

# TBCM



## Impact Report

Jan-Dec 2021

Improving people's lives in Northern Ireland

“I was so deep in the shame I couldn’t bear the thought of anyone knowing what was happening so I hid myself in every way I could. I no longer feel hidden and now I go down to the local café once a week and talk to people. My life has been changed”

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## Message from Nicky Conway, Chief Executive

I am extremely proud to present this report which highlights the impact that BCM and its services have had on the lives of individuals, families and communities across Northern Ireland.

BCM's purpose is to Improve people's lives across Northern Ireland and the real-life stories and information contained in this report serve to evidence this and bring it to life at a time when our support was needed more than ever.

2021 was one of the most challenging years in BCM's long history and the staff team faced a range of challenges in continuing to deliver vital services during the pandemic. Despite these challenges their focus on putting the needs of services users at the heart of everything they do has remained unwavering.

BCM's success and impact is very much down to a team effort from the Board, Senior Management, Project Managers, staff team and volunteers and I am extremely privileged to lead an organisation with such a committed team.

As we enter a new strategic planning period I have no doubt that there will continue to be challenges ahead but I am confident that BCM is well positioned to meet these challenges and continues to make a positive difference in the lives of the people we work with.





## Introduction by Rev David Campton

This is the first BCM impact report since the advent of the Covid-19 Pandemic and it is heartening to be reflecting on our impact over the past year, rather than the pandemic's impact on everything, including our operations.

In the last impact study (my first) I stated that I was “astounded and encouraged” by the work done by our staff, congregation and volunteers. Two years of covid has not lessened that assessment. The speed and efficiency of adaptation to a radically changed operating environment and the tireless compassion of our front-line workers has been truly inspirational, and I trust that the stories shared here will have that effect on you.

Our stated aim of **“Improving people’s lives in Northern Ireland”** is carried out under our two legally defined charitable objects:

- The advancement of the Christian Religion in Ireland; and
- The relief of poverty, sickness, infirmity, or other necessitous circumstances through the provision of accommodation, care, counselling or education on a cross-community basis for people in Northern Ireland who are in need of such provision.

In doing the latter we seek to offer, not simply a contracted service, but rather an authentically compassionate, person-centred expression of care, help and hope, treating people with dignity and respect.

None of this would be possible without our partners in other charities, organisations and statutory services who work with us in various ways to address a diverse range of needs, as well as our supporters, who give financially, practically and prayerfully. To them and to our own staff, congregation and volunteers, I want to say a profound word of thanks, not only on behalf of us as an organisation, but on behalf of all our service users.

In the coming year we are entering into a period of significant strategic review of who we are and what we seek to do in the future, in a radically changed world. Therefore, if you have any suggestions, or questions after reading this report, please get in touch.

BCM is an initiative of the Methodist Church and among many things that its founder John Wesley is misquoted as saying is:

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”

Wesley may not have said it, but in BCM we have sought to do it!

A large, light pink graphic of a quotation mark is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the text below. It is a stylized, hand-drawn style mark.

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**“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”**

# Christian Witness

Among the faith-based projects and initiatives directly supported or partnered by BCM include our own Grosvenor Hall Congregation in the centre of the city, the 4 Corners Festival, a peace-building festival which this year hosted its 10th Anniversary with a Broadcast Service on BBC Radio Ulster featuring music by the Belfast Community Gospel Choir and special speaker the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, the Belfast City Centre Chaplaincy, which is now a fully independent charity in its own right, and our Chaplaincy programme at the new Copelands Development:



// A Chaplain chats to shop staff in Belfast

## City Centre Chaplaincy

Exceeding our prudent planning forecasts, Belfast City Centre Chaplaincy has grown rapidly since it commenced operations in July 2018. The Chaplaincy began with the Lead Chaplain (Andrew Irvine) serving alone on a part-time basis. Remarkably, by the end of 2021 we had 20 part-time volunteer Chaplains. The Chaplaincy provided four 12-week initial training programmes for these new volunteers before the pandemic arrived in February 2020. These Chaplains have now grown strong pastoral relationships with people working and managing businesses in core areas of the City Centre, including St. George's Market, CastleCourt Shopping Centre, and the shops in the pedestrian core of the city. Several of our Chaplains have felt a 'call' to build relationships with, and support those, in the City Centre who are street homeless and/or suffering from addictions. The Chaplains are having significant pastoral conversations with people in need almost every day. It is said 'never judge a book by its cover' - and our Chaplains know the truth of that! Sometimes it is the homeless person who is in most need - but equally sometimes it is the apparently successful businessperson. The Rev. John Wesley advised Methodists that they should "go to those who need you most" - daily we are finding those most in need and by the grace of God we are there for them.

As the Chaplaincy approached the end of 2021, it received match-funding from Belfast Central Mission and The Methodist Church in Ireland to take a major step-change, and, as a result, is excited to be in the process of hiring a Development Officer who will build financial sustainability, accelerate the growth and therefore the reach of the Chaplaincy in the City. With COVID-19 restrictions now being eased, the Chaplaincy is about to deliver a further Training Course for 5 more new volunteers who have come forward.

## A view from the pew:

The Grosvenor Hall congregation was delighted to return to in-person worship on Sunday mornings. The very ordinary social interactions, albeit at socially acceptable distance and with masks on faces, became extraordinary in their significance given the isolation of lockdown. To also have the opportunity to worship and to hear the words of prayer and sermons from Revd David Campton, in the first instance as BCM's Superintendent, as well as from other members of the Circuit's Ministerial Team had particular impact.

The congregation's actions may have had an impact louder than the words prayed, said, or sung. The congregation's association with BCM's Toy Appeal continued albeit based in Donegall Road Methodist Church. However, it was the actions of young brothers Zach and Adam Braithwaite which merit particular mention. Firstly, they led a Circuit-wide initiative for people to donate old and no longer used glasses - some 300+ spectacles were collected from all the churches to find their way ultimately to Africa. They also rolled up their sleeves in the kitchen to make tray bakes for Christmas. In doing so, over £300 was raised for BCM's Parent Support projects.

## Copelands' chaplaincy – by Rev June Parke

As Chaplain to Copelands, it gives me immense pleasure to write this short report.

The most recent project of the Belfast Central Mission is the wonderful Copelands Care Home in Millisle. Opening its doors in June 2021, this purpose-built facility offers 24-hour dementia and residential care in a person-centred approach, influenced by a 'household' method, with each named household home to 10 residents.

Just because a person is ageing or has dementia doesn't mean they now sit in a corner and vegetate! Copelands has an Activities Co-ordinator who organises a variety of activities in which the residents can take part during the week. From crafting to flower arranging, to cookery, to walks in the garden, to painting and much more; there is something for everyone. The Chaplaincy service is also an important part of the overall holistic care within Copelands. This service is available to support residents, their families and staff, whatever faith background they may or may not have. Each week there is a short residents' worship service and it's a joy to hear the familiar hymns being sung, and on occasions have residents take part in the service. This is a privileged and important role, and I really am blessed every time I step over the threshold of Copelands. How wonderful that I get to share the love of Jesus with people in a new chapter of their lives or starting a new job or even a new career.

Copelands is still in its infancy, but we give thanks to God for the wonderful vision now come to fruition and pray that God's blessing will be upon this Care Home in the years to come.

The logo for BCM (Belfast Central Mission) features a stylized, handwritten-style 'T' or 'B' shape in a dark pink color, with the letters 'Bcm' written in a cursive font to its right.

# Community Services

Community Services continued to work with service users and volunteers within the Wednesday Lunch Club, Christmas Programme, and our Befriending Service in the greater Belfast Area.

We have 40 lunch clubs per year with 30 people attending each week. It is a place where people can make new friends and renew friendships, enjoy a home cooked meal, and take part in different activities and information sessions.

There was a significant difference in our service users due to the closure of our lunch club during the Covid-19 lockdown and after we re-opened in June 2021 it took a bit of time to rebuild their confidence after being alone in their own homes for a long time.

The befriending programme continued as a telephone service during lockdown, but again it is great to have volunteers meeting their befriendeds face-to-face again.

We had a very successful Christmas Toy Programme, even during Covid restrictions. The donations were very good quality and quantity. The volunteers and staff in BCM worked well together to make sure everyone who applied for help received it.

Community Services could not survive without the dedication of all our volunteers, they give so much of their free time and add so much to our service users' experience.

**3,840**

toy parcels distributed at Christmas



**40**

regular attendees at the lunch club



**20**

older people befriended



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**“Very happy, just over the moon. I was so frightened I would not see my friends again. I am over 90 and enjoy this club so much, it’s just brilliant.”**



## CASE STUDY

Jeff (19) was referred to BCM Housing Support for Young People by NIHE at the end of July 2021 to have help, support and advice to live independently in his own home.

Jeff lived with his Mum and two younger sisters aged 15 and 10 years. At the beginning of July 2021 Jeff's Mum passed away suddenly. Jeff's younger siblings went to live separately with a family member and a family friend for a short period before returning home.

Christmas 2021 was the first Christmas for Jeff and his sisters without their Mum. Jeff chatted about how difficult it was going to be for him without his Mum - what to do for Christmas, who to be with at Christmas and, most importantly for him, making Christmas the best he could for his sisters.

Jeff had been unemployed since his Mum died and was anxious about how he was going to be able to afford/provide gifts for his sisters at Christmas. I informed Jeff about BCM's Christmas Toy Appeal and made a referral for help.

I visited with Jeff on 16th December and delivered the gifts from BCM Christmas Toy Appeal. Jeff was pleased to receive the gifts and he also was provided with food. We were able to provide a voucher for Jeff which he could use at Argos. It meant a lot to him as he was able to give his sisters more gifts at Christmas than he could afford.



## Copelands, Dementia & Residential Care

Copelands is BCM's new flagship project. Opened in June 2021 to residents, Copelands has a brand-new staff team who have worked tirelessly to create a homely, safe, person-centred environment for our residents. With four 'households', we provide care for both Dementia Residential and Residential clients. Opening during the pandemic hasn't been without its challenges, but due to the hard work of the staff we have been able to successfully receive positive recognition, not only from the RQIA, but our residents and their families as well.

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Copelands strives to mirror the excellent work of our sister home in Belfast - Kirk House, with the BUTTONS model of care and 'Engages All' intergenerational project being implemented in the home. With extensive facilities in the building, we have been able to create a schedule of meaningful and fun activities which our residents can avail of when they wish. Having a varied, full calendar has had a positive impact on many of our residents, with their families commenting that they have seen great improvement in their loved one's wellbeing.

We aim to continue providing compassionate, research-based high standards of care to our residents with all staff undergoing 'Best Practice in Dementia Care' training accredited by Stirling University.



**26**  
Residents



**20**  
staff members completed dementia friends training

**“Wonderful staff (very professional but extremely friendly) and a very calm environment. Feels like a home-from-home. The facilities are amazing too. Absolutely fantastic place.”**

# Housing Support for Older People

Funded by Supporting People, the projects work holistically with service users (aged 55+) to support them to maintain their independence at home for as long as they wish to.

## BELFAST

Throughout the pandemic, Housing Support for Older People (HSOP) Belfast remained “open for business”.

The pandemic has meant that the team have adjusted to working in a very different environment. All staff, including our admin support, worked tirelessly to ensure that the older people’s needs were met. The necessities, such as food, electric, heating and medication were often topped up by the team in emergency situations. The emotional support offered was vital to the service users, whether by phone or by social distancing at the garden gate. This helped to alleviate the fear and anxiety about the potential outcomes of contracting Covid and the loneliness and isolation many felt from not having face to face contact with friends and family.

Referrals kept coming in and over the two-year period (2020/21) we received a total of 411 referrals for housing support.

Our office base closed in May and in December our application to Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) Supporting People for an expansion to the project was agreed and the team will now consist of: 10 support staff, 1 part time Volunteer Coordinator. This will enable us to support 210 older people at any time (an increase of 50).



**“Louise did everything for me, I have a house now and I am so happy, my mental health has improved, she treated me so well I don’t know where I would be without her help. If you ever need anyone to speak up for the service I will do it, I never would have spoken to anyone before I had Louise’s help”**

## SOUTH

Early stages of research have highlighted the detrimental impact of Covid-19 on older people. HSOP services have continued to support those most isolated and vulnerable throughout the pandemic. Regular phone calls, garden visits, activity packs, treats and more support workers ensured that no service user was left alone.

Fear was prevalent amongst older people and the project continued supporting those who need it most. Now, adjusting to the 'new normal' many older people still live in fear. Project staff have seen a deterioration in service users' mobility, mental health, and an increase in levels of loneliness and isolation. Service users confided their fears, losses, and concerns during the pandemic, with support workers providing a vital listening ear and link to the outside world. Each day within the project brings new challenges, many of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. With each challenge comes the passion and drive from our dedicated staff to go above and beyond what is required to help improve the lives of service users. As a team we love what we do and are grateful for the privilege of playing even a small part in keeping people safe.

221

people helped

92%

remained independent

97%

supported to access relevant welfare benefits

## CASE STUDY

An older sister and brother live together in a cold and damp rented property heated by twigs in the grate with mould on the walls and they have limited contact with the outside world, while both living off the brother's pension. There is no phone in the home, and they are very isolated except for District Nurses supporting them.

They hadn't had oil or proper heat for about ten years so by the end of that day oil had been delivered and their oil burner serviced and working. On the sister's behalf, we submitted a claim for Pension Credit. A food hamper was also provided as there is limited money, and we are trying to source a small mobile phone that is easy used.

The couple benefitted from activity packs and donations during lockdown and their support worker uses her tablet to show them different things that are going on in the world (they don't have a tv). The house has now full working heating, has been completely painted and a new kitchen installed. They are in receipt of full benefits and their support worker also met them to help them buy some new clothes.

A housing application will be completed for a NIHE two-bedroom bungalow in the local area, as both have stated they would like somewhere smaller and easier managed for the future.



# Housing Support for Young People

**Working with young people aged 16–25 who are experiencing difficulties with their current tenancies, who are homeless and/or require help to develop independent living skills necessary for them**

## ARDS

The team continued to deliver a service during a year that was regularly changing and challenging how we completed our work. One of the biggest challenges faced was recruitment during the pandemic. Our staff team worked hard to carry a higher caseload and committed to working overtime to ensure they could continue to support the young people to achieve positive outcomes.

We were delighted to be awarded additional funds which enabled us to provide our young people with support and activities in relation to positive mental health and to help with obtaining and maintaining their own accommodation.

All those who participated in the “Between a Rock and a Hard Place” programme are enjoying better mental health, while the Rent Deposit Scheme (First Hurdle) supported six service users with deposits and the first month’s rent. This enabled them to overcome the barrier of finding large sums of money over a short period in order to access private rental accommodation. This fund also allowed us to send six staff members on a Housing Rights training programme.

Progress was made towards improving Service User Involvement. We met with Service Users twice during the year and held some group activities. A phase 3 plan for 2022 will give us an opportunity to establish and grow our Service User Involvement.



## SOUTH

We worked with 176 young people aged 16-25 who were experiencing difficulties with their current tenancies, who were homeless and/or required help to develop independent living skills necessary for them to maintain their tenancies. There has been an increasing number of vulnerable homeless young people with complex needs (not just housing needs) such as mental ill health and disability. In our locality we saw a rise in the number of service users not living in suitable or affordable accommodation. It was our aim to assist our service users to develop the skills needed to live independently in the community and maintain their own tenancy. We did this through providing a flexible, person-centred approach which helped our service users grow in confidence and independence.

We were delighted to receive almost £40,000 funding from NIHE Homeless Prevention fund which was used to provide our Rent...Sorted tenancy deposit scheme. This was our third time receiving this funding which to date has helped 29 young people access private rented accommodation. The team continue to raise emerging needs and trends at a local level with representation on the CYPSP locality groups and loneliness networks. We continue to be thankful for the ongoing support of the local Church of Ireland and Methodist Church in our area.

176

young people supported

45%

increase in referrals to project

100%

felt more secure in their home as a result of support

100%

felt their physical and mental health had improved as a result of support



**“Helen has been able to support me and help me go from thinking I may be potentially homeless to being able to have my own home which I feel safe and very happy in.”**

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## CASE STUDY

TCBM

I started supporting a service user in March 2021 who has a diagnosis of autism, ADHD and dyslexia, he finds certain situations very challenging, and his main goal was to find employment and move into independent living. At this time he was struggling to manage his anxiety and poor mental health, he was engaging with MENCAP and I referred him to a new service in Armagh called the NOW project.

I showed him information on the 'Prince's Trust Get into Retail' programme. In a short space of time Sam was accepted and started an eight-week programme working and being supported by Tesco staff and via regular meetings with his Prince's Trust mentor. The NOW project also helped Sam to maintain the post and worked closely with management on a contract that best suited Sam's needs and after the 8 weeks he applied for a permanent role and he is now employed 30 hours a week as a delivery driver.

Sam had already started to save money towards private rented and had saved £2000, he sourced a mortgage advisor independently, he stayed focused on maintaining his job and saving, and now Sam has made an offer on a property and this has been accepted. He has budgeted for insurances, bills and necessities. Sam is a true testament of what hard work and commitment can achieve.



// A volunteer collecting donated food items for distribution



## Kirk House, Housing with Care

Kirk House provides Housing with Care and opened in 1994. With 42 flatlets we can accommodate 46 residents with an aim to promote privacy, independence and companionship, whilst acknowledging each resident's individuality.

We practice positive person-centred care by following 'Buttons': a household model of care.

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**"I've been in Kirk house for about three years. I lived in a farm all my life about a mile from here in the heart of the country and once my father died, and then shortly after that my husband died, I couldn't stay on the farm on my own. My four children were all married and had their own families and didn't want to move to the farm so they came and looked at Kirk House for me as it's close to where they all live. Craig (support worker) was very welcoming and was able to show them where I could live. I have been very happy. I made it my home very quickly and everyone has been very friendly. The food was good, the bed was good and all the staff were very nice and so I have stayed ever since. I torture the life and soul out of them but am very happy to be here and hope I live to be here a little while longer yet!"**

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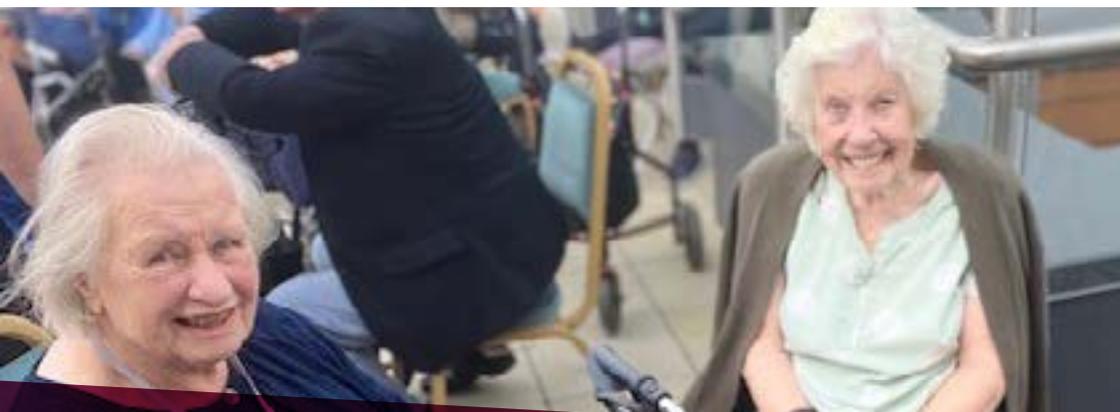
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During 2021 we continued to involve residents in how Kirk House is run, through monthly meetings of the Resident's Forum. In these meetings lots of topics were discussed for improvement i.e., food, menus, and the activities programme. The Forum continued to develop, and residents were involved in the recruitment of staff and with the setup of Copelands. It is our aim to create a partnership between Kirk House and Copelands.

Our intergenerational programme called "Engages All" has been on hold during the pandemic, but we look forward to starting it up again as it had proven itself as being a very successful way to help younger and older people work together on activities. These included cooking, computers, making cupcakes to sell to support Alzheimer's Society, and a weaving project. We also worked very hard to build relationships with the local community by training churches, shops and businesses to be Dementia Friends. Our RQIA inspections found Kirk House was delivering positive, safe, effective, compassionate care and is a well-led service.

During the pandemic we strove to ensure our residents stayed connected with the outside world as safely as possible through safe meeting pods and electronic devices.



// Kirk House residents enjoying a visit to Copelands and sitting on the roof terrace in the sunshine

# Parent Support Projects

## ARMAGH/DUNGANNON

BCM's Parent Support Service is a home-based early intervention family support service designed to meet the varying needs of families. We work across the Armagh and Dungannon area with parents of all ages and children from 0-17 years of age.

We aim to strengthen the capabilities of parents using practical and emotional support thereby reducing the need for social intervention, this can take many forms and Maria, our parent support worker, has no two days the same!

From January to December 2021, we received 50 referrals from the local Family Support Hub. We supported 56 families with 98 children.

We have provided 110 hours of Parents Connect (a signposting service to other available supports) to 73 parents using both face to face visits and a virtual drop-in facility, this is in addition to the parents who received our 14-week time limited programme.

Maria co-facilitated two 14 week Incredible Years programmes with the Parenting Partnership and delivered two group-work programmes on key areas identified by parents such as sleep, fussy eating and food avoidance, and challenging behaviour. She also ran a virtual drop-in for parents over the summer.

56

families (98 children) supported

254

home visits completed

100%

of parents saw a reduction in their child's challenging behaviour

**“Every conversation with Maria, every strategy given, explanations to sleep patterns, behaviour patterns, for goodness’ sake even just having a chat about concerns and worries for him was INVALUABLE for us. We could not have got through these last few years without her.”**

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## ARDS

The pandemic continued to alter the way in which we worked throughout 2021. As individuals we worked remotely using our homes as base. For a project that usually facilitates much of our work through group activity we had to find different ways to meet the needs of the families we work with.

Throughout most of the year we facilitated sessions online. These included paediatric first aid sessions, Baby Massage sessions, an Under 5's Safety Clinic as well as a Baby Well-Being Clinic and Cook-it programmes.

In the latter quarter of the year we were able to deliver our service at a face to face level with home visits once again taking place. This allowed support workers to work more on the specific needs of the family such as routines, boundaries and behaviours.

We continued to deliver an evening session encouraging parents to read to their children called Rhyme Time at Bed-Time which has been very well received by parents. We delivered 12 sessions before bringing the program to a rest. The legacy of these sessions is that families continued to meet up weekly online to run bed-time story sessions themselves. We aim to bring back facilitated story time sessions in 2022. We are extremely proud of this program.

"Since getting support from BCM, I have totally changed who I am as a parent, I have a stable home, I'm in a good financial situation and I'm working on bettering myself further by undergoing a university course in psychology, and its all thanks to the support I received."

No parent should be made to feel like they aren't good enough for their children and that is the main thing the support I received has taught me."



53

people helped

63%

of service users had weekly interactive contact with the support worker

748

1-1 home visits completed

12

Rhyme Time at Bed-Time sessions were held

## CASE STUDY

When I was first referred to BCM Parent Support I suffered from bad anxiety. Meeting someone new normally flares it up, but from my first meeting with my support worker I was put at ease.

From early on in my pregnancy I struggled with many issues and complications and BCM's Parent Support were the ones I knew I could always turn to for support and advice without being judged. I was helped with any questions I had about raising a child and they helped me in ways of coping with difficulties I was facing being a new and first-time parent.

With my son being on the child protection register for the first 2 months of his life, my support worker was very helpful by visiting or calling daily and making sure I was feeling ok and not showing any signs of postnatal depression.

The activities that the parent support programme have set up have definitely helped my son in all aspects of his development, he is a very social and active child thanks to him interacting with other children and adults at the baby morning from a very young age.

Since getting support from BCM I have totally changed who I am as a parent. If it wasn't for the parent support programme, I'm certain I wouldn't still be here today and there is no way I would still have my son in my care. I have built a good life for me, my son and my daughter. I have a stable home, I'm in a good financial situation and I'm working on bettering myself further by undergoing a university course in psychology and its all thanks to the support I received. No parent should be made to feel like they aren't good enough for their children and that is the main thing the support I received has taught me.



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**“We wouldn't have our little girl  
anywhere else. She's always so  
happy going to Puddleducks.  
Thank you for always showing  
so much love and kindness”**

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# Puddleducks Day Nursery

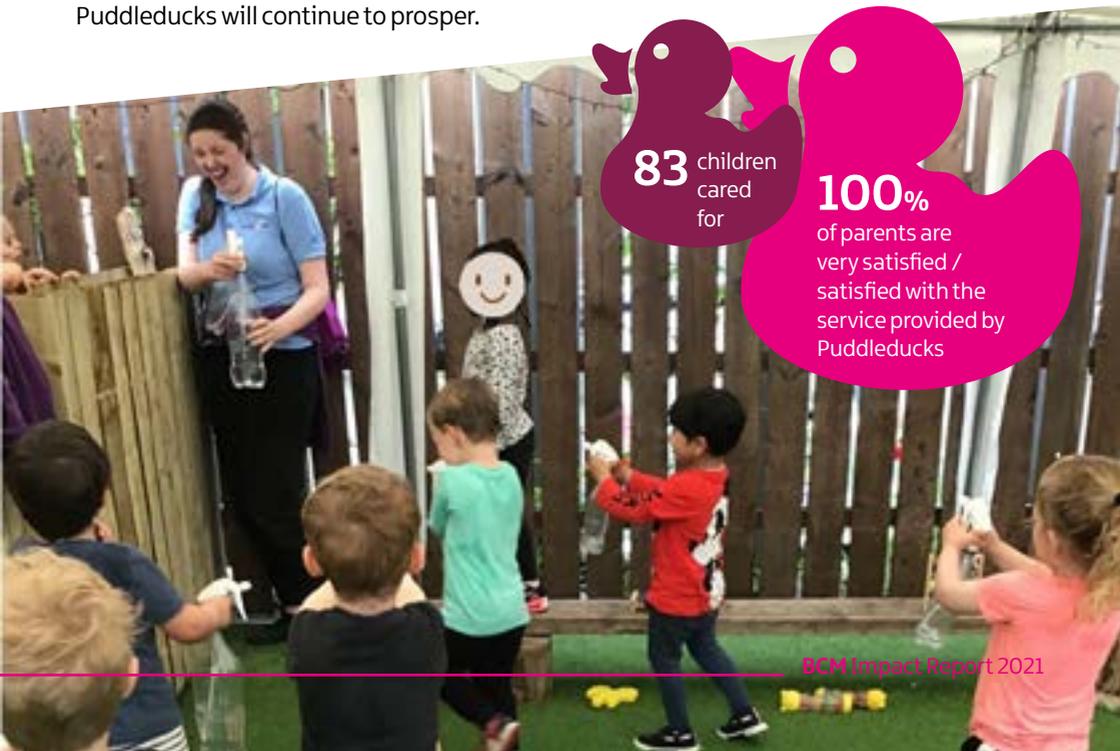


As for so many of us, because of the covid-19 pandemic, 2021 was a challenging year. However, Puddleducks continued to go from strength to strength in respect of occupancy and income. We are pleased to report that despite increased costs because of the covid-19 health & safety guidelines (cleaning & additional staffing) we finished the year in profit.

So much of our lives changed when covid struck, yet one thing which remained consistent was the love and nurturing care provided to each of the children placed under our wing. In advance of starting in Puddleducks, many of our children had never had the opportunity for social interactions at a parent/toddler group, an afternoon at an indoor play centre or even a family and friends get together. We have always recognised the significance of supporting a child's emotional wellbeing and this was never more important than for our 'covid babies'.

Despite having to close an individual pod (due to covid-related staff absence) we were always able to keep the other three pods open - a testament to our stringent infection control measures.

The success of Puddleducks in 2021 is in no doubt a reflection of the continued enthusiasm, determination and hard work displayed from each of our staff team. I have no doubt that as we move into 2022 and look forward to celebrating our 10th birthday, Puddleducks will continue to prosper.





## Supported Housing For Young People

### Supporting care leavers aged 16 – 21 years

9

young people supported

3

young people moved on and have sustained long-term placements

#### DUNGANNON

Thomas Steet maintained service throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The determination of our team in addressing the challenges, and the consistent support to the young people has been recognised both formally and informally, by our jointly commissioned partners, family members, RQIA and external agencies.

Referrals progressed consistently throughout the year, with an increase in more unusual and complex needs of young people, often professionals involved were unsure if BCM could meet the need, however 100% of referrals resulted in admission.

Due to the enthusiasm of staff and support of SHSCT the project has successfully addressed young people's needs and continues to do so. As a team, we build a nurturing and very individualised support plan alongside the young people. We source staff training to help address individual / specialist need, while also strengthening partnerships after the impact of Covid. 100% young people who left the project have maintained contact, which is testament to their experience in the project.

This year additional support received allowed us to ensure all our young people were provided for, both physically and emotionally; it also helped them develop soft skills such as empathy, recognising the kindness of others, the support from within the community and insight into the joy of giving. Our young people in recognition of "Homelessness Awareness week" cooked dinners for those less fortunate and these were distributed by the Housing Support for Younger and Older People teams.

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**‘Staff in BCM have been very welcoming and supportive of a young person to date and as a result she has been able to develop good working relationships with staff. This has been a key strength of the placement as this has helped with her transition to supported accommodation, given this was something she was very anxious about initially’.**

## MAGHERAFELT

Tafelta Rise is a modern, purpose-built facility for young people who are transitioning from care, are young homeless or vulnerable and 18+.

The young people are supported by a team of full-time and part-time staff, Deputy Manager and Manager who provide a range of supports to assist with the development of practical

independent living skills, emotional support, help with education and training and connecting young people with the local community.



// The team at Tafelta Rise with an expression of thanks to Mcatamneys Traditional Butchers

It has been a busy, rewarding year for Tafelta Rise and the young people we support. We celebrated 5 years of Tafelta Rise in September, enjoyed Christmas together and marked other occasions including Care Day, Mental Health Awareness Day and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Many valuable partnerships were forged this year which has ensured that the service is focused on the service users and achieving the highest level of support. Community Partnerships were made with local charities and employers within Magherafelt which have provided additional support to the young people living in Tafelta Rise.

**“I have lived in other supported housing, this place is different, the staff care, listen and support me”**

31

young people supported



12

young people supported

## BELFAST

The accommodation comprises three self-contained flats and a Shared House with three bedrooms for young people. The project is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week which ensures that a high level of support is available to our service users. We support those young people who require that high level of support to move towards independence, as well as those young people that carry a high level of risk because of their past and current trauma.

In 2021 as a staff team, we have faced and risen to the challenge of very complex individuals to achieve positive outcomes including positive move-ons, engagement in work and education and promoted better choices relating to offending behaviour.

At Grampian we received additional funding to provide follow on support from the developer Hagan Homes. This work has given us an insight into the need for long-term follow-on support provision. Young people struggle in the initial stages when moving from our high level of support to their own independence. Our follow-on support has enabled us to deliver extra support and we have then seen the young people flourish in independence.

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**“I would just like to commend all BCM staff for the positive and encouraging support that they have provided to my young person over the course of this year. This young person had potential to go in some other worrying directions but due to his own motivation and consistent support, advice and guidance from BCM staff – they have played a very significant role in helping this young person to steer a new course for themselves.”**

**100%**

stated they felt well supported by staff

**100%**

would recommend the service to a friend

## BANGOR

The accommodation at Riverside Place provides residents with an open plan living and kitchen area, one single bedroom and a bathroom. All flats are furnished with all white goods provided, residents have responsibility for topping up their own electric and gas meters. The accommodation is situated on the Donaghadee Road in Bangor. This provides convenient public transport routes into the Town Centre which is also within a twenty-minute walking distance.

The Supported Housing service is regulated by RQIA and assessed against Supporting People’s Quality Monitoring Tool (QMT). An RQIA inspection took place in October 2021. This identified several examples of excellent practice which included keywork, support planning and staff understanding of residents’ strengths, needs and risks.

The Service was staffed by:

- 1 x Project Manager
- 2 x Senior Support Workers
- 4 x Full-time Support Workers
- 2 x Part time Support Workers
- 5 x Night Support Workers

**12**

young people supported

The service continued to accommodate young people with complex and challenging needs. For example, extensive drug misuse, at risk of sexual exploitation, violent and aggressive outbursts, disabilities, suicidal thoughts and threat, and complex mental health diagnosis. This presented ongoing challenges to the staff team, however they continued to deliver support in line with BCM’s core values of Respect, Integrity, Person-Centred and Excellence.

## CASE STUDY

Janet lived in Belfast Supported Housing for a year and ten months and was in the fortunate position of moving on into her own accommodation while we had an outreach worker in place – funded by Hagan Homes. Janet had made real progress during her time with us, having developed budgeting skills, a good standard of self-care and cleanliness, enrolled and engaged in education and seen a significant improvement in her ability to manage anxiety.

Janet moved into her accommodation in the summer of 2020 and was greatly helped by staff being able to assist her with the practical elements of moving into new accommodation, such as help with arranging flooring to be laid, ordering white goods, constructing items of furniture, fixing up shelves, and setting up a broadband service.

A trend often witnessed by staff when a service user moves into the community, is an increase in their drug use and the encroachment of peers on the newly available accommodation. This was the case with Janet – staff observed a big increase in her drug use and noted that peers were staying in her accommodation for long periods of time. The outreach worker was able to support Janet by giving advice about putting up relational boundaries and reducing drug use. After a few months, with the support of staff, Janet had ironed out these issues and was settling into her new living circumstances.

Janet would keep in regular contact with staff by text and phone calls and would often meet for a coffee and a chat or attend Supper Clubs or house meals, run by staff, to which she was invited on a regular basis. The outreach worker was able to take Janet for walks on the beach, something that Janet found very therapeutic, and during these times she would often confide about issues she was having, seeking advice and a listening ear. One such issue was re-establishing contact with a long-estranged family member which caused confusion and anxiety.

Some months later, Janet's mental health had declined, and this led to her traveling and ending up sleeping rough. She was very vulnerable during this period, and staff were able to offer support and advice over the phone. By spring of 2021 she had returned safely to her accommodation and things had taken a turn for the better. She was no longer using drugs; she had found employment and was doing some part time education. Janet continued for the rest of 2021 to look to BCM's outreach program for support with issues that arose in her employment, for support to apply for new courses, as well as in relation to her relationships and finances. Janet also took part in fun activities that were arranged for ex-service users over the summer, including a beach trip and a trip to Let's Go Hydro.

It is our expectation that Janet will continue to utilise the support of our team which is a steady and secure point of help in her challenging and ever-changing world.

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**“I know all areas of BCM offer fantastic support yet I would not have coped through last year without the floating support provided to my son by David from BCM’s Western House.**

**My son is now in Tafelta Rise in Magherafelt and the staff there are absolutely brilliant, as is the accommodation.**

**While he is currently in hospital, the staff have been so selfless, easy to talk to, and empathetic.**

**They are also non judgemental, which is so comforting as I have met some very patronising and judgemental professionals on my journey with my son.”**

**A recent message from the mum of a service user of our HYSB community-based support team and Supported Housing projects.**

# Therapeutic Counselling

Providing counselling for young people aged 16-25 in North Down and Ards to improve their mental health and emotional well-being and prevent self-harm and/or suicide. To promote the life chances of care experienced young people so that they can reach their full potential.

2021 was a year where we built on the changes introduced as a result of COVID-19 including offering face-to-face assessments, followed by the Choice counselling sessions delivered by zoom or telephone. This provided continuity for clients throughout the difficulties of lockdowns, social isolation and the associated increase in issues such as anxiety, isolation, loneliness, addiction and domestic abuse.

The senior counsellor identified a gap in her training which was met by completing an intensive course on how to deliver counselling by telephone and video. This was funded by BCM and has meant that we could continue to offer a professional service over different media to meet the needs of our clients.

An unintended consequence of offering counselling via a hybrid model of face-to-face, telephone and video sessions was that the overall attendance improved. This may have been due to a number of factors such as issues with mental health barriers which may prevent clients leaving the house as well as financial, transport and childcare difficulties which would have prevented clients from attending in person, but they were able to have their session remotely. It is important to recognise the pros and cons of different methods and to continue to offer a choice to clients going forward.

38

young people supported

12

sessions offered per week

448

counselling sessions were attended

**“I am forever thankful to Alison (Counsellor) for without her I wouldn't be here.”**

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BCM  
Impact Report  
2021

## CASE STUDY



Mark (not his real name) was living in a BCM Supported Housing Project and was due to move out to his own accommodation. He was lonely and isolated as he had limited contact with his family and he had fallen out with his only friend. He got on well with the staff at BCM and was worried about how he would manage in his own accommodation. At the time of being referred for counselling his mood had dipped significantly and he was prescribed anti-depressant medication by his GP.

He attended a face-to-face assessment and then we had weekly sessions via telephone. He used the counselling sessions to explore his past trauma and recent issues which have contributed to his low mood and he learned new coping strategies for dealing with these.

At one point the client's mental health took a dramatic turn for the worse but partnership working between BCM Supported Housing and BCM Therapeutic Counselling enabled us to support this client through this crisis. With his consent we worked together to share relevant information on a "need to know basis" and he was kept fully informed throughout this process as we strove to keep him safe.

Another aspect of working across teams is illustrated by how Mark was allocated a BCM Housing Support Worker prior to him leaving BCM Supported Housing which eased with the transition into his own accommodation. This was a positive move for the client (who struggled with change), and he made a new group of friends, started a relationship and started thinking about possible career options.

This client has completed his counselling sessions and he said that it has helped him to develop new coping strategies and to start to build his self-esteem and confidence. We also looked at ways in which he can challenge his negative thought patterns when they arise, and these are skills which he can continue to practice going forward in his life. This client showed dramatic positive changes in his questionnaires which now indicate that he is in the "normal" range of client distress and a significant reduction in risk in terms of self-harm or suicide.



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