

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL (KNOWN AS CROSSREACH BOARD) MAY 2023

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

National Care Service

2. Note the report which has been published by the Archbishop's Commission and instruct the Social Care Council, in partnership with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, to continue to engage with the Scottish Government in the development of a National Care Service, and urge the Scottish Government to respect the views of care service providers and service users and their families for the implementation and delivery of a National Care Service which:
 - a. Promotes co-design and co-production of services between commissioners, service providers and service users.
 - b. Makes Scottish Government ministerial accountability clear and transparent.
 - c. Makes sure that the principles of a National Care Service are based on values which protect and uphold human rights and dignity.
 - d. Respects the Fair Work Convention recommendation for Fair Pay across the whole sector.

Drug Deaths

3. Welcome the investment in residential rehabilitation services and note the excellent progress made in the recovery volunteers programme, recognising the importance of this in reducing stigma and opening up opportunities for those affected by alcohol and drug use.
4. Instruct CrossReach to work alongside the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and give advice on the information being developed to support the work of local congregations in order to reduce stigma in relation to those affected by alcohol and drug use.

Dementia Strategy

5. Endorse the roll out of the Heart for Art groups and recognise the potential for further collaborative working between CrossReach and local congregations in order to support those living with dementia and their carers.

Workforce Matters

6. Note the huge challenges in recruiting to posts in social care, commend the existing workforce for their dedication and commitment so that supported people of all ages can continue to live life to the full and encourage Presbyteries to engage in this issue as a matter of urgency by using their networks to distribute CrossReach recruitment resources.

Presbytery Promise And Support From Congregations

7. Encourage Presbyteries to explore the many opportunities which exist within the 'Share the Love' initiative and to share these with congregations in order to find areas of mutual interest and raise vital funds for both CrossReach and congregations as part of their commitment to the Presbytery Promise.

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2023, the Archbishop's Commission of the Church of England¹ published a report entitled 'Care and Support Re-Imagined'. While the recommendations are directed towards the future of social care in England, many of the challenges it examines resonate with the current situation in Scotland. It talks of the true nature of social care being misunderstood, a system where those receiving care and those working to support them are undervalued, an uneven access to care along with a growing number of people in need of it, and inequity in the way in which it is funded.

1.2 It is, however, clear about the need for the Church to support change in the social care system. The Commission's report states that it is *"underpinned by several theological considerations, but there are two which have heavily influenced our conclusions. One is the belief that every one of us has been created in the Image of God (Genesis 1. 27); which means that we are all a 'gift', valued for who we are not what we produce. The other is a command (which recurs in Scripture) to love one another. The ultimate expression of this is Jesus Christ, who serves both as model and guide for how we should live and care for others."*

1.3 It goes on to talk about good quality social care, founded on supportive relationships "being a way to ensure human flourishing; or, to use the language of the bible 'Life in all its fullness'."

1.4 It also stresses the importance of valuing those who provide care, paid and unpaid.

1.5 This year, the report of the Social Care Council (CrossReach Board) explains the changes that are happening now, within Scotland's own social care system and how the Church here can get involved in helping to shape the future. It will then go on to outline how CrossReach already works in a variety of settings to promote fullness of life and reduce stigma across the life course, supporting the Church of Scotland to fulfil the third mark of mission through responding to human need by loving service. It will explore the importance of and investment in resources, including the workforce, buildings, and wider infrastructure as enablers to doing care and support well. Finally, it will outline the financial situation and the steps being taken to improve this and secure services so that those in vulnerable situations can continue to access the support they need for the future.

2. A NATIONAL CARE SERVICE FOR SCOTLAND

2.1 Here, in Scotland, where is wrestling with many of the challenges outlined above, The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill has already been laid down in Parliament. This has the intention of bringing about a National Care Service which will put care services under the same ministerial accountability as the NHS. The Bill intends to drive positive change for supported people and for the workforce but there are a number of concerns about the Bill as presented, not least about the cost of the restructure, the impacts on supported people, and the potential loss of local control. Whilst recognising that much change is necessary, CrossReach, along with other third sector providers of social care, holds reservations about the Bill as it stands. Many of the concerning issues have been shared widely by the third sector representative body, the Coalition of Care Providers Scotland (CCPS). CrossReach has been accepted on to the NCS Stakeholder Register and is working with employees and supported people to ensure that their views are represented as the exact provisions in the legislation are worked through. The Faith Impact Forum have also been active in this area, supporting CrossReach and the wider Church to have their voice heard during the consultation phases of the Bill passing through Parliament. It is not yet clear what impact the National Care Service will have on CrossReach, or the social care activities run by many churches up and down the country, but what is clear is that there are a number of important principles which must be evidenced if this legislation is to bring around a change in the way social care is funded, accessed and delivered. It is here that the Church, its congregations, and the communities in which it is active, can exert influence to ensure that this Bill allows people to 'live the full life for which we were created'.

2.2 The Bill should include provision for:

- A human rights based approach where promoting choice and control for individuals receiving support is at the centre of a new National Care Service.
- A provision for Fair Work to be extended to all employees working in social care operating directly under or commissioned by the National Care Service.
- A clear understanding of the position of third-party providers in a National Care Service and how they relate to what is being proposed.
- Clear and transparent accountability for the good running of the service, within legislation which recognises that the National Care Service is overseen directly by Scottish Parliament ministers.

2.3 Collaboration with the Faith Impact Forum and other social care providers will continue throughout the next year on this wide reaching piece of legislation which promises the biggest shake up in services since the NHS, should the Bill be passed.

3 FULLNESS OF LIFE

3.1 Making a difference

3.1.1 CrossReach, meanwhile, continues to offer services to those in need of care and support across the life course. From early years to older age, it serves thousands of people in vulnerable situations every year in both residential and community settings. A list of services, with the geographical areas covered, is at Appendix 1. Specialisms include work with older people (including dementia specific support) and work with adults affected by mental health, homelessness, criminal justice, learning disability, and substance use. Services within the children and families division include small houses for children in care, an education campus for children who struggle with mainstream schooling, early years and family outreach services and counselling services, both generic and also with a specific focus such as perinatal mental health and substance use.

3.2 Quality services

3.2.1 Many of the services are registered with the Care Inspectorate who grade services depending on a number of quality indicators which are underpinned by a set of standards:

1. I experience high quality care and support that is right for me.
2. I am fully involved in all decisions about my care and support.
3. I have confidence in the people who support and care for me.
4. I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support.
5. I experience a high quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.

3.2.2 Services are graded as to how well they do on a scale of 1 (unsatisfactory) to 6 (excellent) and although scores do vary between our 55 registered services the overall average is:

Quality Indicator	Wellbeing	Leadership and Management	Staffing	Setting	Care and Support Planned
Grade	4.1	4.3	4.3	3.7	4.2

3.3 Having a voice

3.3.1 As well as being subject to external scrutiny, CrossReach has a number of ways in which it asks for feedback on services in order to ensure that people's rights are being protected and that they (or a nominated carer) are at the heart of making decisions about their own support. This also helps improve services and shape them for the future.

3.3.2 The most recent service user survey key findings indicated that:

- 92.4% of the people who responded strongly agreed or agreed with the question "I can control my own care and support if this is what I want."
- 97.8% strongly agreed or agreed "I am supported and encouraged to be as independent as I can be."

- 96.5% strongly agreed or agreed “I am supported to understand and uphold my rights.”
- 90.1% strongly agreed or agreed “I am supported to communicate in a way that is right for me, at my own pace, by people who are sensitive to me and my needs.”

Comments included:

- “Overall, we find all the staff devote their time and attention to (person’s) needs above and beyond their brief.”
- “The support I get in here is with the upmost respect.”
- “I feel that the support I need is always at hand and anytime I have an issue or problem that I don’t understand the staff are always there to help.”

3.3.3 In addition to the service user survey, a number of forums are in place to ensure the voices of our supported people are heard directly.

3.3.4 The CrossReach National Learning Disability Forum, is the largest of these forums bringing people who use the learning disability services from Stonehaven, down to Hamilton, together in one place. 2022 saw people coming back together physically, rather than online, and was hosted by Gorgie, Stenhouse and Dalry Parish Church. The National Learning Disability Forum is customer organised and led by staff lending a helping hand where called upon to do so. The Moderator opened the event which was a genuine celebration of achievements and a real illustration of how many of the customers of that service are living life to the fullest possible, with the appropriate support.

3.3.5 2022 also saw the first of our ‘World Café’ events where supported people from different services came together to share their views of the care and support they receive from CrossReach indicating what would make it better for them. It provided good insight into the culture of the organisation as a whole. Recommendations from the day have been shared by those attending and will inform decision making for the future.

3.4 Measuring the change

3.4.1 The CrossReach Impact Report gives more information about CrossReach services and the positive change it makes for service users <https://www.crossreach.org.uk/impact2023>. Three areas in which the organisation has been particularly active over the past year, are around drugs deaths, Scotland’s National Dementia Strategy and The Promise, which are outlined further in sections 4, 5 and 6.

4. DRUGS DEATHS

4.1 The situation around the high level of drugs deaths in Scotland has been highlighted in the report of the Faith Impact Forum. CrossReach fully supports the notion that people can recover, that all lives are worth living and recognises that for many, the roots of adult drug and alcohol use lie in adverse childhood experiences. The organisation remains very active in this area, providing direct services to people who wish to tackle their substance use, and also early intervention initiatives for children affected by parental substance use at the Sunflower Garden Project. For adults, there are two routes to getting support through CrossReach services, either by moving towards total abstinence or by deciding to adopt an approach which sees the harms of drug and alcohol use reduced by changing behaviours. Some 178 people accessed the specialist residential rehabilitation programmes at CrossReach Recovery Services (Rainbow House) in Glasgow or Beechwood House in Inverness over the past year, many of whom then went on to take up a supported tenancy at the Move On services; Whiteinch (Glasgow) or Cale House (Inverness). There, people are supported to live independently and rebuild a life where substance use is not at the centre, by paying attention to relationships and the activities they get involved in. The success of these programmes has been recognised by Scottish Government who have awarded CrossReach £2.4 million to extend capacity at Beechwood House under the new Residential Rehab Rapid Capacity Programme which will allow around 22 more placements, 36% added capacity, to be offered from late 2024 onwards.

4.2 The Recovery Volunteers Programme, which sees people who have been through one of the services being trained and equipped to support others, continues to go from strength to strength. Angela Constance MSP (Minister for Drugs Policy) was the keynote speaker at the 14th recovery volunteers graduation ceremony which saw 35 people recognised for completing the training course, many accompanied by family and friends. They will now go on to mentor others at the beginning of their recovery journey either in one of our own services or further afield. Some of our past graduates are now employees with one going on to help lead the peer volunteer training course. It is always humbling to hear from those who have tackled their substance use and who are looking forward to a brighter future filled with hope.

4.3 *“CrossReach is a brilliant organisation who make you feel part of something and when you leave their Service they still keep in touch with you and continue to support you. I was in a very bad place abusing drugs on a regular basis for number of years, I dont want to use an old cliché but if i can do it anyone can do it.”*

4.4 A family member spoke movingly at the event about how they had thought their daughter was lost to them, but how proud they were of her achievements and their own hope, as a family, for the future.

4.5 One of the graduates, who has been through both residential rehabilitation and move on services in Glasgow and is now a staff member, was also recognised for his skills in supporting and motivating others by reaching the finals of the Scottish Social Services Awards 2022 in the Bright Spark Category.

4.6 *“I got treated with love and compassion and respect and all those things when I was here. It’s just great to be on the other side of the table and to be able to give that to somebody else and hopefully they find their own path in life. That’s what it’s all about and I love the fact that it’s called ‘Move On’ because that’s what it’s all about. You want to inspire people to live independently and move on with their life.”*

5. SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL DEMENTIA STRATEGY AND CONSULTATION

5.1 CrossReach remains an active partner in the Scottish Government dementia strategy and is recognised for its skills and expertise in this area. The current strategy is in the process of being rewritten and responses are being sought by way of a wide consultation to which CrossReach will respond.² CrossReach runs 6 specialist dementia care homes in Ayr, Johnstone, Polmont, Edinburgh, Inverness and Glasgow and has rolled out a dementia ambassadors programme in each of its other 9 care homes with all staff undertaking skills for excellence training in dementia. One of the innovations, Heart for Art which was initially supported by Guild Funding and went on to attract Life Changes Trust funding, is well established. There is now a successful model of collaboration with a number of churches who have generously offered up premises, funding and volunteers to minister to their own communities through this therapeutic arts based initiative designed for people living with dementia and their carers. The latest groups are based in Dunfermline Abbey and Morningside Parish Church, bringing the total to 18 groups and supporting around 300 participants every year.

5.2 In November 2022, CrossReach Heart for Art reached the finals of the LUMINATE Scotland Creative Ageing Awards in the social care and creativity category and were represented at a ceremony in Scottish Parliament. One of the individual artists, who is also registered blind, was nominated in the outstanding older artists category and made the final three. He has acknowledged that Heart for Art has been able to rekindle a passion for art after thinking he would never paint again saying, *"I was able to discover new ways of approaching painting which has been enlightening and life changing."*

5.3 There is also a clear benefit for carers. A wife of one of the artists commented:
"On my own, I can't provide the stimulation and activities Norrie needs and his art class meets so many needs. I know he's engaged and happy; he comes back with a bounce in his step and a feeling of worth."

6. KEEPING THE PROMISE

6.1 CrossReach continues to lead the way in #KeepThePromise which is a national commitment to children and young people in vulnerable situations to give them the best start in life possible. This includes improving family support where families are struggling, and ultimately working to reduce the numbers of children who are looked after out with their own families. Where children are living in a care setting it makes several recommendations for those delivering the care to ensure that they build a positive experience for children so that they can feel loved and move on with confidence to a future bright with potential.

6.2 One of the ways in which CrossReach has responded is to offer trauma informed training to the children's workforce across all services. These include the Prison Visitors Centres at HMPYOI Polmont and HMP Perth which support families visiting loved ones held in these establishments and in the Daisy Chain Project in Govanhill which is an early years project supporting marginalised families in an area of urban deprivation. The staff report feeling more confident in working with families in these settings, more able to start difficult conversations and signpost to the right sort of help as needed. At the heart lies the ability to make relationships and to really listen. The service leader at Daisy Chain reports: *"Being trauma informed allowed us to understand the importance of allowing space for our children to express their feelings in a group, without repercussions of shame or consequence. We endeavour to provide them with loving boundaries for them to feel safe and held, visible, and important"*. It is not all about talking though, for example, at the Visitors Centres, a number of practical steps have been taken to provide toys and furniture which can help children to manage difficult emotions before or after a prison visit.

6.3 CrossReach looks after up to 25 children and young people in 7 small community houses and operates a small school in Erskine for up to 30 children who find mainstream schooling particularly challenging. An increasing number of children are day pupils placed from neighbouring Local Authorities. It is in these settings where CrossReach becomes an alternative family for these children and young people. Much work has been undertaken to ensure that children have the best experiences possible and understand that their voices are important in telling staff what works for them and improving services so that they have the best chance to thrive.

6.4 This work has led to the creation of a sector-leading practice model, one of the first of its type, outlining the Care and Education Services relational model of care to support children and young people, which will be formally launched later this year.

6.5 The Care Inspectorate have noticed the great practice in these settings and on a recent inspection at two of the children's houses awarded a 5 (Very Good) for quality of care and commented particularly positively on the quality of relationships between children and staff members which evidenced humour, affection, respect and love.

7. WORKFORCE MATTERS

7.1 None of the work that is undertaken by CrossReach can be done without a competent, experienced and caring workforce. Individual staff members are registered with the appropriate professional body, the majority being registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC dictates the level of qualification needed for each role and puts a time limit on staff to achieve these qualifications. It requires commitment, dedication and expertise to work through each module and meet the professional standards laid down.

7.2 However, the past year has seen existing staff teams under immense strain due to the well-publicised difficulties in recruitment across the whole social care sector and beyond. As a result, there is a heavy reliance on agency staffing in some service areas, which impacts on both the continuity of relationships with supported people, as well as hitting the finances hard.

As of February 2023, the employment picture showed:

- Number of Employees overall 1497 full time equivalent (FTE).
- Number of employees on relief contracts, in accordance with employee choice 369.
- Current Vacancies over all sections 215 (FTE).

7.3 The staffing deficit has inevitably had an impact on services, and in some areas, services have been reduced, closed or temporarily unable to offer support to new service users until contingency plans have been put in place.

7.4 The current level of vacancies is a matter of extreme concern to the Corporate Management Team and Board of CrossReach and will take significant efforts to continue to address the gaps in staff teams. There are a number of initiatives in place to retain existing staff as well as recruit to vacancies, but given market competition within the sector, the fact that Local Authority terms and conditions are superior, and that there are competing sectors such as retail and hospitality, this is now extremely challenging.

7.5 The support of Presbyteries and the wider Church to help advertise vacancies widely across their networks is asked for at this General Assembly. Information to help those willing to do so will be made available.

7.6 The existing managers and staff teams are to be highly commended for their willingness to cover for vacancies, wherever possible, whilst keeping quality up at this challenging time.

7.7 Despite the challenges for the workforce one of the highlights of the last year was the Employee Awards event which took place in October 2022. Master of Ceremonies Jason Leitch, joined with the Moderator in praising the dedication, commitment and achievements of the CrossReach staff teams who were recognised in a number of ways including gaining qualifications, excellent practice, innovation and long service.

7.8 *"I want to say a huge congratulations to all of you. As I shared at the virtual event there were over 100 nominations received so the fact that you have been selected as finalists is a huge achievement...It's fantastic to see people who are so dedicated to developing not only their own practice but sharing that passion and support to develop others."*

8. FAIR PAY AND LIVING WAGE

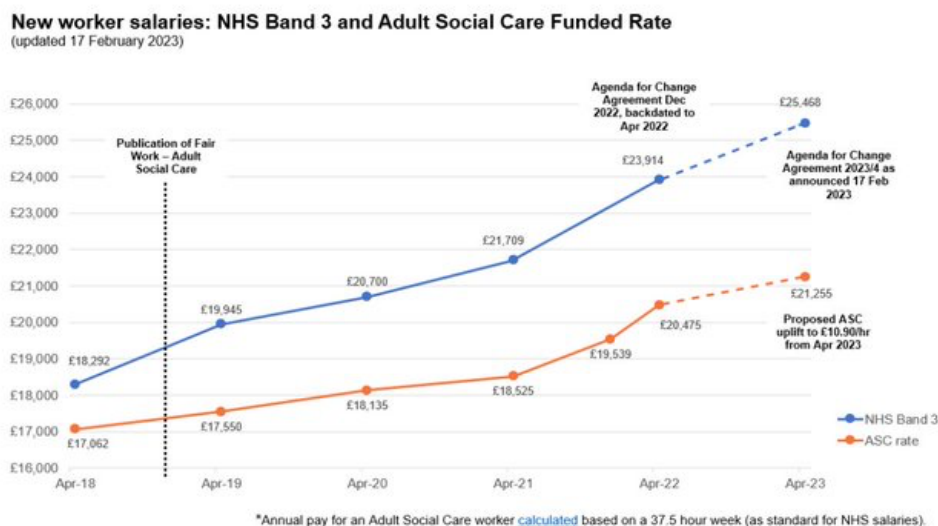
8.1 One of the challenges to recruitment is the issue of Fair Pay. While the National Care Service could make a difference to the way in which the sector is recognised in the future, for now the issue of Fair Work and Fair Pay in the sector remains contentious.

8.2 In June 2022, the CrossReach Board made the decision to ensure that every member of staff was paid at least the Real Living Wage (RLW) as part of its own response to the pressures around terms and conditions for the workforce. Despite the ambition of the Board to consolidate RLW, this was agreed as a temporary arrangement until the next uplift was announced, and the risks of consolidating could be reassessed. The financing of this move was made possible by a combination of Government funding through contracts, charitable funding and support from the Assembly Trustees. This has been a long-held ambition for CrossReach and was warmly welcomed by staff.

8.3 Since then, the situation has changed and the early announcement of the Real Living Wage to help combat the cost of living crisis has not yet been fully matched by Government funding for the social care workforce. There is no provision made for a number of our services including the entire children and families division. This seems fundamentally unfair and the case for parity of pay across the sector continues to be made by CrossReach and wider representative bodies.

8.4 It is anticipated that in June 2023, the CrossReach Board will be able to consider again its position on RLW as the settlements from Local Authorities, under which CrossReach operates the majority of its contracts, are announced for the year April 2023 – March 2024.

8.5 It is increasingly clear that the currently proposed 3.8% uplift for social care staff, which falls well behind NHS and other service sectors, will have a profound impact on people making career choices for the future. The gap between social care staff in the voluntary and independent sectors against the NHS equivalent grades is illustrated by the following graph.



8.6 The social care pay gap issue is further illustrated by the Community Integrated Care supplementary report which clearly demonstrates the disadvantage in pay to those working in the social care sector. <https://www.unfairtocare.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Unfair-to-Care-Scotland-Supplementary-Publication-Final.pdf>.

8.7 The Chief Executive Officer remains very active around the wider issue of Fair Work in Social Care and has made direct representation on this issue to the Scottish Government outlining the challenges for CrossReach and the sector as a whole in collaboration with colleagues from CCPS and Scottish Care.

9. OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENT

9.1 CrossReach continues to operate with an Occupational Requirement, under the provisions of the Equality Act 2018, which allows it to recruit only Christian applicants for certain posts. Over the past year, the Board have asked a small working group to look at how this was being applied in order to ensure that it continued to be appropriate, proportionate and that it was couched in accessible language. Recommendations will be put before the Board in June 2023.

9.2 One of the areas the working group has been looking into is wellbeing of staff, specifically how spiritual wellbeing might be incorporated into the wider health and wellbeing initiatives being applied across the workforce. Discussions are now taking place with the Faith Action Forum around a model of chaplaincy which might provide a helpful way forward.

10. BUILDINGS

10.1 Fullness of life can only be enhanced if the environments in which people live, work and receive support are fit for purpose.

10.2 Over the past few years, CrossReach has made significant inroads into assessing its buildings and making strategic investment where necessary and as appropriate. This has seen the children's services benefit from the building of a new school and the purchase or lease of small houses for children to call home for as long as needed.

10.3 In Adult Care, a programme of refurbishment over the past year has seen a transformed Cunningham House in the Grassmarket in Edinburgh so that those who are homeless can enjoy a safe space and take time to get life back on track. A recent application to the General Trustees for a loan will see Gaberston House in Alloa, home to 14 people with severe and enduring mental illness, rebuilt into self-contained flats where they can enjoy a greater degree of independence while being well supported.

10.4 In our homes for older people, a programme of refurbishment is being carried out to enhance the experience of residents and ensure that the homes meet current care standards and are fit for purpose for the future.

10.5 Attention to the physical environment will remain a key priority for the organisation over the next year, with a number of other initiatives for building investment under active consideration.

11. NET CARBON ZERO

11.1 While not restricted to buildings, the aspiration to reach the Net Carbon Zero target for 2030 will partly depend on how we manage our properties and the infrastructure that surrounds them. The Board have commissioned an assessment of six properties in the early part of 2023 with a view to understanding more about CrossReach's current carbon footprint, and the steps that can be taken to reduce this. Action has already been taken to reduce travel and to introduce energy efficiency measures. The results of the work being undertaken will be fed into the wider Net Zero strategy group but there is concern that without significant investment of time and resources, CrossReach will fall short of reaching the 2030 target. This remains work in progress.

12. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

12.1 The Board is working to a clear and well thought through IT strategy which addresses issues of cyber security and data management as well as supporting technology enabled care. One of the major achievements for 2022 was introducing a Care Management System into each of CrossReach's care homes for older people. This reduces the administrative burden for staff, allows better visibility of care plans, and keeps track of various measures of frailty, allowing fast action to be taken as necessary. This has been a huge undertaking for both the IT team and older people service staff but has been declared a significant success in both the way it was implemented and its ongoing benefit to all.

13. PRESBYTERY PROMISE AND SUPPORT FROM CONGREGATIONS

13.1 CrossReach acknowledges that this is a hugely difficult time across every part of the Church and would wish to record thanks for the generosity which continues to be shown to the organisation by Presbyteries, congregations, and the national church offices. Now that the Presbytery planning programme is well underway, work to engage in the most appropriate manner will be taken forward.

13.2 One of the new initiatives, launched by CrossReach in January 2023, is the 'Share the Love' campaign, a loving partnership with mutual benefit tackling areas of identified need. The campaign outlines ways in which churches can collaborate with CrossReach in fundraising for local initiatives as well as for CrossReach services. With over 30 partner churches and groups so far, feedback has been positive supporting renewed relationships between churches and CrossReach Services all over Scotland. The CrossReach Board would want to encourage Presbyteries to promote this initiative to their congregations: <https://www.crossreach.org.uk/love>

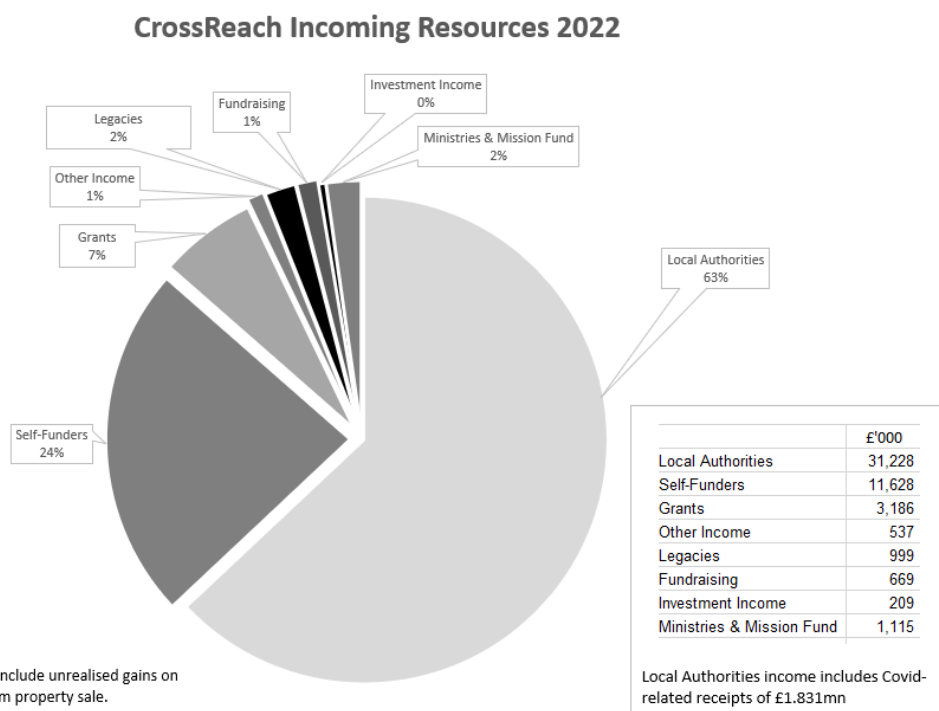
13.3 Take up of the opportunity to pray with CrossReach and for our services has been good since the launch of the prayer app in 2022 and this has been appreciated throughout the organisation.

13.4 CrossReach would also wish to extend thanks to the Right Rev Iain Greenshields, during his time as Moderator, for his support and encouragement over the course of the year and for his sensitive and appropriate engagement with both the services and the wider political issues around social care.

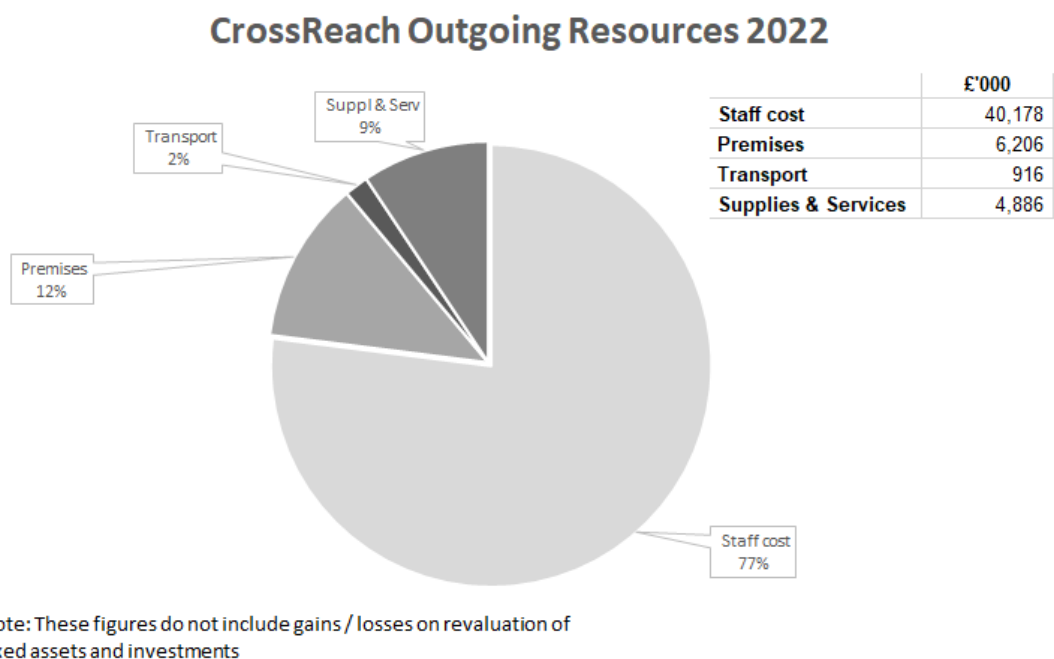
14. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2022

14.1 The graphs below show the profile of income and expenditure in 2022.

Graph A: Incoming Resources for 2022



Graph B: Outgoing Resources for 2022



14.2 2022 was a financially challenging year for CrossReach with Service Delivery costs up by 7.5%, whereas income from Charitable Activities only rose by 3.6%. The primary cause of this was the welcome pay increase for frontline staff in adult social care services which was announced by Scottish Government. An exceptional award was made in December 2021, followed by the more customary uplift in April 2022. However, these uplifts were only partly funded through Government and Local Authority contracts. The partial funding offered meant that provisions had to be made to cover some element of differentials in adult care services and for staff in children's services but did allow a final push to achieving Living Wage for all CrossReach staff by June 2022. This Government pay policy has been challenging for the whole third sector with the impact on the wage bill for CrossReach being in the region of some £800K.

14.3 The difficulties in recruitment have meant that there has been a higher than average reliance on agency staff in 2022 with costs there rising by 63%.

14.4 In addition, Support Costs increased by 9.1% which is mainly due to the significant increase in utility costs.

14.5 A number of significant investments were made over the course of the year, notably in IT infrastructure (£88k) and to maintain buildings (£330k).

14.6 These increases meant that the net income of CrossReach, before property disposals, and gains on investments, and property impairments, increased from a deficit of £(345)k in 2021 to a deficit of £(2,745)k in 2022.

14.7 After property disposals (2021: £2,259k and 2022: £204k) and gains/(losses) on investments (2021: £976k and 2022: £(1,149)k) and property impairment (2021: £nil and 2022: £(716)k), the overall net income went from a surplus of £2,890k in 2021 to a deficit of £(3,690)k in 2022.

14.8 This deficit, together with the previously mentioned level of necessary investment, led to pressure on cashflow throughout 2022. In spite of careful monitoring of outstanding debt, the overdraft from the General Treasurer increased by £1,894k during the course of 2022.

15. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: THE ISSUE OF SUSTAINABILITY

15.1 2022 was a difficult year with a number of pressures affecting the budget and the finances. There was a slow build up of occupancy in services most affected by Covid-19 which affected the financial outturn. However, the finance group were pleased to note the overall progress in this area by the end of the year which was the consequence of strenuous effort in the Older People Services teams. The price of energy had an impact as did the inflationary rise in most cost centres, including food. The biggest financial impact, however, was the cost of agency staff as a result of the recruitment challenge and this remains a huge cause for concern.

15.2 The Board have set the Corporate Management Team the task of bringing forward a number of route maps to tackle each area in which there is a significant overspend and to bring each of these areas to balance. That may mean that decisions have to be taken about restructuring, resizing or even closing services where no other way forward can be found. Work to reduce agency costs is being undertaken as is work to boost income. The financial projection for 2023 continues to show a significant deficit of £(2,326)k, including both property and IT investments. A number of mitigating factors have been identified which will improve the current forecast and support cash flow.

15.3 The route maps will also help identify areas of potential investment or change in focus. The need for services based on current demographic information remains high and is set to grow as a result of a number of factors including people living longer, Covid-19 recovery and the current cost of living crisis. The recent report 'Leave no one behind'³ is the most recent exploration of health inequalities in Scotland and contains stark information about drugs deaths, child poverty and suicide rates in young men specifically.

- Scotland's population is projected to age. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to grow by 29.7% by mid 2045, from 1.06 million to 1.37 million. 90,000 people in Scotland currently live with dementia at any one time and this is also projected to rise. Those with dementia are more likely to need the support of a care home as their illness progresses compared to the general population of older people.
- The estimated number of individuals with problem drug use in Scotland is 57,300 – almost 1 in 60 of the population aged between 15 and 64. There were 1,092 suspected drug deaths between January and December 2022.
- 1 in every 4 people in Scotland are likely to experience a mental health problem at some point in their life with suicide, alcohol and drugs currently showing as the leading causes of death for men aged 15 – 44 years old, accounting for two-thirds of absolute inequalities in total mortality at that age. Socioeconomic trends also point to younger men being at greater risk of poor future health through reduced earnings potential.
- Child poverty in Scotland is on the increase. The health and experiences of infants and children in their early years show that relative and absolute inequalities have widened for infant immunisation uptake and risk of obesity at the start of primary school. Absolute inequalities widened in low birth weight, relative inequalities have widened in infant mortality and development concerns at age 27–30 months. Meanwhile there has been no significant improvement in the poverty-related attainment gap for primary school and secondary age pupils.

15.4 The results of the current work being done to bring services to balance and invest in new initiatives will be taken forward into the detailed budget preparation for 2024.

16 ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES TASK GROUP ON CROSSREACH

16.1 Information and support has been offered to the task group throughout the past year and the recommendations of that group are still under consideration, by the Trustees. Since 2019, and the recommendations of the Special Commission in that year, the future of CrossReach in terms of the relationship with the Church of Scotland has been uncertain. It has been good to see progress made in this area. Settling this issue is necessary to help the CrossReach Board to plan for the future with some degree of certainty. The focussed attention of the group has been welcome and the Board will discuss any impact on the operations of CrossReach with the Trustees, once the recommendations are known.

17. REFERENCES

- 17.1 1 – <https://bit.ly/3mGXa6V>
- 17.2 2 – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-conversation-inform-new-dementia-strategy-discussion-paper/>
- 17.3 3 – <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/leave-no-one-behind>

18. ADDENDUM

18.1 Sarah Wood has served with the Social Care Council since 2017, taking up the role as Vice Convener in 2020 just as the Council was taking steps to bring in a much more streamlined and targeted governance process and structure. She has been an invaluable member of the Council (CrossReach Board) bringing with her extensive experience of senior management positions within Local Authorities in both Scotland and England and from the voluntary sector as chairperson of Turning Point (England). Sarah served on the Finance Committee as well as the CrossReach 150 years working group, most recently chairing the HR and Quality Group. She was a great support to the organisation throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and has been a passionate advocate in championing staff wellbeing. Sarah is known for her sharp observations, incisive questions and her good humoured support of the Convener and all at CrossReach. We owe her a huge debt of gratitude and wish her well for the future.

In the name of the Social Care Council (known as CrossReach Board)

THOM RIDDELL, Convener
SARAH WOOD, Vice Convener
VIV DICKENSON, Chief Executive Officer

Appendix 1 – List of CrossReach Services

Adult Services

Justice Services

- Dick Stewart Service (Glasgow)

Homelessness

- Cale House (Inverness)
- Cunningham House (Edinburgh)
- Kirkhaven Project (Glasgow)

Learning Disabilities

- Eskmills (Edinburgh)
- The Bungalow (Stonehaven)
- Threshold Edinburgh
- Threshold Glasgow
- Threshold Support Services (South Lanarkshire)
- Threshold Housing and Residential Services (South Lanarkshire)

Mental Health

- Allarton (Glasgow)
- Gaberston House (Alloa)
- Morven Day Services (Kilmarnock)
- Lewis Street (Stornoway)
- The Umbrella (Irvine)

Substance Use Services

- Beechwood House (Inverness)
- Dochas Housing Support (Stornoway)
- CrossReach Abstinence Recovery Service (Glasgow)
- Rankeillor Initiative (Edinburgh)
- Tayside Support Service (Dundee)
- Whiteinch Move on Service (Glasgow)

Children and Family Services

Looked After Children (7 small residential houses)

- Carraig View (Port Glasgow)
- Dumbrock House (Strathblane)
- Finniescroft Farm (Lennoxton)
- Millmuir Farm (Gargunnoch)
- Mount Pleasant (Dalry)
- Rockwood House (Beith)
- The Old Lodge (Stirlingshire)
- Erskine Waterfront Campus

Children With Disabilities

- The Mallard, The Garratt & GO2 (Glasgow)

Community Services / Early Intervention

- Daisy Chain Early Years Project (Glasgow)
- Perth Prison Visitors Support and Advice Centre
- Polmont Prison Visitor Centre

Counselling, Support & Training

- Specialities: Perinatal; Children and Young People; General Adult; Addiction Recovery and Workplace Counselling.
- Counselling & Recovery (Edinburgh)
- Perinatal East (Edinburgh)
- Confidential Conversations (Nationwide)
- Sunflower Garden (Edinburgh)
- Tom Allan Service (Glasgow)
- Bluebell Perinatal (Glasgow)
- Moray Counselling (Moray)
- Inverness Counselling (Inverness)

Older People Services

- Adams House (Elderslie) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- Balmedie House (Balmedie)
- Bellfield (Banchory)
- Cameron House (Inverness) – Dementia
- Clashfarquhar House (Stonehaven)
- Cumnor Hall (Ayr) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- Glasgow Day Opportunities
- Heart for Art, Bankfoot
- Heart for Art, Broughty Ferry
- Heart for Art, Carluke
- Heart for Art, Carluke – Carers
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh (Morningside)
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh (Charteris Centre)
- Heart for Art, Galashiels
- Heart for Art, Garelochhead
- Heart for Art, Glasgow (Broomhill)
- Heart for Art, Kirkcudbright
- Heart for Art, Musselburgh
- Heart for Art, Stonehaven
- Heart for Art, Dunfermline
- Morlich House (Edinburgh)
- Oversteps (Dornoch)
- Queen’s Bay Lodge (Edinburgh)
- South Beach House (Ardrossan)
- St Margaret’s House (Polmont) – Dementia & Heart For Art in the Care Home
- The Elms Care Home (Edinburgh) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- The Oasis Bankfoot
- The Oasis Garelochhead
- The Tryst Day Care Centre (Pitlochry)
- Walter & Joan Gray Care Home (Shetland)
- Walter & Joan Gray Day Care (Shetland)
- Whinnieknowe (Nairn)
- Williamwood House (Glasgow) – Dementia & Heart For Art in the Care Home

Further information on our services can be found on our website www.crossreach.org.uk