



# **ANNUAL REPORT** 2022 - 2023

Six Degrees Social Enterprise



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### CONTENTS

FOREWORD

OUR PEOPLE

- SERVICE PERFORMANCE
- WORK WITH THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

#### PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- ART THERAPY
- COLLABORATING WITH OUR PARTNERS

#### OUR WORKFORCE

- <sup>-</sup> A REFLECTION ON STAFF TRAINING DURING THE PANDEMIC
- OUR VOLUNTEERS

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ADDING SOCIAL VALUE

FINANCES

MOVING FORWARD – THE YEAR AHEAD



# FOREWORD 2022 - 2023

The last few years have brought us significant upheaval, with covid, war, political change and the costof-living crisis. Thankfully, this year we have been able to begin to plan and to move forward. We have been through some momentous changes, and I am pleased that we have been able to survive and adapt as an organisation together. This is a credit to all of us at Six Degrees. I would like to thank our staff for their dedication, our board, commissioners and our communities and stakeholders for their ongoing support.

This year we have seen significant changes. In May 2022 we said goodbye to our old office and moved to 100% remote working until September, when we were able to move into our new office in Eccles. The opening of the office was a major milestone and marked the start of a new chapter.

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 the commissioning landscape changed with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) being replaced with the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (GMICB). During this period we have worked to strengthen our position with our partners, communities and stakeholders.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) has rebranded to NHS Talking Therapies for anxiety and depression. This change was rolled out across the country at the start of 2023. This rebranding exercise was designed to raise the profile of talking therapies and to remove barriers to access.

We have continued to work hard to improve mental health services including fine-tuning our delivery model. We are seeking to deliver services from GP surgeries and community venues, whilst maintaining patient choice and exploring digital working practices.

We at Six Degrees developed a set of principles (see next page) to help guide our decision making as we move forward. These principles support a healthy workplace and are a guide for decision making.

Kelly Hylton

Managing Director

### SIX DEGREES' PRINCIPLES for transitioning post pandemic



#### DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Demographic Diversity – differences in gender, race, age, and religion.

Cognitive Diversity – differences in perspectives, insights, experiences, thinking styles.

Occupation and Training Diversity – different backgrounds and experiences bring a richness to problem solving. Managing complexity helps identify unserved communities.



#### VISIBILITY

There are some groups of people that require our visibility. Those who have difficulty communicating, those who are at risk of neglect, abuse, and exploitation and those where standardised and westernised ways of accessing support may be a barrier.

A significant part of human communication is non-verbal, and we communicate intuitively. Our intuition is one of the most important instruments when working with people. It facilitates effective clinical decision making.

Our colleagues and partners require our physical presence to promote the work of Six Degrees and continue to build strong partnership working practices.



#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality builds trust and works both ways.

Our people's privacy and dignity must be maintained and protected at all times, so they can share sensitive information.

Our workforce requires a work environment that ensures privacy and confidentiality where they can speak freely.

A confidential setting is crucial for everyone.



#### CONNECTION AND RELATIONSHIPS

Working together enables us to better support the people we serve and recognise the gaps.

Positive relationships with each other enables people to feel they can access the support they need and raise concerns safely. Trusted working relationships enables peer learning. We know that working together impacts positively on patient outcomes. Understanding critical points and dependencies in the patient journey enables us to work together better.

A healthy workplace works to facilitate connection with Six Degrees' vision, mission, and values.

Below is a brief summary of some of our achievements in 2022/23:

- We have expanded our accessibility in areas including long-term conditions, perinatal mental health, Silver Cloud (online programmes), Jewish, Polish and Farsi-speaking community.
- We have extended our mental health programme within the Jewish community.
- New roles have been developed, providing workforce diversity and career opportunities.
- We have developed significant networks and systemic changes, enhancing our offer to those bereaved and, through Living Well, those with needs not currently met by primary and secondary care.
- We've developed new relationships as well as strengthening existing partnerships.
- Through an on-line seminar with two distinguished keynote speakers, we evaluated the impact of the pandemic on mental health services and bereavement.



#### VISION

Our vision is to enable the communities we serve to achieve their best possible mental health and well-being.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our People – We maintain high quality, compassionate and safe services for those we support.

Our Workforce - We support an enabling environment that allows our people to grow and develop.

Our Partnerships – We develop strong, collaborative, and trusted relationships with our commissioners, communities and partners.

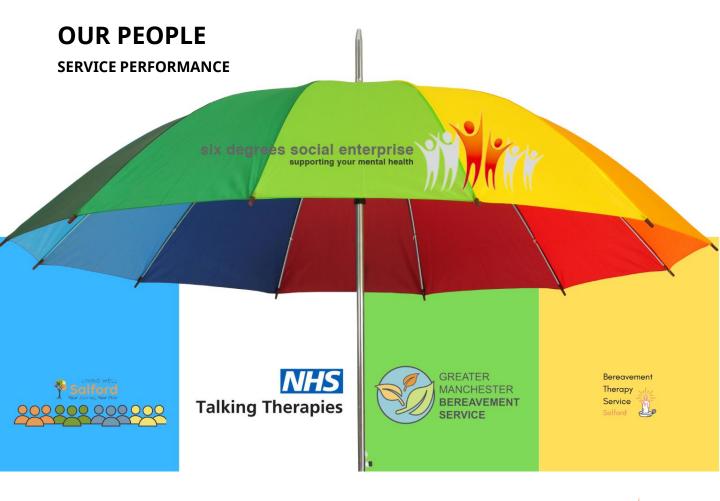
#### MISSION

Our purpose is to build resilient communities in which people are connected, supported, and equipped to deal with the challenges they may face.

#### **OUR VALUES**

We are a value driven organisation, keeping the people we serve at the at the centre of everything we do. As we have grown, there arose a need to review our values and in August 2022 we launched our new values.







# 8,732

referrals into the service during this period.

# 50%

of those receiving treatment were able to move towards recovery (national target 50%).

## 570 people with long term

conditions were helped.

# 540

perinatal people supported with their mental health needs.

Slightly over 200

people from minority communities were supported.



# NHS TALKING THERAPIES FOR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION (formally known as IAPT)

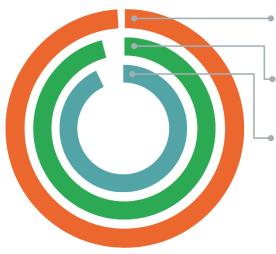
We are proud to deliver NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression. This year we have been able to start the work of moving appointments from the phone to offering a choice between phone or face-to -face.

Below are some highlights and celebrations for last year:

- To help bolster the psychological workforce we have successfully recruited into the Trainee Associate
   Psychological Practitioner (TAPP) role, which is a new role.
   They will work across Talking Therapies and the Greater
   Manchester Bereavement Service (GMBS) allowing greater
   opportunities for clinical and professional development.
- Two patient experience forums were held at the start of 2023, one online and one face-to-face. These focused on the clinical settings for therapy post-Covid. Patients were able to give us wide ranging feedback, but their overall view was that they want a choice throughout their treatment journey. This is something that we are exploring further in the Talking Therapies Operational Team and will be involving other staff in this journey along the way. We will also be focusing on other areas that patients mentioned including ensuring that patients know who we are and what they are being referred for and the use of Teams for video appointments.
- We have developed links with local perinatal services through regular attendance at the Salford Perinatal and Parent Infant Mental Health (PPIMH) group. This is with the aim of enhancing multiagency pathways to ensure parents and families receive timely and effective care. We are looking forward to continuing to develop these partnerships and building on our existing perinatal offer.
- We have worked towards improving access to mental health support for patients by strengthening our relationships with our NHS and VCSE sector colleagues, maintaining and developing relationships with services, such as NHS talking therapies and Living Well partnerships, ensuring patients receive the right level of care at the earliest opportunity.
- We have taken our first steps towards developing a selfreferral platform which is currently being piloted with some of our key stakeholders, before rolling out on a larger scale.



#### PATIENT FEEDBACK



#### 98%

Felt staff listened to them and treated their condition seriously

• 87%

Felt involved in making choices about their treatment and care

#### 93%

Had confidence in their therapist and their skills and techniques

PATIENT FEEDBACK

I was a bit anxious before my first appointment, but my therapist made me feel at ease. They were extremely understanding and *listened to my* problems with great care. It made me feel good knowing I could talk to somebody who understands and could give me advice on how to tackle my problems.



#### **TAKE CONTROL**

The Take Control course is the current group offer at Six **Degrees Social** Enterprise. Where the structure is a grouplike setting, the course is designed to provide a learning space in which facilitators share knowledge around different concepts and teach skills to improve current psychological distress. The model uses a trans-diagnostic approach to distress. The course has been thoroughly evaluated and a paper was recently published,

following a randomised control trial completed between University of Manchester and Six Degrees. The evidence base demonstrated that the course is 'as effective as step 2 oneto-one interventions.'

Last year, 42 patients were referred to the course. We intend to expand the number of recipients as part of the service delivery work that is currently underway.



#### PATIENT FEEDBACK



I found looking at aoals and working out what's important to me really helpful. Especially when I think something I worry about too much is just a small thing but using the upward arrow technique to work out why it's important really helped me to look at the bigger picture rather than focusing on little things.



#### **GREATER MANCHESTER BEREAVEMENT SERVICE (GMBS)**

The Greater Manchester Bereavement Service (GMBS) is provided by Six Degrees on behalf of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. The service offers support to individuals living across all 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester, who have been bereaved or impacted by a loss, no matter the cause of death, or how long it has been. This includes loss through suicide. Our team of bereavement practitioners at GMBS are available to help via telephone or email, and can provide emotional support, practical advice, education,

resources, and signposting; the aim is to help people access the right kind of support that they need.

The team has grown, and has welcomed new practitioners, transitioning from remote working, and settling into a new structure and work environment at our Six Degrees office in Salford.

Service users accessing GMBS are invited to leave feedback after receiving support. A new outcomes questionnaire has been introduced to help measure and evaluate the use of the service. Feedback demonstrates that the majority of service users have been supported by the service. Most commonly with 'signposting options for counselling/and other support'. Our service users value most 'feeling listened to and understood' as well as having the 'opportunity to seek both practical and emotional support with bereavement'. GMBS have also received powerful and meaningful stories via Care Opinion, highlighting the value in being able to access bereavement support at any stage of loss.

1,024

individuals supported.



more people supported than last year.

people bereaved by suicide were supported.

70-80%

of service users received the help they were looking for when contacting the service.

GMBS began as the Suicide Bereavement Service in 2018. Those bereaved by suicide are themselves at increased risk of suicide. Therefore as part of the prevention agenda, access to support following a suicide is integral.

#### PATIENT EXPERIENCE



*My* best friend of 40 years took her life; she had struggled for the last 3 years with her mental health. I spoke with her that morning and we arranged to meet for breakfast the day after. Later that day I was made aware a worrying phone call she had made to someone, so I rang and rang and rang her. When she answered just cried and cried, I told her I loved her and that it will be ok, I told her to tell me where she was, and I would come and get her. She put the phone down and that was the last time I spoke with her. I feel so empty without her she was more than a best friend she was my sister. I've been through grief many times, but this is another level of pain, I have lots of support but I feel so lonely at times. I wish I could have helped her more.

#### PATIENT FEEDBACK

The Service was very helpful in signposting me to bereavement services, that I have since used and found useful. They were also very kind, caring and sympathetic, at a time when I was feeling vulnerable and grief-stricken. They called me every week to see how I was getting on, and their support was much appreciated.





#### SALFORD BEREAVEMENT THERAPY SERVICE (SBTS)

Salford Bereavement Therapy Service (SBTS) provides talking therapies to people who are struggling with bereavement and loss in the broader sense (including suicide and perinatal bereavement). The role of Loss Counsellor was developed in collaboration with Living Well and currently serves mainly patients referred from Living Well.

SBTS has several aims, including serving the community through therapeutic work, becoming a hub of expertise, and upskilling the workforce in the impact of loss and bereavement.

We celebrate some of our achievements over the last year below:

We support NHS Talking Therapies staff in working with bereaved patients. SBTS provides training in working with bereaved patients to all new bereavement counsellors and trainee counsellors. SBTS is working with GMBS to design a training program for external services (based on the successful workshop delivered to counsellors from the Jewish Community in 2022).

- SBTS has a referral pathway from NHS Talking Therapies (including referrals from GPs re-directed to SBTS), GMBS, Living Well and Suicide Bereavement Workers. We are developing new pathways to improve patient access to our service.
- SBTS is working closely with: GMBS creating a seamless journey for bereaved people who require support. Living Well providing loss counselling. Arts for the Blues - diversifying our offer for patients and taking part in research. Specialist Psychotherapy Service - offering specialist treatment to those who's grief has become further complicated over time.
- SBTS is working closely with the University of Salford, and Tavistock and Portman Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training providers in Manchester and Leeds building relationships and training places. Thanks to this collaboration, clinical staff develop their skills and deepen their understanding of mourning and loss, and placements for psychotherapists are created, diversifying the clinical offer for the patients.

# 430

referrals received. 305 to bereavement therapy and 125 to our Loss Counsellor. The number of referrals is gradually increasing.

# 85%

of patients chose to be seen face-to-face.

### 5

face-to-face and remote therapy is offered from five locations around Salford.

#### PATIENT FEEDBACK

I lost my father to COVID last year. Due to all the COVID regulations I could not say goodbye to him in hospital and the funeral was very short not allowing for any emotions to be processed. This was a very emotional time for me, and I knew from previous experience that having someone to talk to would be helpful.

I was well received into the service and enjoyed that the person led approach let me choose what I wanted to talk about. My therapist guided me through my feelings and emotions that originally looked impossible to process became clearer and easier to navigate.

In a way I always knew I would walk through my grief, but I believe that with the help of my therapist I managed to keep a steady pace that allowed me to get to the other side quicker than I would otherwise.

*Even though I think 6 sessions are short I believe I accomplished a great deal with them and would recommend the service to everyone who is grieving and ready to talk about it.* 



#### LIVING WELL

Salford Living Well is a multiagency support offer, for people with mental health needs that are not met by the current primary and secondary care structures. In Salford, there are approximately 5000 people in this cohort, often representing at primary care, with no further support available in the system or unable to access support until reaching crisis point.

The offer was developed over a three year period to co-

design, co-produce and codeliver support in a person centred, trauma-informed way. The model is delivered jointly between Six Degrees, Mind in Salford, Start Inspiring Minds, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust, GM Lingua, Society Inc and many more.

Six Degrees provides psychological therapists to the Living Well Initiative. There is a dedicated loss counsellor and psychological therapists that support the multi-disciplinary team through supervision, reflective spaces, training opportunities for staff and group work for the Living Well population. The psychological therapies aspect of Living Well is in its infancy and the work is developing. We are proud to be part of the Living Well offer.

#### WORK WITH THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE JEWISH COMMUNITY PROJECT

We are proud to have been able to continue to support our patients in the Jewish community this year. We have been working to further develop links in the community, we are also seeking to offer Talking Therapies to male Jewish patients who wish to see a therapist from their community.

case study Jewish patient, Yiddish speaker



The patient presented to the service 20 weeks pregnant after experiencing infertility and miscarriages. She presented with low mood and high levels of anxiety over her pregnancy. She reported ongoing negative, obsessional and intrusive thoughts about losing her baby. The patient felt feelings of shame that her body was not functioning as it should and felt as though she was not a good enough religious person. The patient highlighted that she preferred a Jewish

practitioner that better understood her culture and nuances. Her goal was to address the ongoing anxiety, obsessional thinking and rumination.

During the patient's sessions, her feelings of loss over her past pregnancies were validated and the anxiety over her current pregnancy was normalised. CBT techniques were used to address the anxiety, intrusive thinking and ruminations and psychoeducation was used to consider the emotional and logical brain, and its role in anxiety. We used breathing, grounding exercises and mindfulness to help the patient connect to the here and now. Following the completion of therapy, the patient reported being able to better manage her anxiety and intrusive thinking and feels more in control of her emotions and thoughts. We used a relapse prevention blueprint to review progress and address future concerns.

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#### WORK WITH THE FARSI COMMUNITY

We are currently in the process of setting up a self-referral pathway for the Farsi-speaking students at the City Skills part of Salford City College. Once this project is up and running, the staff at the City Skills College will be able to refer any Farsi-speaking students who may need support with their mental health.

Creating new referral pathways will make it easier for the Farsi-speaking community to access mental health. Due to language barriers and unfamiliarity with the healthcare system in the UK, individuals from this community who may need support with their mental health can go without receiving support for many years.

We have been engaging with the Farsispeaking community by hosting and attending community events. These events facilitate building a meaningful and effective relationship with the community.

At Six Degrees we have a clinician who speaks Persian (Farsi). The main reason he entered the world of therapy was due to his skills in language. Working with the Farsi-speaking community and delivering therapy sessions without the need for an interpreter can offer various benefits:

- Overcomes potential language barriers, allowing for more effective and accurate communication between the therapist and the client. This leads to a deeper understanding of the client's thoughts, feelings, and experiences, facilitating a more meaningful therapeutic relationship.
- Cultural competence is enhanced throughout the workforce. It demonstrates respect for the people's cultural background and values, creating a safe and inclusive space where they can fully express themselves. Therapists who can provide therapy in the client's native language can better understand cultural traces, beliefs, and traditions, leading to more culturally sensitive therapeutic sessions.
- It fosters a stronger sense of trust and rapport. People may feel more comfortable and at ease when they can directly communicate with their therapist in their preferred language. This can enhance engagement, participation, and overall treatment outcomes.
- A deeper exploration of complex emotions and experiences is allowed. It enables people to express themselves more fluently and articulately, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their concerns. This can lead to more effective therapy interventions and a more personalized treatment approach.
- Effective communication is promoted, cultural sensitivity, trust, and empowerment. It enhances the therapeutic experience and increases the likelihood of positive outcomes for clients within this community.

This model is built on our work with the Polish community, where we offer Polish speaking therapists.



# PARTNERSHIP WORKING

#### **ART THERAPY**

Six Degrees works with an art psychotherapist who runs art therapy groups for women's health peri/menopause, perinatal and within the orthodox Jewish community. Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art media as its primary mode of expression and communication. Within this context, art is not used as diagnostic tool but as a medium to address emotional issues that may be confusing and distressing (British Association of Art Therapists). Creating artworks and allowing for deeper expression of difficult emotions can lead to greater understanding and insight. Group art therapy can have profound effects in allowing people to connect with other's experiences, gaining invaluable peer support and creative expression.

At the beginning of the year our art therapist ran an art therapy group at START for women experiencing the peri/menopause. This group was in response to the lack of information around this period of change. Women's highest rates of suicide are between the ages of 45-55, typically the time of the peri/menopause. The group aimed to offer a safe creative space for women to explore their experiences of the menopause, gain information and psychoeducation about the physical and mental symptoms, learn mindfulness techniques and use the art materials to express and process their experiences. The group received incredibly positive feedback with improvements across both outcome measures (STAR and WemWebs) for all participants. There was 100% retention of participants with all members finishing the course.

The success of this group has led to another Women's Health group that currently has 8 participants and a waiting list of 10 with referrals from Six Degrees, START and Wellbeing Matters.

PATIENT FEEDBACK



I have learnt a lot, that lots of other people are going through the same as I *am, art therapy puts* your thoughts onto paper things that you didn't realise were there.

Evaluation Art Therapy for Perimenopause &

Menopause at

PATIENT FEEDBACK

It has helped a lot with my mental health learning how the brain works during the menopause and how the body works. It has helped by meeting other people that are going through the same thing.



#### **COLLABORATING WITH OUR PARTNERS**

We work closely with our partners to improve access to talking therapies and to support the reduction of health inequalities within our communities.

At a partnership meeting in 2022 we were praised for our work with people experiencing long covid, as we work toward collaboration, understanding and facilitating those who may present with additional complexity. I am thankful to everyone involved for all their hard work.

Our GP partners spoke highly of our service, outlining that Six Degrees were an incredible resource for supporting the citizens of Salford with their mental health and about the significant difference made.

Our Business Operations Manager has conducted an event with Salford University supporting the leaders of the future in a range of industries across the Greater Manchester area.

We are proud to work closely with our partners in Salford. The Alternative Provider Federation (APF) seeks to raise awareness and influence the delivery of provision for those in our communities who are less able to voice their needs.

### **OUR WORKFORCE**

We are proud to have trained six trainee Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP) and Trainee Assistant Practitioners (TAP) in the last year. In the last five years we have trained 26 trainee PWPs and five TAPs.

Our trainee cohorts have responded positively to returning to in-person learning and working. This has allowed them to re-connect with the rest of their cohort, with the Six Degrees team and to share different working experiences in informal spaces.

Over the last year we have developed our workforce with additional training:

20 over 20 practitioners attended training to support their engagement with the communities we serve, for example, motivational interviewing and the foundations of CBT training.
4 staff have completed courses to strengthen the support we provide to our teams including senior leadership training and PWP supervisor training.
2 practitioners commenced training in different therapeutic approaches (D58 and IPT).
5 staff attended courses to develop their confidence in managing challenging situations.

#### A REFLECTION ON STAFF TRAINING DURING THE PANDEMIC



During the pandemic, everyone was asked to work from home, for me it was working from home and studying from home. I feel this offered several benefits and challenges.

Working from home firstly provided flexibility in managing my day-to-day schedule and allowing for a better work-life balance. I no longer needed to wake up super early to get ready and attend clinic or the office, this meant that I had a little longer to sleep and rest which was welcomed. I also had time for some life admin which made me feel productive as I was getting more done in a day.

However, remote working also brought significant challenges. A blurring of work-life boundaries began to occur from the very beginning and the need for self-discipline. My bedroom became the place where I rested and conducted therapy sessions listening to 100's of difficult stories of people's lives. It was hard to switch off from work as I could not physically leave work at the office and go home. Another challenge I felt daily was communication difficulties, I found it very challenging to develop my clinical skills as I was not able to utilise my colleagues as much as I would have if I was working from the office.

I encountered social isolation during working hours. I am a social person and enjoy other people's company, therefore working from home, and not having any in-person contact with colleagues felt lonely and isolating.

Overall, working from home can provide flexibility and comfort, however, I found it counterproductive for my professional and selfdevelopment as the opportunities for learning are minimal due to the isolation. The return to more connected practice is welcomed as we move forward.

#### **OUR VOLUNTEERS**

Over the last year, we have had four volunteer trainee counsellors from the University of Salford and UCEN Manchester on placement.

We maintained relationships with training providers such as the University of Salford and Northern School of Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy and built new relationships with UCEN, Bangor University and Edge Hill.

We are collaborating on developing and implementing an innovative group art intervention called 'Arts for the Blues'. Developing placements for and supporting trainees offering various therapeutic models gives our patients a wider range of modalities suited to their individual needs. We also develop collaboration with other services offering placements such as Specialist Psychotherapy Service.

Offering student placements allows the Salford Bereavement Therapy Service to strengthen the offer to the patients. We are supporting clinical professionals to work with bereaved patients by offering them internal training, supervision, and involvement with the team. Our trainees are invited to be fully involved in the life of the service so they can develop not only their clinical skills but develop other transferable skills to use in their professional environment. We are proud to be able to offer trainee counsellors a career pathway and the opportunity to join a qualified team. FEEDBACK RELATED TO THE WORK OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

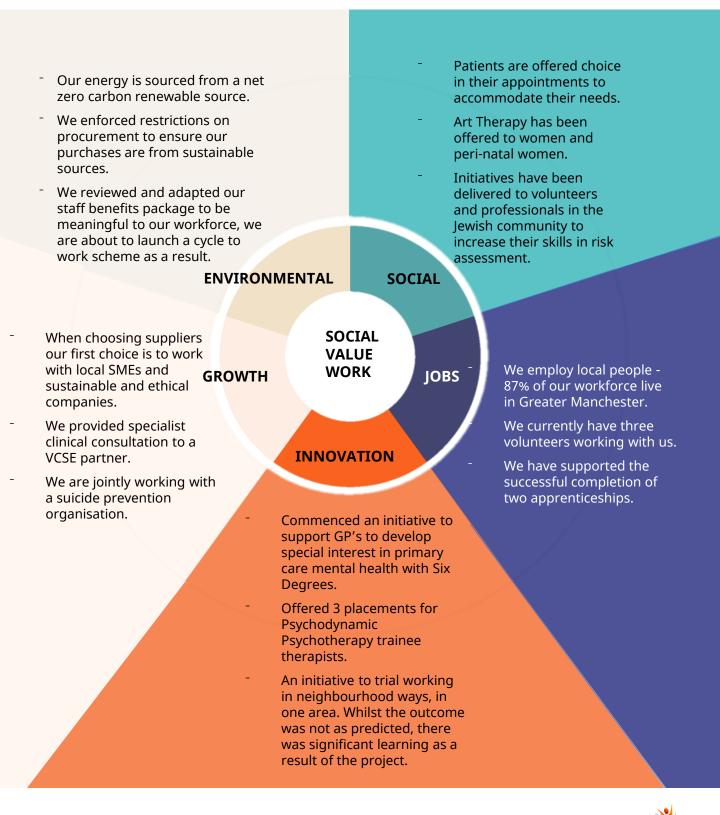
My therapist was caring, patient, and calming. She listened and didn't rush me. She also allowed for me to talk about things I find difficult to discuss with others. I felt safe in the environment.

Having counselling helped me out of a rut. I found it easier to get things off my chest with this than talking to friends or family. I felt at ease talking about my loss during these sessions, things that I wouldn't have discussed in public were easier to talk about in therapy. I am now looking at life in a better frame of mind. I feel more confident and am now embracing friends instead of shunning them. I am still struggling to get over my loss, but things really are getting better, slowly but surely. Thank you to everyone who helped me.



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE ADDING SOCIAL VALUE

In 2022/23 we continued to work on our social values. These measures review the positive value we create for the economy, communities and society, above and beyond what we offer as a service. Below is a flavour of some of the social value work we completed in this year:



# FINANCES

Profit and loss for the financial years ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

	2023 Draft *	2022 Approved	2021 Approved
Income	2,251,403	2,143,254	2,070,649
Administrative expenses	2,335,677	1,854,976	1,895,326
Operating (Deficit)/Surplus	(84,274)	288,278	175,323
Tax on Deficit/Surplus	(16,012)	53,509	(772)
(Deficit)/Surplus for the financial year	(68,262)	234,769	176,095

\* Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are draft and for illustrative purposes but not yet approved.

### MOVING FORWARD – THE YEAR AHEAD

Moving forward into 2023 -2024 we intend to continue to transition from remote to new ways of working.

The next year marks the last year of our threeyear strategic objectives. We will review what has been achieved and begin to plan for the next three years and launch our new objectives in April 2024. We will continue to support the communities we serve to optimise their mental health and to work with our stakeholders and partners to address health inequalities.

A huge thank you to our board of directors in supporting the organisation and our staff over the last year.



