



Our strategy

April 2020 - March 2023

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Appendix 1 – our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Appendix 2 – 2020/21 annual plan

Where we are now:

1. Our vision, mission and values

Our vision is to give people who are homeless, vulnerable or in need of support, the opportunity to build a brighter future

Our mission is to provide safe, flexible and reliable client led housing and support services that focus on reducing homelessness, improving health and wellbeing and building on individual's skills and resilience.

Our values are:

- Integrity
- Resilience
- Empowering
- Inclusive
- Proactive

2. Who we are

We were formed in 2001 through the merger of St Petroc and St Dismas. We offer housing, and support services in Berkshire, Hampshire (including Portsmouth and Southampton), the Isle of Wight and West Sussex. We've been accepted on frameworks to provide services in Hampshire, Surrey and on the Isle of Wight. Our head office is in Fareham in Hampshire. We're a registered community benefit society with charitable objectives, a registered provider and member of the National Housing Federation and Homeless Link.

We make a difference by providing approximately 700 places of hostel and resettlement accommodation and support a further 500 clients. We employ approximately 250 people and around 60 relief workers.

We have a turnover of approximately £13 million and reserves of over £3 million. We receive approximately £7.8 million a year from support contracts, donations and other income and £5.2 million a year in rent income.

We have strong governance, but continually review this to ensure our board has the required skills and experience in an ever more difficult operating environment.

3. Where we work and what we do

We work in:

- Hampshire (including Portsmouth and Southampton) – 85% of what we do
- The Isle of Wight
- West Berkshire
- West Sussex

We provide the following services:

- Single homelessness – 85% of what we do
- Young people and some young families
- Mental health

Plus a few other services including for refugees and former offenders

We aim to own or lease as many of the buildings we operate out of as possible.

We work with clients to enable them to develop personalised support plans. We aim to keep clients safe and work with them to develop their confidence and skills to help them move into independent accommodation, maintain their home and find meaningful activity.

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4. Our context

The political and social context we operate in is shaped by both central and local government policies. We work alongside local authorities, health service providers and other agencies.

Our agenda has been dominated by working in a period of austerity, with reductions in our rent income, public expenditure and the reform of welfare benefits. Since 2010, rough sleeping has increased by 168% and there are now over 4,500 people sleeping rough in England every night. In 2018 the government announced their strategy to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. Funding has been made available, but this has been short term and lacks strategic focus. As a result, rough sleeping has not reduced and if the government's approach doesn't change, they're unlikely to achieve their objectives.

Our clients are often socially excluded, have complex needs and chaotic lives. They may have been affected by a range of factors including family breakdown, debt, addiction and worklessness. As a result, it can be difficult for them to stay safe and find and keep accommodation or employment.

5. Our culture

We've developed a culture that's characterised by:

- high quality affordable services that are personalised and meet the needs of each client
- a focus on safeguarding and health & safety
- psychologically informed environments
- client empowerment in all aspects of services, including opportunities for client challenge, scrutiny and feedback, leading to service improvement
- recruiting excellent staff and volunteers, developing skills and rewarding people for their positive contribution
- strong leadership by our board, senior management team and managers
- excellent governance through a strong and experienced board that gives clear strategic direction and scrutinises financial and performance outcomes
- effective risk management to ensure our business is sustainable with a strong reputation
- strong performance management, ensuring high performance from our staff at all times, to ensure we deliver the standards and outcomes required by our commissioners
- a values based culture across the organisation

Where we want to be:

6. Our starting point

In developing our strategy, we looked at our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and these are set out in appendix I. Our stakeholders tell us we have a strong reputation for working with vulnerable and marginalised people and for putting our clients at the heart of everything we do. As well as being homeless, many of our clients have other complex challenges including offending behaviour, substance misuse, mental and physical health problems.

We regularly carry out client and staff surveys and the outcomes from these influence the development of our strategy.

We're in a relatively strong financial position and are prepared to consider investment in riskier 'boundary pushing' or 'value added' initiatives linked to our mission.

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7. Our destination

After careful consideration during the development of this strategy, we believe over the next three years we need to aim to:

- be the leading provider of accommodation and support for vulnerable people across our area of operation
- make our services on the Isle of Wight financially sustainable
- provide support to approximately 1,000 people a year
- develop new services including for women and housing first
- deliver our services within psychologically informed environments
- have a focus on safeguarding and health & safety
- Consolidate and expand our services in our current geography
- specialise in providing accommodation and high quality support for single homeless and young people and those with poor mental health – but also provide accommodation and services to other vulnerable people including young families, offenders, refugees and those with addictions
- highlight the impact of health inequalities
- increase the number of properties we own, with a focus on the buildings we use to provide support and ensure these remain safe and fit for purpose
- proactively seek strategic partnerships by providing evidence to commissioners and other providers of the benefits of long-term relationships

We also need to be financially competitive and sustainable. We believe that to be competitive we need to maintain our turnover at no less than £13 million a year, whilst keeping our overheads competitive. We anticipate our turnover will increase to approximately £17 million a year within the next three years and our governance and management arrangements need to be fit for purpose to manage this level of turnover.

8. Our strategic commitments

Our strategy is based on us committing to:

- Providing safe, flexible and reliable client led housing and support services
- developing our people
- developing our organisation

The next sections of this strategy look at each of these commitments in more detail.

Providing safe, flexible and reliable client led housing and support services

To achieve this our commitments are to:

- be contract compliant in all of our services
- provide services in psychologically informed environments by upgrading our existing accommodation or buying or building new accommodation
- provide opportunities for clients to engage in meaningful activity to develop skills and resilience and reduce isolation
- maintain strong and meaningful client involvement with clear links to our governance
- co-produce solutions with our clients
- maximise opportunities for staff to use technology to deliver services and enhance clients' information and communication technology skills
- ensure our services are safe and secure
- provide new services for homeless or vulnerable people

Developing our people

In developing our people our commitments are to:

- have engaged and motivated staff who share our values
- be a values based organisation
- have well trained and equipped staff, volunteers and peer mentors
- involve staff in decisions that affect them
- use reflective practice to improve and maintain staff welfare and increase staff resilience
- have low staff turnover so clients benefit from consistency

Developing our organisation

In developing our organisation our commitments are to:

- secure our current services through competitive high quality tendering or negotiation
- grow the organisation in line with our strategy
- acquire more accommodation with a focus on the buildings we use to provide support
- consider the possibility of strategic partnerships or mergers if these strengthen the organisation and provide benefits to clients and staff
- have a sustainable financial plan that is rigorously stress tested
- deliver value for money and protect and maximise our income
- improve our efficiency through a programme of transformation
- have strong governance
- engage our stakeholders in our work and be seen as thought leaders

How we're going to get there:

9. Our business development and development strategies

Our business development and development strategies involve building on our reputation to grow our services in the following ways:

- consolidating and expanding our work in Berkshire, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and West Sussex
- being creative, agile and responsive to the needs of vulnerable people and to the requirements of commissioning partners – we'll seek new partnerships and sources of funding, and pilot new ways of working
- learning from our research on psychologically informed environments and using this to inform future service delivery models
- taking opportunities to increase the number of properties we own and ensuring these are all high quality, with a focus on the buildings we use to provide support – we anticipate providing approximately 60 bed spaces over the next three years
- looking at the possibilities of working or merging with other organisations, if this strengthens the organisation and provides benefits to clients and staff
- continuing to improve our communication and visibility so commissioners and other funders and supporters know what we stand for and the positive outcomes we achieve for our clients

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- being open and approachable in working in partnership with local authorities and other commissioners, seeking solutions to funding pressures that still allow us to offer good quality services
- providing clients with opportunities for meaningful activity
- considering ways to develop alternative income streams to support the work we do and protect this from financial pressures

10. Our quality

We have effective systems in place to show we meet regulatory and quality standards. We aim to ensure that all our services continuously improve to meet the changing needs and aspirations of clients, are affordable to commissioners and are provided in psychologically informed ways. We embrace the spirit of co-creation to involve our clients in designing services, setting service standards and reviewing performance. We'll continually improve services, so they meet expressed needs and respond to client feedback.

We have a strong focus on our efficiency and effectiveness and on providing value for money. Over the next three years we'll increase the pace of this through a transformation programme.

Our values-based approach to recruiting, managing and retaining staff also has a positive impact on quality and safety.

We're aware of the importance of the environmental impact of our work and will be looking at ways we can minimise this.

11. Delivering our strategy

Our objectives for each year will appear in annual plans. These will set out the steps we'll take to achieve our objectives and ensure our culture is embedded throughout the organisation.

Our 2020/21 annual plan is attached as appendix 2.

The board will receive reports in November and May each year on the delivery of our annual plans.

Each February the board will review this strategy and set a plan for the coming year.