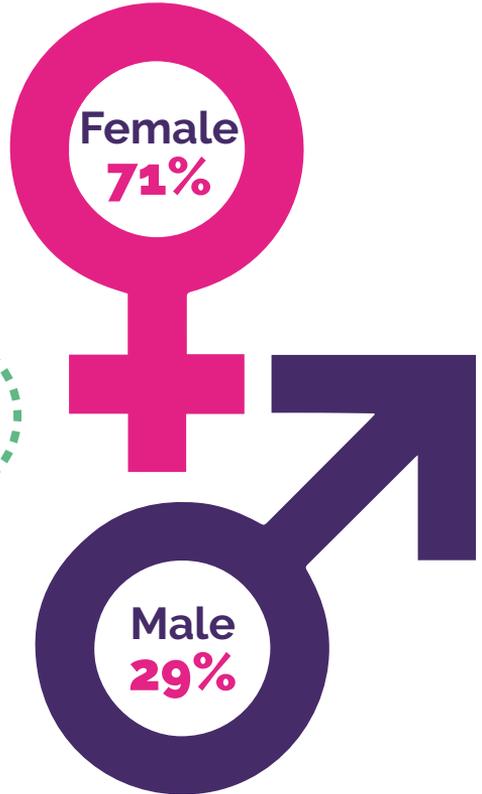
### **How do you feel that working with Foundation helped you?**

In every way possible Foundation gave me stability, support and something to fall back on in case anything went wrong.

# Foundation Employees Overview

  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES **173**

FULL TIME **47%** PART TIME **53%**  

## Achievements



## WHAT'S NEW



### Linking Leeds

New city-wide social prescribing service Linking Leeds launched in September 2019, providing wellbeing support to the people of Leeds through their GP practices. The service, run by Community Links and partners, connects patients with activities that will benefit their wellbeing.

Once referred, patients can see a Wellbeing Coordinator who will work to understand their needs, then help them to access relevant community activities, including art, gardening and fitness groups, mental health services and specialist advice or support services for housing, money and health.

### Customer Service Excellence Assessment 2019

We are delighted to share with you the results of our recent Customer Service Excellence assessment at Community Links. 17 of our services participate annually in this rigorous quality audit, which assesses our achievements and continuous improvement in five quality areas: Customer Insight, The Culture of the Organisation, Information and Access, Delivery, and Timeliness and Quality of Service.

We achieved compliance in all 57 areas, with ten areas achieving Compliance Plus. The report said "Community Links goes to great lengths to identify, understand and meet the needs of hard-to-reach groups and individuals."

### Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers

Community Links has once again been recognised as an Inclusive Top 50 UK Employer. Good Morning Britain's Sean Fletcher presented the awards in November to reveal those companies that have thought beyond diversity to inclusion. Community Links placed 15th this year, in a positive evening for West Yorkshire.

We are very proud to have been recognised for our continuous dedication to diversity, equality and inclusion.

### East Grange

In July 2019 we launched a new supported residential service for people who are ready to be discharged from acute mental health wards in Leeds. East Grange supports clients with their continued recovery after discharge, transitioning back into the community and moving on to more permanent accommodation.



### Dementia Packs

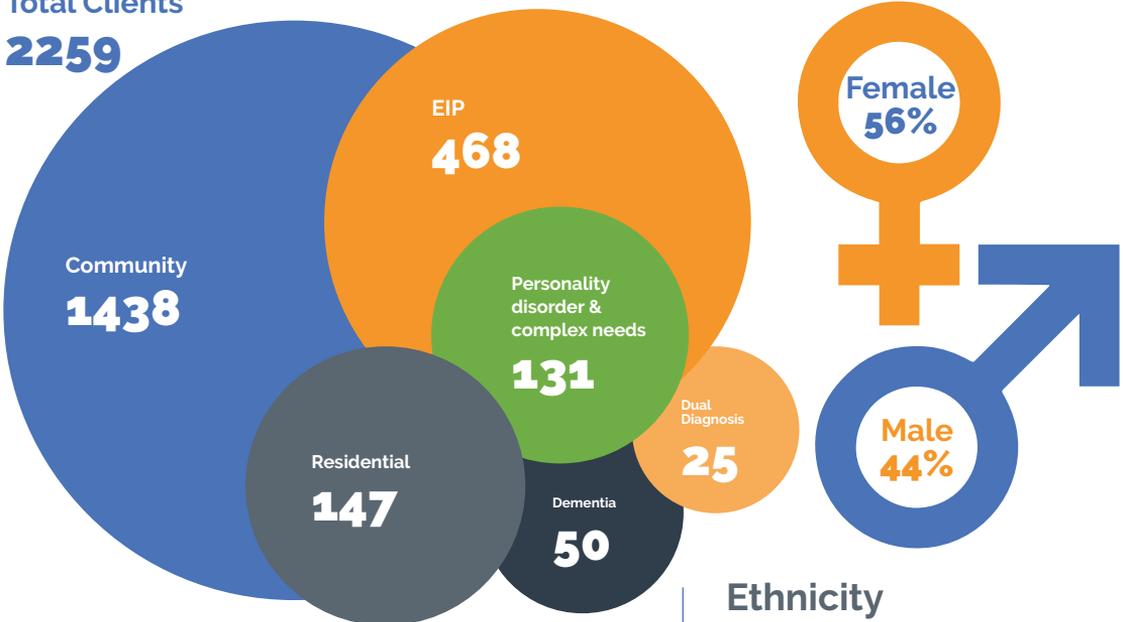
Our Young Dementia Leeds service has been hosting regular cooking classes, focusing on the importance of good nutrition for people living with dementia. Using money from a Harnessing the Power of Communities grant provided by NHS West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership, the service put together a number of innovative food and dementia packs to support clients and their carers. The packs include advice and information on nutrition and eating, and a number of recipes that are easy for clients to make. The packs were given out to clients in December.

# OUR CLIENTS An Overview

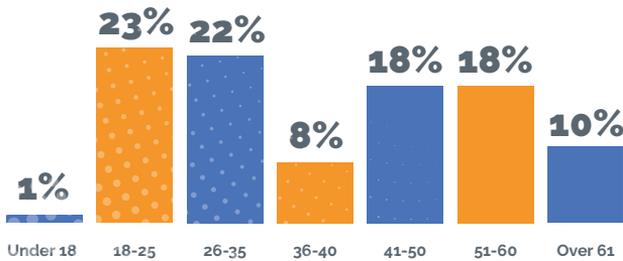
As of 31/10/19

## Total Clients

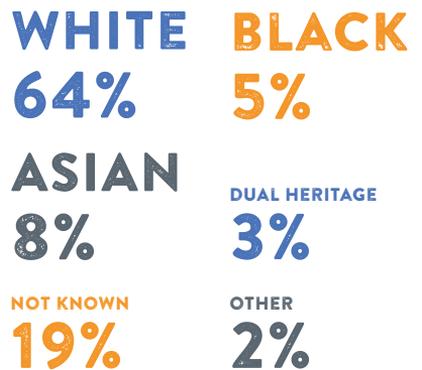
**2259**



## Age Breakdown



## Ethnicity



**25%** of clients identified themselves as having a disability

## Achieving Positive Change

The majority of Community Links services use the Outcomes Star as a tool to measure the positive changes achieved by the people we work with. These changes are referred to as 'outcomes' and are measured with the client and their support worker.

**82%** of clients maintained or made improvement on the overall average outcome score.

# Community Links Annual Satisfaction Questionnaire 19/20

## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT US?

**93%**

I feel that my story is shared appropriately so I don't have to repeat myself

**85%**

I make my own choices and feel supported through the choices I make

**87%**

I believe that workers go the extra mile - no one gives up on me

**96%**

I value the relationship with my worker and feel listened to when I have ideas

**98%**

I am treated as a human being and with dignity and respect

"I feel that you have done everything you can to support me."

"I felt more understood and listened to. I felt not judged and not a diagnosis."

"The approach I have had is excellent, I am treated with respect and understanding around the issues I am suffering from."



## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY?

**92%**

I am happy with my personal contribution to my accommodation

**86%**

My repairs are done in a timely manner

**93%**

My accommodation is at a high standard

**90%**

I am happy with my heating and insulation

**86%**

I feel safe and secure where I live

Data based on 158 responses; response rate of 14.6% of total service users. Percentages based on positive responses ('Agree', 'Great', 'Good', 'OK', 'Extremely likely' and 'likely').

**92%** of clients said they were likely to recommend us to their friends and family.

# CO-PRODUCTION

Community Links clients are involved at all levels of the organisation with co-producing our services. Co-production is paramount in the way we deliver services, so we encourage all clients to get involved with producing the service environment.

In this example, at residential service Maltings Close, clients worked together to update the hostel garden using funds from Bright Ideas, the Community Links internal grants scheme. Maltings Close Support Worker Diana Piwowska tells us more:

"Through initial discussion with residents it was agreed that they wanted to update the garden. After making sure they wanted to be involved in the update, I presented them with some ideas, and we agreed on the list of things they would like us to apply for from the Bright Ideas Fund. The residents completed statements to go with the application, and explained how the garden project would be beneficial to them. So far there have been six planned sessions and numerous spontaneous sessions. We have tidied up the whole garden, we have planted seeds and flowers, painted various things around the garden, and we have purchased some seeds for next year.

Plans for the future include repairing the greenhouse window panels, planting vegetables such as tomatoes and cucumbers, digging out the planters for replanting new seeds, and finishing up the painting on the smoking shelter.

So far residents have found that helping with the project has been fun, relaxing and exciting."



Paul shares his experience of working with our Community Links Engagement and Recovery (CLEAR) service to improve his mental wellbeing. CLEAR provides a range of social, leisure and skills-based activities which aim to develop confidence, motivation and self-reliance.



#### **Can you tell us about your experiences before you came to CLEAR?**

Before I came to CLEAR I didn't have much in the way of help and advice. My behaviour and mood were all over the place. I'd been asked to leave the family home prior to joining CLEAR, and spent the first part of 2019 homeless, living in sheltered accommodation, because I couldn't keep my temper in check when explaining things. When I'm flooded with too many mixed emotions, I'm a wreck, I can't cope. I hit self-destruct and I walk away. Twice I've had the police looking for me as a missing person. I was referred to single point access by my GP, who referred me to Kirklees IAPT, who referred me to CLEAR to help with my anger before commencing any one-to-one therapy.

#### **When did you first start working with CLEAR, and what was it like at the start?**

It was around mid-2019. I felt like I been thrown in the deep end. I met Hannah, my key worker, who explained what CLEAR does and what they could do to help me. I was really anxious to start with. It was like being the new kid in a new school.

#### **What did you and your support worker do to help improve things?**

Hannah understood what I was looking for, put me on the list for anger management and explained the men's group drop-in which I attend most Wednesdays along with the Men's Talk theatre group.

#### **How are things now?**

Things right now are a bit complicated, but I feel I've moved more forwards than I have stepped backwards. I don't think I'm anywhere near yet to getting to understand my mental health, but I will. I've got a lot more to smile about.

#### **How do you feel that working with CLEAR has helped you?**

I think CLEAR has been a very good support to me. The men's group and Men's Talk was getting me out of the flat, doing something different. It's nice to be part of a team. And learning something fun. But more importantly I did my anger management, which has given me tools to help with my emotions and progress in helping my mental health.

# Community Links Employees Overview



NUMBER OF  
EMPLOYEES

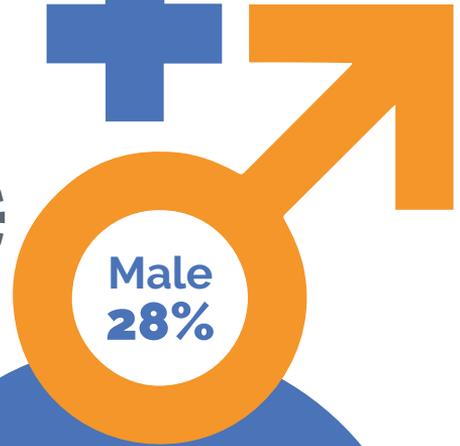
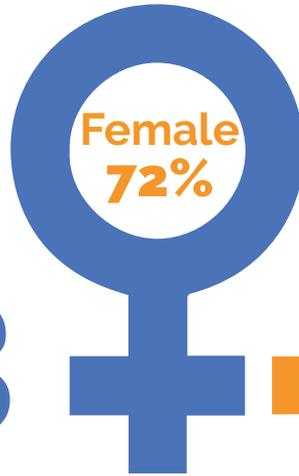
248

FULL  
TIME

68%

PART  
TIME

31%



## Investing in Volunteers

We welcome and value volunteers, who attend training as part of their induction. Many of our volunteers are former clients. To find out more about volunteering with us visit [www.commlinks.co.uk/volunteering](http://www.commlinks.co.uk/volunteering).



## Achievements



# WHERE TO FIND US

## Inspire North Head Office

3 Limewood Way, Leeds, LS14 1AB

Tel: 0113 273 9660

Email: [info@inspirenorth.co.uk](mailto:info@inspirenorth.co.uk)

## Locations

Batley  
Darlington  
Dewsbury  
Doncaster  
Durham

Grimsby  
Harrogate  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Redcar

Richmond  
Scarborough  
Scunthorpe  
Selby  
Skipton

Stalybridge  
Wakefield  
York





### Inspire North

3 Limewood Way

Leeds

LS14 1AB

☎ 0113 273 9660

✉ [info@inspirenorth.co.uk](mailto:info@inspirenorth.co.uk)

[www.inspirenorth.co.uk](http://www.inspirenorth.co.uk)

🐦 @InspireNorthUK



Part of the Inspire North Group

