

Potential Living

# ANNUAL REPORT

April 2022 - March 2023



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## Mission

That all may reach their potential.

“ The care provided by Potential Living is excellent. I see the proof of this in my happy brother who is supported every day by a wonderful team who are very much appreciated. ”

RELATIVE OF FOCUS PERSON

## Vision

To open up the opportunities we provide for people of all ages, with differing disabilities and none, throughout Lanarkshire, so that they too can reach their potential.

# Aim

For Potential Living to be outstanding in it's mission of supporting the people we work for to meet their individual aspirations and be the best possible version of themselves. "That all may reach their potential."

// Excellent provider. The best I have worked with in my 20+ years in social care. //

POTENTIAL LIVING STAFF MEMBER

## OBJECTIVES

- Ensuring that the people we support are at the heart of everything we do
- Creating a culture focused on best interests, choice, control and rights
- Working creatively as a team with the individual, their family, friends and community to provide the best possible service
- Continually developing the service, ourselves and our practice
- Always role modelling the values, qualities and behaviours we expect from others

## Achievable by

- Involving the people we work for in the planning and delivery of their care and support.
- Working in partnership with our colleagues in social work and health.
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Promoting people's independence.
- Providing high quality, cost effective and efficient services.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Promoting physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.
- Empowering people to lead the life that they choose.

## BACKGROUND

**Potential Living came into being with the formation of a supported living project operated by VAMW Care. VAMW Care was formed in the early eighties by a group of local people concerned about the limited opportunities available for people with learning disabilities in the area.**

In 1982 VAMW House in Motherwell was opened as a registered residential home and throughout the remainder of the eighties and nineties other homes were opened in Wishaw and Motherwell providing accommodation and support for individuals of all ages and a wide variety of needs.

Towards the latter end of the nineties, opportunities were beginning to present themselves to us and the people we worked for, that would allow us to offer them something better and in 1999 we formed the Potential Living Project, initially by supporting people with the transition from our own residential establishments to their own homes.



The majority of the people we now support have their own tenancy, with the remainder living at home with family. In 2017 we moved away from using the name VAMW Care in favour of Potential Living.

## SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

**Over the years we have continued to grow and develop.**

Varying our registration to include people without a learning disability has meant that we have been able to support people with life limiting degenerative conditions like MND and dementia, as well as individuals who have sustained a brain injury.

Another significant development has been the continued growth of our response on-call (ROC) and peripatetic services. The ROC service in particular has now evolved to become one of the most advanced in the area.

## THE LAST YEAR

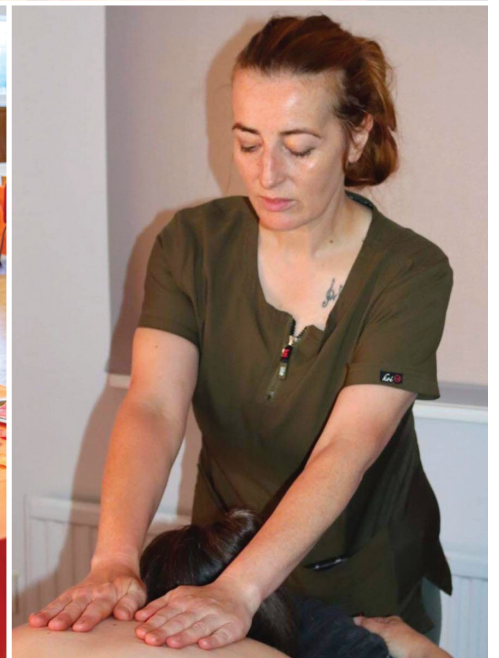
**The Covid-19 pandemic proved to be a very challenging and difficult time for all of us and so the lifting of restrictions provided a welcome boost and some fresh impetus.**

Staffing remained a challenge throughout the year, particularly the early part, where new Covid infections remained an almost a daily occurrence amongst staff. It is a testament to the wonderful people we have working for us, and their, at times selfless commitment, that we managed to navigate that period with very little impact on our ability to provide a normal service.

This commitment and effort was not without cost though and we were very aware of the toll that it had taken

on our staff and the need for us to acknowledge this. At the time, the Scottish Government had created a Workforce Wellbeing fund and following a successful application we organized a staff wellbeing week. Over the course of the week our staff were able to enjoy a mix of complementary relaxation sessions including Yoga, Massage, Reiki and Crystal Healing. The week culminated with a buffet and raffle and every staff member was also issued with a Wellbeing Gift Bag which was very well received.

# WELLNESS WEEK



# RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The pandemic experience not only produced a difficult environment for our existing staff, it exacerbated what was an already very challenging recruitment and retention situation.



The additional pressures Covid brought led to some staff deciding to leave and this combined with the comparatively poor terms and conditions and financial reward a job in social care is able to offer, we faced a perfect storm.

To address these challenges, we made two applications for money from the local council's Self-Directed Support Building Capacity Fund to help with recruitment and retention. With the first award we used the money to develop our website and for the commissioning of two promotional videos. The videos can be viewed on the website. With the second award our focus was more on retention rather than recruitment and a request was made for funding to make a one-off payment of £400 to each of our staff with a recognised qualification in return for a commitment



to stay for two years. We also requested money to fund a part time role designed to provide support to those struggling with gaining a qualification or meeting their CPD obligations.

On receipt of the award we increased the amount to £750 at our own expense and made a commitment to continue paying it to staff in the future either arriving with a qualification or obtaining one during employment with us. In January we also started offering existing employees up to £250 for referring a new member of staff to the organisation and issued everyone with a winter wellbeing bag.



The health and social care crisis, the cost of living crisis and the ongoing uncertainty around the future of the economy, mean that we will continue to operate in a difficult environment for the foreseeable future. We are confident though that we are doing all that we can to both look after our staff and encourage people thinking about a career in social care to come and join us.

# 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Potential Living turned 40 in 2022 and we presented Anne Clements with some flowers and chocolates to celebrate her being with us on every step of our 40 year journey!

Anne was one of the original residents of VAMW House and still lives in her own tenancy in the same street - she is pictured in her home with her gifts and with members of the management team who visited her on the day.



# CARE INSPECTORATE REPORT

The most recent inspection took place in 2023 and we were graded very good in the following areas:

## Care and Support



**VERY GOOD**

## Quality of Leadership



**VERY GOOD**

Since our last inspection, we have constantly sought to evolve, engage, reflect and work in partnership with all of our stakeholders to ensure that we continue to improve our planning, practice and processes to best meet the needs of the people we work for. We are very proud of our achievements.

### What the inspector wrote:

“ People had a lot of opportunities to engage in community activity as well as having a high quality of life at home.”

### What people told the inspector:

“ Really glad I chose Potential Living. Interviewed a few companies but they stood out. Glad I picked them.”

# FONDLY REMEMBERED

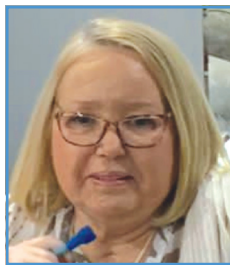
Sadly in the last year we lost six incredible people who we had the privilege of working for over a large number of years.



**Mark Friar**



**Richard Kirk**



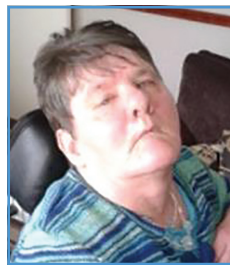
**Teresa Ward**



**Eddie Christie**



**Mary Murphy**



**Mary Gold**



**Bobby Hill**

We were saddened by the passing of long term board member, Bobby Hill, in November 2022. Bobby became a board member in May 1995 but in reality had been involved with the organisation for many years before that.

Bobby, an electrician, carried out lots of work in VAMW House in the 80's and continued to do "odd jobs" for the organisation up until his passing. This also included his other love of woodworking where he made garden planters, tables and chairs to raise funds.

Bobby enjoyed his weekly visits to the admin team to sign any cheques and to have a few biscuits and a coffee. He was well known and loved by staff and Focus People and his presence and knowledge of the history of the organisation is sorely missed.

# LONG SERVICE AWARDS

In December we held our annual long service awards in VAMW House. We celebrated 265 years service between 19 staff.



Jim Harper greeting Roddy like he hadn't seen him for 19 of the 20 years he has been with us.

Well Done Jim!!

# TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

We continued with our normal mandatory and service specific training throughout the year to ensure that our staff are as prepared and up to date as they can be. Using money from the Workforce Development Fund and in partnership with New College Lanarkshire, we were also able to offer training in the following areas:

- Personal Development
- Minute Taking
- Safeguarding & Coaching
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Powerpoint

Throughout the year we continued to develop our relationship with Kaizen Training who took over providing our Care About Rights training and also started providing Time Management and Leadership Training to our managers.

In relation to service specific training our staff working with one individual told us that they would benefit from

training in Bolus Feeding and abdominal massage. This was provided by Abbott Nutrition and Glasgow Caledonian University respectively. We also sourced and provided Dementia Awareness Training and our own CALM (Crisis, Aggression, Limitation & Management) Instructors David and Kevin, undertook additional qualifications in Escape Techniques to allow them train the staff in a particular team where they felt that this would be of benefit.

With consideration being given to the effects of the Covid pandemic and the cost of living crisis, we expanded our wellbeing efforts to also include Mental Health First Aid training for our managers. This will help to ensure that they are able to recognise and respond quickly when they suspect that one of their colleagues might be struggling.



## SURVEYS AND FEEDBACK

**Our Employee Survey was issued to staff at the end off 2022 beginning of 2023. A total of 32 forms were returned which included 24 from support workers and 8 from managers.**

The result of the survey overall was very positive with some indication of areas where we might be able to improve. These were;

- Look to develop our image and presence. Tell people what we do and how well we do it. This will have benefits for us in terms of recruitment and retention, both of which have become very important in the current climate.
- Maintain the focus on staff wellbeing through the promotion of other activities and events designed to promote this. It was particularly pleasing to witness from the responses how well received our efforts in this area had been.

### Some of the comments from respondents

- This is the best company I have worked for in terms of getting the balance of support right between focus people and staff.
- Potential Living is one of the best organisations I have ever worked with. The training is second to none and the quality of support given to the Focus People is exemplary.
- Potential Living is a great organisation - they truly have the best interests of the Focus People at the forefront of what they do.

**Our Stakeholders and Partners survey** was issued to family and friends of the people we work for, in addition to our colleagues in health and social work, at the end off 2022 beginning of 2023. A total of 22 forms were returned 15 from relatives and seven from professionals.

It was very humbling to observe how so many of our stakeholders recognise the good work that we do and had taken the time to acknowledge it and provide us with valuable feedback.



### Some of the comments from respondents

- Excellent care group, one of the best. I work in North and South Lanarkshire and wish all my patients had Potential Living Care staff. **Dietician**
- The care provided by Potential Living is excellent. I see proof of this in my happy brother, who is supported every day by a wonderful team who are very much appreciated. **Relative**
- Manager and Staff go above and beyond in their care duties. Always feel my brother is in safe care. The staff are a credit to Potential Living. **Relative**
- Pleasure to work with, maintain good communication and always want the best for their service users. **Social Worker**

**Our latest Service Satisfaction Survey** was issued to each of the people we work for in the first part of 2023. A total of 15 forms were returned. As in previous years we were pleased with the very positive results. 100% of the respondents told us that they were happy with the support they received in each of the identified areas of living.

### Some of the comments from respondents

- I like the staff that support me. The staff help me with lots of things.
- Very good and decent service. Roddy, Ann, Janice & Ian all the ideal thing and Emma and all the support workers too.
- Aye they help me to use my phone and laptop. I tell them when I am sad. I know everyone who helps me.
- Staff help me to get to my clubs. I enjoy going to clubs.

## MEETING WITH FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

**We were also delighted to be able to have our first meeting with family and friends of the people we work for following the outbreak of Covid.**

This was hosted by the Managing Director and all three Project Managers. Fifteen next of kin attended. The event showcased the new recruitment videos which included a mix of Focus People and commentary by various members of staff.

The recent inspection report and surveys were also discussed and the event concluded with a general Q&A session. One attendee commented on how well their relative was supported throughout Covid by staff known to them rather than Agency Staff. They had heard this was the case with other providers.

Feedback on the night was very positive, with a family member giving a vote of thanks that was then followed with a round of spontaneous applause!



## SELF EVALUATION

**Our Self Evaluation Group met throughout the year to enable us to reflect on what we are doing, so that we can get to know what we do well and identify what we need to do better.**

The group has representation from the people we work for, family members and staff at all levels from within the organisation. After initial meetings to establish the group and work out practicalities the group has now been using the Self Evaluation for Improvement Toolkit to explore

where we are at and how we can be better. A special thanks must go to our family member representatives Mhari Jones and Margaret Johnston for giving up their time to join us. It is very much appreciated. New members are always welcome.

## STAFF OPEN DOOR FORUM

**Our staff group met throughout the year to facilitate staff engagement, wellbeing and provide a platform for discussing any potential workplace issues.**

They made valuable contributions to the development of the website and the new recruitment videos and provided valuable feedback on the wellbeing packs and how their future use could be expanded. The group has also taken on a vital role in the formation and running of the quarterly awards for staff and staff teams who have performed exceptionally over the period.



## WHAT WE LEARNED

**From all of the feedback that we have received over the last year we learned that some people felt that they could be more included in the interview process.**

We also recognised that we need to maintain and increase our social media and recruitment activity to ensure that we can continue to provide the level of individualised support that we currently do without external help. We learned how much appreciation for this there is amongst family members. We were reminded

how lucky we are to have such dedicated and caring staff and of how important it is that we recognise this and do what we can to both reward and support them as much as the people we work for. We learned that some staff needed additional support with obtaining their SVQ and understanding the requirement for recording their CPD.

## MOVING FORWARD

**We need to identify people who are able and willing to participate in the first stage of the interview process and enlist their support to participate.**

For everyone - their wishes and preferences in relation recruitment and their level of participation should be recorded in their support plan. Where people are able to actively participate and wish to do so then they should be supported to develop their own set of interview questions.

We will continue to develop our website and social media presence to enhance our recruitment opportunities but also to recognise and celebrate the work that we do. Recruitment has proved difficult and in the present climate is likely to remain so. It is therefore important that we remain equally as focused on retention and valuing the staff that we already have.

Feedback indicates that the staff wellbeing events and care packages have been well received and this is something that we will maintain and develop in the future. We will also continue with the financial incentive to gain a qualification and the payments made to employees for referring someone they know.

We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in social work and health as this is a key driver of service development and success. We will develop ways to increase feedback and use this where appropriate to improve practice. This will link in with the ongoing work of the self evaluation group and inform our improvement plan.

## DUTY OF CANDOUR

**All health and social care services in Scotland must provide an annual duty of candour report for their service. As a supported living provider this information is sent to our regulator the Care Inspectorate.**

During the reporting period, 0 incidents triggered the Duty of Candour.

As no notifiable adverse events have occurred in the past year, there is no specific learning to report as a result of any having taken place. Our Policies, procedures and Practices therefore remain unchanged as may have been necessary otherwise.

If you would like more information about this report, please contact us using these details:

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A full set of accounts for Potential Living can be found at both Companies House  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house)

and The Office of the Charity Regulator (OSCR)  
[www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)