



Inspire North

Catalyst For Change

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023/2024
Creating a World Where Everyone Matters

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Welcome to our 2023/24 annual review and what a significant year it has been.

We saw a lot of changes to our Board for Trustees– saying 'goodbye' to David Strachan and Jacqueline Hallam and 'hello' to – Brad Strutt, Sade Ladejobi, Olivia Bradshaw, Margaret Iyekowa, Duane Samuels, Sharon Whitehurst and a boardroom apprentice – supported by DHLUC Naeha Granger and welcomed our new Chief Finance Officer Adam Miller.

We continued with our growth strategy and established our dementia offer in Bradford as well as attained the Silver Social Value Accreditation (SVQM). We are only one of seven organisations nationally, and the only voluntary sector organisation in Yorkshire and the Humber to have been awarded this prestigious accreditation. This demonstrates that as a group, Inspire North has an open and transparent practice to delivering social and local value, including ethical governance, transparent decision-making, and an ethical culture.

The external environment was fraught with concerns over Local authority bankruptcy and reductions in funding to ICBs (Integrated Care Boards) so we had to plan to ensure we could navigate any changes we may face. Undeterred we pushed forwards developing three new units of excellent quality accommodation for our OWL (Our Way Leeds) contract. We are looking at procuring further properties into the OWL contract in the future too.

We continued to improve our performance and drive forwards our trauma informed agenda as well as our anti-racism strategy offering cultural humility training and Ramadan awareness sessions to name but a couple of initiatives.

We held strategic road-shows to develop our next 5-year Inclusive Business and Growth Strategy which we successfully launched in March 2024. The Future Proof Strategy sets out our ambitions for the next five years in terms of growth and delivering high quality effective services. It can be viewed on the Inspire North website.

Our services continued to innovate with Aspire our EIP (Early Intervention in Psychosis) service's second Voyage to Recovery. This is a national project which aimed to sail from the South Coast around Scotland and back via the East Coast, with our team sailing from Hartlepool to Ipswich. Adventure therapy uses new and challenging environments to create physical demand. The trip will help the participants form social connections and promote the learning of new skills.

Men's Talk, a creative advocacy project for men who have experienced mental health issues; using applied theatre and film making to enable the men to gain confidence, develop new skills and create original material; with the aim of reducing stigma, encouraging men to talk about their mental health and enabling change, continues going from strength to strength.

We have responded strongly to the increase in regulatory activity and demands including registering for Ofsted and preparing for the Social Housing (Reg) Act 2023 including new consumer standards.

Wow, so many things achieved, and so much hard work done, a massive thank you once again to all our people who make the organisation what it is; innovative, creative, and successful, in order that we support our clients to the best of our ability to fulfil their potential, building brighter futures and creating a world where everyone matters.

Ruth Kettle, *Chief Executive*



Ruth Kettle, *Chief Executive*

WELCOME

INTRODUCING

the Senior Leadership Team



Ruth Kettle
Chief Executive Officer



Donna Gooby
Director of People and Culture



Adam Miller
Chief Finance Officer
(joined August 2023)



Sinéad Cregan
Director of Development and Innovation



Will Goode
Acting Group Director of Operations



Kira Moxon-Lumb
Acting Group Director of Operations

Board for Trustees

Claire Vilarrubi

Chair
Inspire North

Karl Milner

Vice Chair
Inspire North
(Retired 28th June 2024)

Philip Turnpenny

Freedom to Speak Up and Safeguarding Champion
Inspire North

Lisa Bradley

Treasurer and Value for Money Champion
Inspire North

Olivia Bradshaw

Independent Trustee of Inspire North

Duane Samuels

Independent Trustee of Inspire North

Dave Roche

Housing Champion
Independent Trustee of Foundation

Vijay Assani

Independent Trustee of Foundation

Sharon Whitehurst

Independent Trustee for Foundation and Employee Wellbeing Champion

Sade Ladejobi

Independent Trustee of Community Links

Brad Strutt

Independent Trustee of Community Links

Margaret Iyekowa

Independent Trustee for Community Links

OUR PURPOSE, VISION AND VALUES

Our purpose is to create **A World Where Everyone Matters.**

Our four values are:



People

We will always treat you as an individual



Integrity

We will always do the right thing, even if it is hard



Collaboration

We will always achieve more together



Passion

We will always go the extra mile

WHAT'S NEW

Launch of Bradford Dementia Hub

The mobilisation of Bradford Dementia Hub (BDH) was a big focus this year.

We announced the new service externally on our website and issued a press release to media featuring quotes from Chief Executive Ruth Kettle and our partner organisations. We achieved coverage for the press release in the Bradford Telegraph and Argus, a key local title with a daily readership of 10,429 online and 5858 print.

We have also built a new website for BDH to act as a one-stop-shop for the service. The website provides information about dementia and how it affects people, information about what the service offers and our partners, information on BDH's commitment to diversity and inclusion, an online referral form, events page and contact details.



Bradford Dementia Hub

Social media accounts were also launched for BDH to help spread the message about the new service. Bradford Dementia Hub Facebook is being used to promote the service and key events. The team are getting more comfortable with using social media and understanding the importance of external communications for their service.

Bradford Dementia Hub officially launched in July 2023 and we held a launch event the following February 2024. We had guest speakers including The Lord Mayor of Bradford. We got to learn more about Bradford Dementia Hub's partners, Khidmat Centres and Bradford Bulls RLFC, The Bradford Bulls Foundation and the amazing work they are doing to raise awareness and support those affected by dementia living in Bradford. It was a great opportunity to network and meet other organisations.

Fundraising

We have continued to fundraise online for Inspire North, Community Links and Foundation this year.

We have had some donations this year and we are so grateful, not all were monetary in value but nonetheless important for our clients and tenants.

In January, The Yorkshire North and East District Methodist Youth Team raised £1453.07 for Inspire North by sleeping out in the cold January weather. This is an annual Sleep Out for Homelessness event where members of the community give up their beds for an evening under the stars to support those facing homelessness.

The Pagabo Group donated £3,333.33 to Community Links from their UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum.

Foundation Scarborough also received a donation of £411 from a local supporter who made and sold soap dishes, giving the proceeds to the team at Scarborough.



Rose Villa Greenhouse

Rose Villa is planning on putting up a greenhouse in their garden to give clients the opportunity to learn gardening skills and have access to healthy, home-grown food. The idea was co-produced with a client who is excited to spend more time outside and grow vegetables, especially chilies.

Aspire Voyage to Recovery

The Bright Ideas fund was pleased to support Aspire's Voyage to Recovery. The Voyage saw aspire clients set off on an adventure of a lifetime as they sailed from Ipswich to Hartlepool as a form of adventure therapy.

Positive Choices Trauma Informed Space

Positive Choices were pleased to be awarded an internal grant to improve its group delivery room in York. The design was co-produced with clients, and this has helped to ensure the space is trauma informed and more welcoming. The fidget toys and wellbeing resources have been effective at supporting anxiety and concentration during sessions and for colleagues when in meetings.



Internal Grants Scheme

The Internal Grants Scheme is an opportunity for clients to work with colleagues to create inspiring and innovative co-produced projects which improve or enhance their experience in service.

In 2023-2024 we awarded the following:

East Grange Drive Cookery Classes

East Grange Drive sought funding for cookery classes. Classes are planned and delivered by clients living at East Grange. These classes help clients to develop new skills and provides the opportunity to socialise.



Becoming a Trauma Informed Organisation

Our journey in becoming A Trauma Informed Organisation by 2030: This year Inspire North has stated its intent with signing the West Yorkshire Adversity, Trauma and Resilience Charter with the completion of the Readiness Checklist; highlighting our long-term commitment on the journey towards co-creating trauma informed systems and services.

This year we have set out our ambition for the whole organisation to become trauma informed. A project lead role has been established and we have devised and rolled out a trauma informed reflective framework to enable us to assess how well we are doing from front line services to central services and at leadership level. This will guide us in making the systemic changes across the organisation to become more trauma informed, including leadership, training, service delivery, our environment, coproduction, and policies.

The framework will also support us to identify what we are doing well in being trauma informed, and to share good practice and resources. There have been many examples of trauma informed practice throughout the year, which have included creating supportive spaces to come together as colleagues including 'Tea N Talk' sessions, Lunch and Learn opportunities, time given for reflective practice and taking time to be in outdoor spaces as a team, benefiting from nature.

This has also included improvements to client journeys, by taking a strength-based review of our client assessment documents and improving the physical environments we deliver support to our clients in, maximising opportunities through internal grant schemes to create client-led wellbeing spaces and gardens, which have been co-produced to benefit all.

Being effectively trauma informed rests heavily on the strength of the relationships we build, both in and across the organisation, a culture built on connection, trust, and respect and crucially, when we get things wrong, repair. We look ahead to embedding this further into our day-to-day work practice and in future partnership working.

Volunteering

Inspire North wishes to thank all the amazing volunteers across its Community Links and Foundation services for the valuable support that you provide. Whether it is bringing lived experience as a peer mentor, helping with a monthly activity group, your help and passion is gratefully received by our clients.

In 2023/24 Inspire North had around 35 active volunteers across its services plus another 25 volunteers that are provided through partnerships with The Conservation Volunteers and Age UK (Calderdale and Kirklees), providing us with around 60 volunteers across the entire group.

Volunteers contributed just over 3,000 hours in 2023/24. The equivalent of around 429 days. An average of around 80 hours and 1.5 days per week per volunteer.

Our volunteer opportunities are built around flexibility and support. We ensure that our offer is flexible, and that support and supervision is in place to enable volunteers to get the most out of their time with services and clients. Volunteers also have access to a huge range of training opportunities to support personal development, and some volunteers go on to gain paid employment with us.

Investing in Volunteers

Inspire North gained the UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management, 'Investing in Volunteers', in 2018. This was renewed for a third year in September 2024.

Supporting this activity, we have a Volunteer Development Manager and a network of volunteer coordinators and service leads who steer the development and growth of volunteering across the group. As well as volunteering we offer opportunities for student placements across Community Links and Foundation services. Building relationships with various universities we aim to link up students with services to provide enrichment opportunities and build experience in a health and social care setting.

[Information on our Volunteering opportunities and Student Placements can be found on our website.](#)

"I don't believe I've ever felt so immediately comfortable in a new role. Thank you – I very much appreciate your kindness." (Quote from Volunteer)



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



For Black History Month in October, colleagues attended Leeds Black History Walk and wrote a blog reflecting on this experience and sharing thoughts. We discussed representation within the workplace and how leaders can support colleagues. Throughout the month we shared communications and content via social media.

This year, we celebrated World Hijab Day. Colleagues brought in hijabs for us all to wear and stand in solidarity with Muslim hijabi women. It was a lovely day of learning and coming together. One colleague shared their experience of wearing a hijab:



"I felt empowered wearing the hijab and it felt nice to be in solidarity with my Muslim colleagues. I enjoyed having open conversations about my own experiences but also hearing other peoples' experiences. It opened my eyes to another culture, and I learnt so much. I hope we can continue to have conversations like this and ensure all colleagues feel seen and respected."

In March, we reflected on Ramadan with colleagues and members of the People of Colour Network shared their experiences and why Ramadan is important to them.



"Ramadan felt like pure magic to me when I was a kid, and its significance has always evolved for me over the years. Doing it year after year does not take its toll on me like I thought it would. In fact, it has given more than it has taken. I learn something new about myself and the world around me every time."

This was received well by colleagues, and it was appreciated.

For South Asian Heritage Month this year Central Services celebrated by sharing traditional foods, such as samosas, pakoras and spring rolls for lunch. Colleagues also had conversations about South Asian culture and shared stories. Some of our colleagues came dressed for the occasion too.



To celebrate the Year of the Dragon, colleagues enjoyed a Chinese painting session led by members of the People Team. Everyone enjoyed the relaxing atmosphere and made some lovely artwork.





Silver Social Value Award

We were the first and only voluntary sector organisation in Yorkshire to achieve the Social Value Quality Mark Silver Award. The Quality Mark recognises distinction in values-led business that benefits

consumers, communities, and the planet. We are delighted to have reached the Level 2 Silver accreditation.

The award is licensed by Social Value Quality Mark CIC – an independent Community Interest Company that exists to uphold the highest standards of values-led business, with evidence reviewed by an independent oversight panel.

Social Value Quality Mark® (Nov 2023): We have been awarded the Silver Accreditation. We are only one of seven organisations nationally, and the only voluntary sector organisation in Yorkshire and the Humber, to have been awarded this prestigious accreditation. This demonstrates that as a group, Inspire North has an open and transparent practice to delivering social and local value, including ethical governance, transparent decision-making, and an ethical culture. We have engaged the group, and we have set our baseline in preparation to embed and progress to the Gold Award.

We have been successful in retaining our ISO27001, Information Security surveillance audit accreditations with no non-conformities or potential non-conformities. This demonstrates that we have taken all necessary steps to assess potential security risks, to ensure these risks are mitigated and that security controls are fit-for-purpose. We will be moving to the new ISO27001:2022 standard in October 2024.

Customer Services Excellence (CSE): The external inspection took place on 14 August 2023, and we are pleased to confirm that we retained the same level of compliance, with 13 areas being scored as compliance plus.

ISO 14001 sets out the criteria for an environmental management system. It maps out a framework that organisations can follow to set up an effective environmental management system. ISO 14001 certification remains valid for three years. Maintaining certification requires an assessment once a year, we had our annual assessment in June 2023 (and again in June 2024) and feedback was positive with no notifications for improvements.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs): We are now part of the RSH's small provider TSMs data pilot and hope to share learnings and best practice with other housing providers. TSMs are being discussed as part of the monthly Housing Governance Group. We are viewing this as a pilot year, with learnings around process being captured as part of the TSM Action Plan.

Work with Leeds Beckett and Leeds University Business School final year students

Inspire North worked with Tony Morgan, Associate Professor in Innovation Management Practice, University of Leeds, Leeds University Business School, on their innovation module. During the module, the students developed a prototype solution to address the use of AI within business development and they created a value-based pitch which they presented to us at the Innovation Challenge event in December 2023.

Inspire North has worked with the final year business students at Leeds Beckett University during 2023/24 as part of an ongoing partnership with the Business School and Business Development. This year we worked with three groups of final year business students during the academic year on three projects that all related to the potential use of AI to enhance our business.

This is a practical way for students to learn about the value the third sector and the role it must play in service delivery.





York St John's University Collaboration

Our team has been actively contributing to the development of the next generation of professionals by delivering guest lectures at York St John University which increases social value and supports future recruitment. We are proud to have submitted joint research with the university, aimed at understanding and maintaining trauma-informed environments in residential mental health settings. Additionally, we are in the early stages of discussing a new research project that promises to further enhance our contributions to the field. We look forward to sharing more details as the project progresses.

Attune Project Oxford University

Inspire North is a partner in ATTUNE, a research project that uses creative arts to explore young people's experiences and understandings of mental health and difficult life experiences. Some of the young people from our Scarborough service have been involved with this project and have produced a short film about their mental health experiences.

New College Durham and Collingwood College at Durham University

Foundation Durham work with New College Durham and Collingwood College at Durham University to provide learning opportunities for their students. They are able to provide placements for Social Work Students to support them to achieve their learning outcomes and demonstrate the ability to practice confidently in accordance with professional social work values and ethics. Our work with Collingwood College includes providing an internship opportunity as part of their Changemakers programme. These internships focus on improving the lives of others in the Northeast, gaining understanding about the complexity and causes of key issues affecting communities or groups of people, and working towards sustainable and lasting social change.

We are looking forward to building on the success of some great placements over the last year and exploring further opportunities to work together in the future.

Best Companies

We are proud to share in 2023 that we achieved 2-star Best Companies accreditation, reflecting an 'outstanding' commitment to workplace engagement. This achievement highlights our ongoing efforts to create a positive and engaging work environment for everyone. The Best Companies survey, based on employee feedback and independent analysis, evaluates engagement across eight key factors: Leadership, Wellbeing, My Manager, My Team, My Company, Personal Growth, Giving Something Back, and Fair Deal. These insights are essential for helping us foster a thriving and motivated workforce while continuously improving our work environment.

Additionally, we are thrilled to be recognised among the top 20 Best Companies in our sector, reflecting an improvement of 7 places from last year. This accolade highlights our commitment to being the best employer we can be, where everyone can be their authentic selves and thrive.



Pride at Inspire North

We relaunched the LGBTQ+ Network and have reinstated meetings. We planned and created content across services for LGBTQ+ History Month relating to each service.

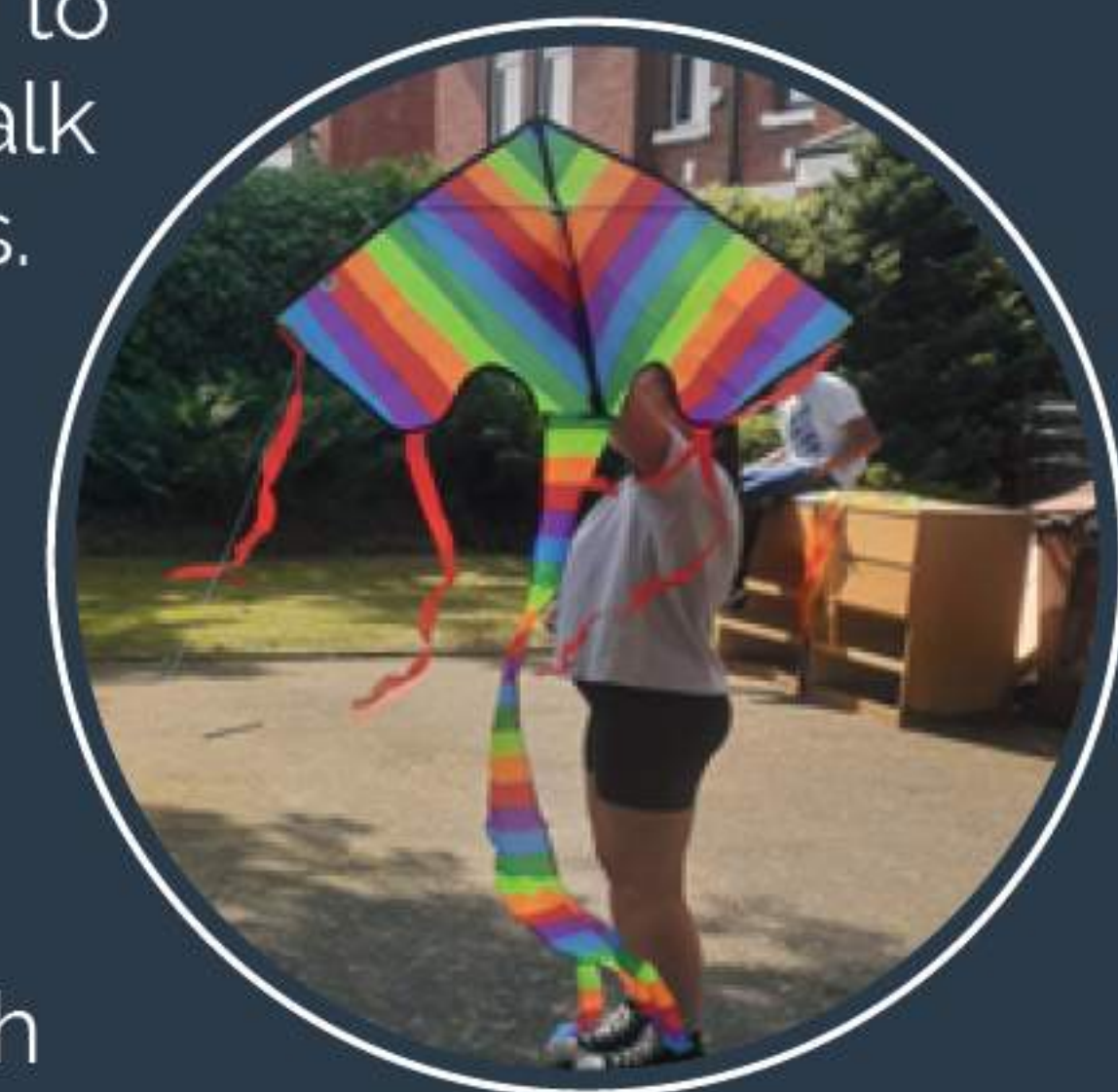


We attended Leeds Pride again this year and joined in the parade and held our stall with other charities including, GIPSIL, BARCA Leeds, Leeds Mind and Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service.

The LGBTQ+ Network purchased a stock of LGBTQ+ Pride supplies that can be used year-round. Services can now request to have these items loaned to them for use and display at their sites. We are keen for all of our services to be welcoming and inclusive to everyone, including LGBTQ+ people. When services display pride items it can make service users and staff feel more welcomed and safer in that space.

In July, Central Services hosted a Pride Lunch and Learn with the LGBTQIA+ Network creating and developing a presentation and advertised internally and then externally once the event took place. This was a great session that led to interesting discussions across the services. The LGBTQ+ Network has been revamped and is now meeting regularly and having discussions and looking at ways to make changes.

Octavia House celebrated Pride Month. For Pride month, the aim was to recognise queer joy and invite those in the LGBTQIA+ community as well as allies, to get involved in the party. This event was co-produced with clients who identify as queer. They created a spread of rainbow food, encouraged clients to express what 'love' and 'pride' mean to them creatively through chalk art and decorated tote bags. For their Neurodiversity Pride event, they focussed on celebrating individuals who are neurodiverse and co-produced this with neurodiverse clients. Kites were created and flown with clients decorating them following the theme of the day and blue and purple (the representative colours).



WHAT'S NEW

Refurbishment of Armley Lodge

We developed three self-contained flats in West Leeds which will be used as move-on accommodation for young people who have either experienced homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. This is the first time that Foundation has secured a grant from Homes England to develop accommodation.



Expansion of the Domestic Abuse Navigator Service

A highlight from Foundation Durham this year was the successful recommissioning and expansion of the domestic abuse navigator service in Durham. The team will be able to support more vulnerable clients and increase the safe accommodation provision across County Durham in the next year.

'I can honestly say without the help and support of Foundation Durham and all who work there I wouldn't be as confident or feeling as good about the future they have helped me build, it truly hasn't just been life changing but life saving and is a vital service that should be protected so others can benefit as much as I have. You haven't just given me a home you have given me a life!'

Space to Share Removes Barriers to Accessing Service

Children's Therapeutic Services' Space to Share has been able to support clients to overcome financial barriers. Parents have benefited from being able to have their journey's reimbursed, this has supported sustainability and consistency in being able to ensure their children can attend sessions each week. The service is now offered in Selby too and a student therapist has undertaken their placement within this area, alongside voluntary hours to increase capacity across Richmond and Hambleton.



Positive Choices and University of Leeds

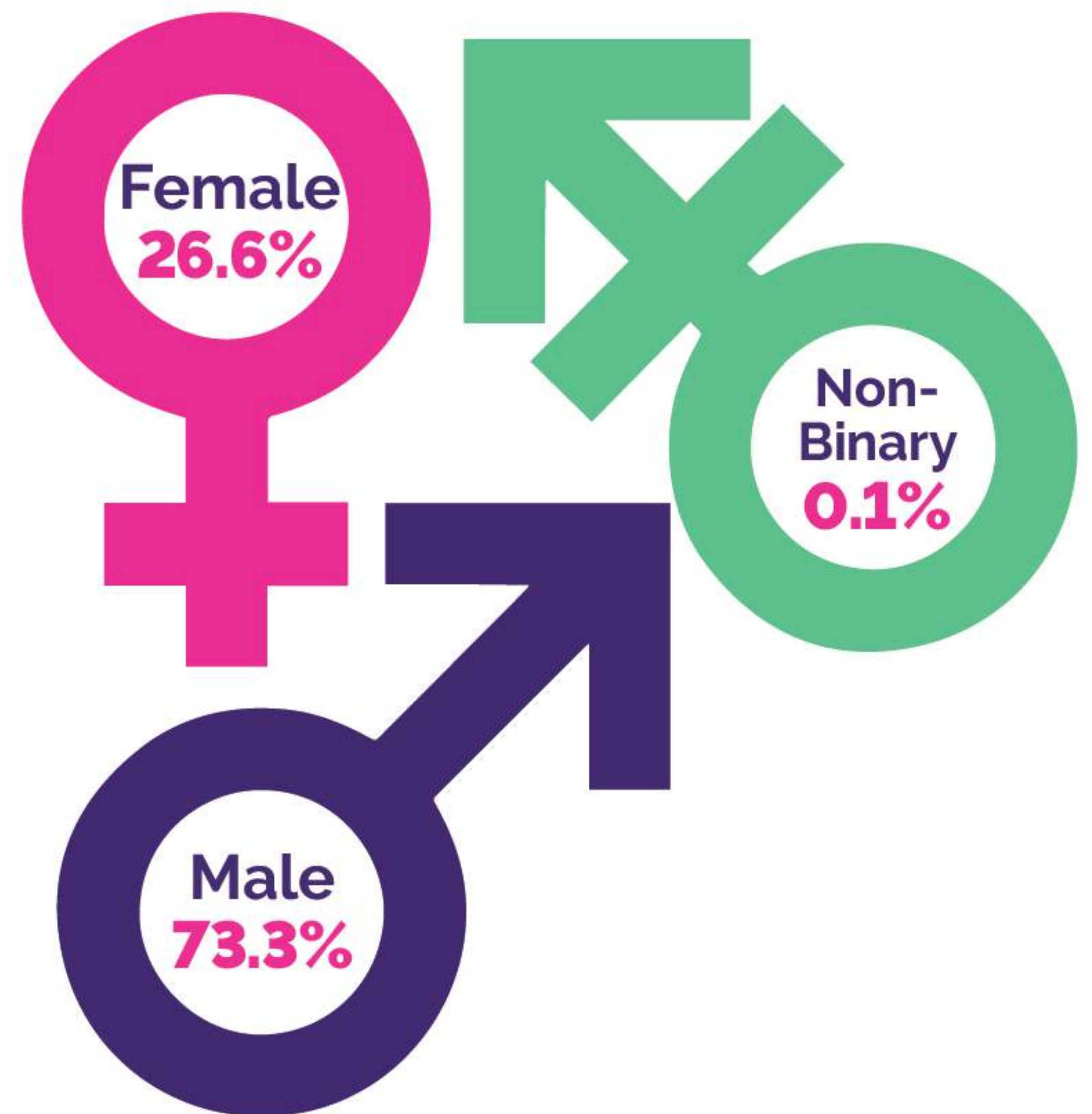
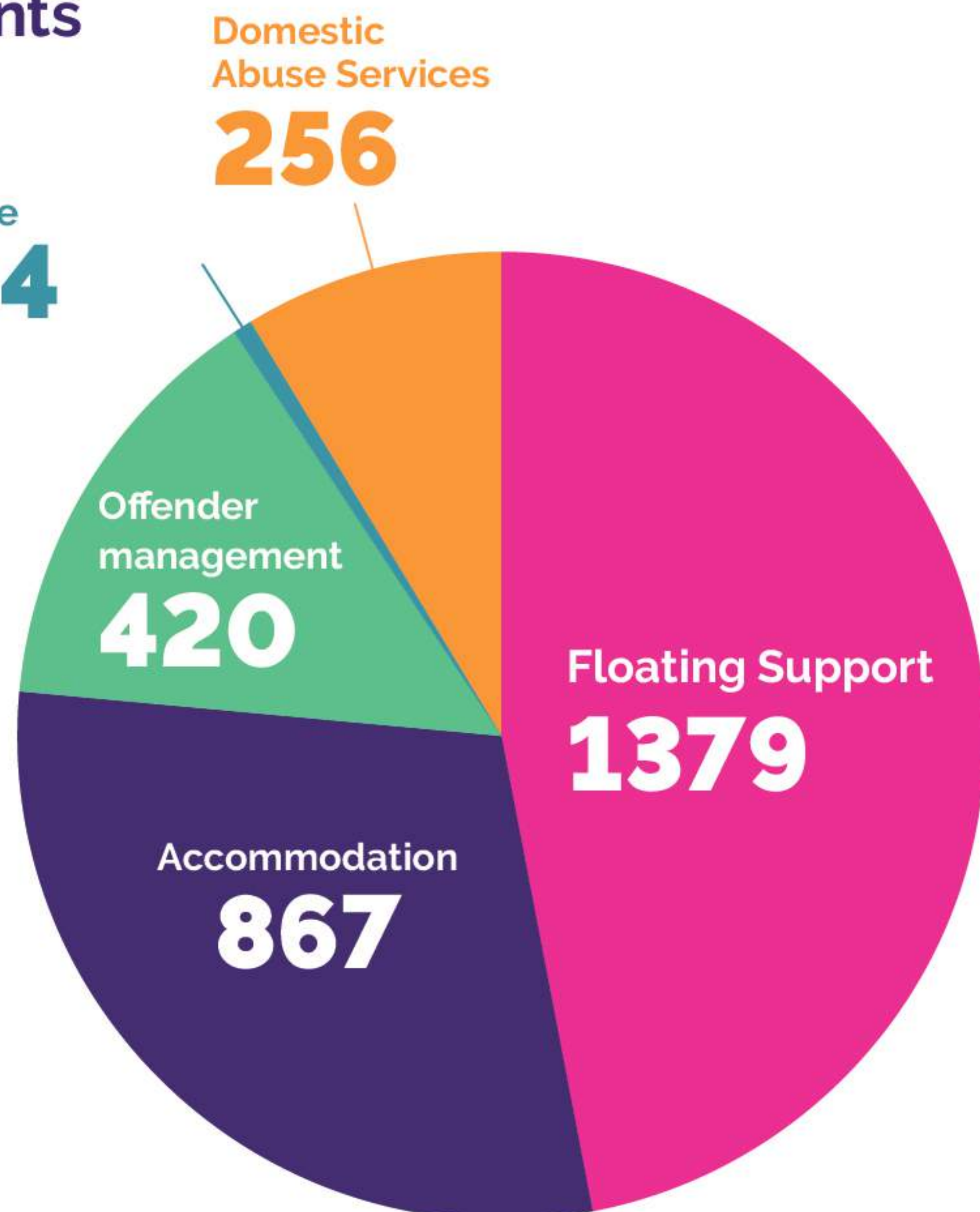
Amongst other North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire services, Positive Choices has taken part in a research project led by the University of Leeds. This project is looking at changing the narrative and response to domestic abuse. The research is due to be published, with opportunities to build partnerships and focus on early intervention and education with children and young people.

OUR CLIENTS, RESIDENTS AND TENANTS: An Overview

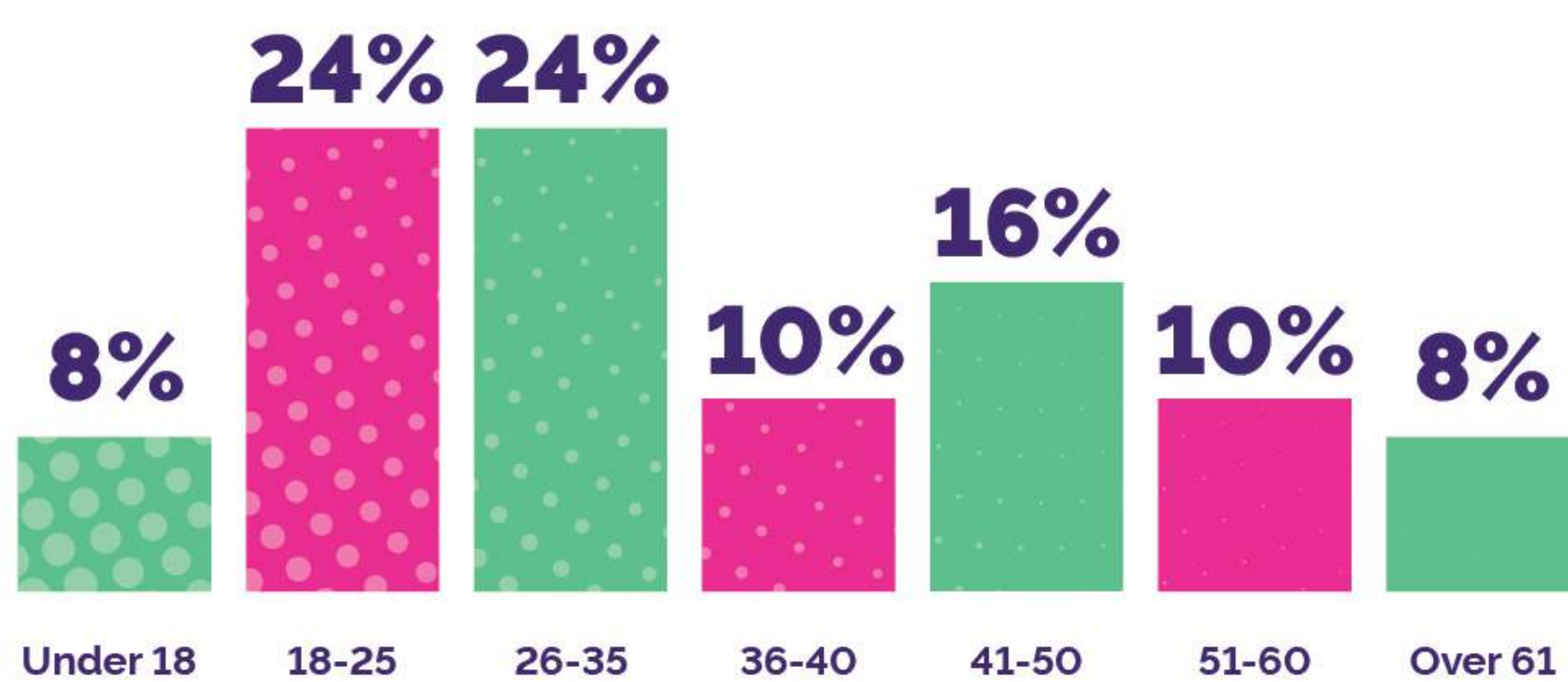
23/24 snapshot

Total Clients
2936

Rise
14



Age Breakdown



Sexuality

HETEROSEXUAL
86%

LGBTQ
5%

NOT ASKED
3%

NOT STATED
4%

OTHER
2%

Ethnicity

WHITE 86.4% **BLACK** 2.6% **ASIAN** 2.6%

DUAL HERITAGE 2.4% **OTHER** 1.5% **NOT KNOWN** 4.5%



23% of clients identified themselves as having a disability

Foundation Annual Satisfaction

Questionnaire 23/24

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY?



85%

My accommodation is at a high standard

85%

I feel safe and secure where I live

74%

My accommodation is easy to heat

63%

My repairs are done quickly

95%

I am treated as a person and with dignity and respect

HOW DID WE DO?

95%

Overall satisfaction

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT US?

94%

I feel that my story is shared appropriately so I don't have to repeat myself

96%

I make my own choices and feel supported through the choices I make

94%

I believe that workers go the extra mile - no one gives up on me

92%

I value the relationship with my worker and feel listened to when I have ideas

93% of clients said they were likely to recommend us to their friends and family.

12% either didn't respond or said they would be 'Neither Likely nor Unlikely' to recommend.

Data based on 104 responses. Percentages based on positive responses ('Agree', 'Great', 'Good', 'OK', 'Extremely likely' and 'likely').

"Since coming into contact with Foundation Durham, my life hasn't just changed for the better but has been saved by the amazing staff who have been there for me. Whether it was help with filling in forms to help with my mental health to moving on to independent living they have been a rock in my corner, having my back when I needed it the most. The weekly support group has been a vital part of my journey as it has helped me develop my social skills as well as making me feel part of a community and not isolated." - *Foundation Durham*

"Very kind and caring soft tone and manner with myself and 'Child'. 'Child' will definitely miss coming." - *Space to Share*

Our therapist not only works with 'Child' but supports with his school too by giving them tools/resources that will help 'Child' best." - *Space to Share*

"I have stopped using violence, my partner feels safe around me and I am a better parent." - *Positive Choices*

"Without my support worker and Foundation, I would not have the home and my kid's back. I wouldn't be where I am now. Keep doing what you are doing." - *Foundation Darlington*

"Foundation support has given me the time and space to grow and learn. They have also given me the tools to live independently, and I am very grateful for that". - *Foundation Harrogate and Craven*



But it was soon realised that going to the gym, though beneficial, barriers such as the weather, oversleeping and travelling to the gym itself, could prevent clients going. So, in November 2023, work started on creating a home gym at one of OWL's Core 2 properties with the help and support of the clients.

Clients are using the gym and making the most of it. Clients have shared their appreciation for this facility and are happy to continue using it.

We caught up with Matt, who initiated the project, and he said:

"Very pleased for the clients and that they appreciate the work. Supporting clients to be active in a way that meets their needs and reduces barriers is key to what we do. This space can encourage client conversations and improve their overall wellbeing."

Feedback from clients is that they like using the gym. Young people who have moved on, return to use the gym as part of their support sessions with their support workers. Clients have also requested that their sessions take place there as this is a safe space for them.

The Service Manager at OWL stated that clients are respectful and follow the rules of the gym, they are proud of their work and see the gym as theirs. They all have ideas for expansion. So, watch this space.

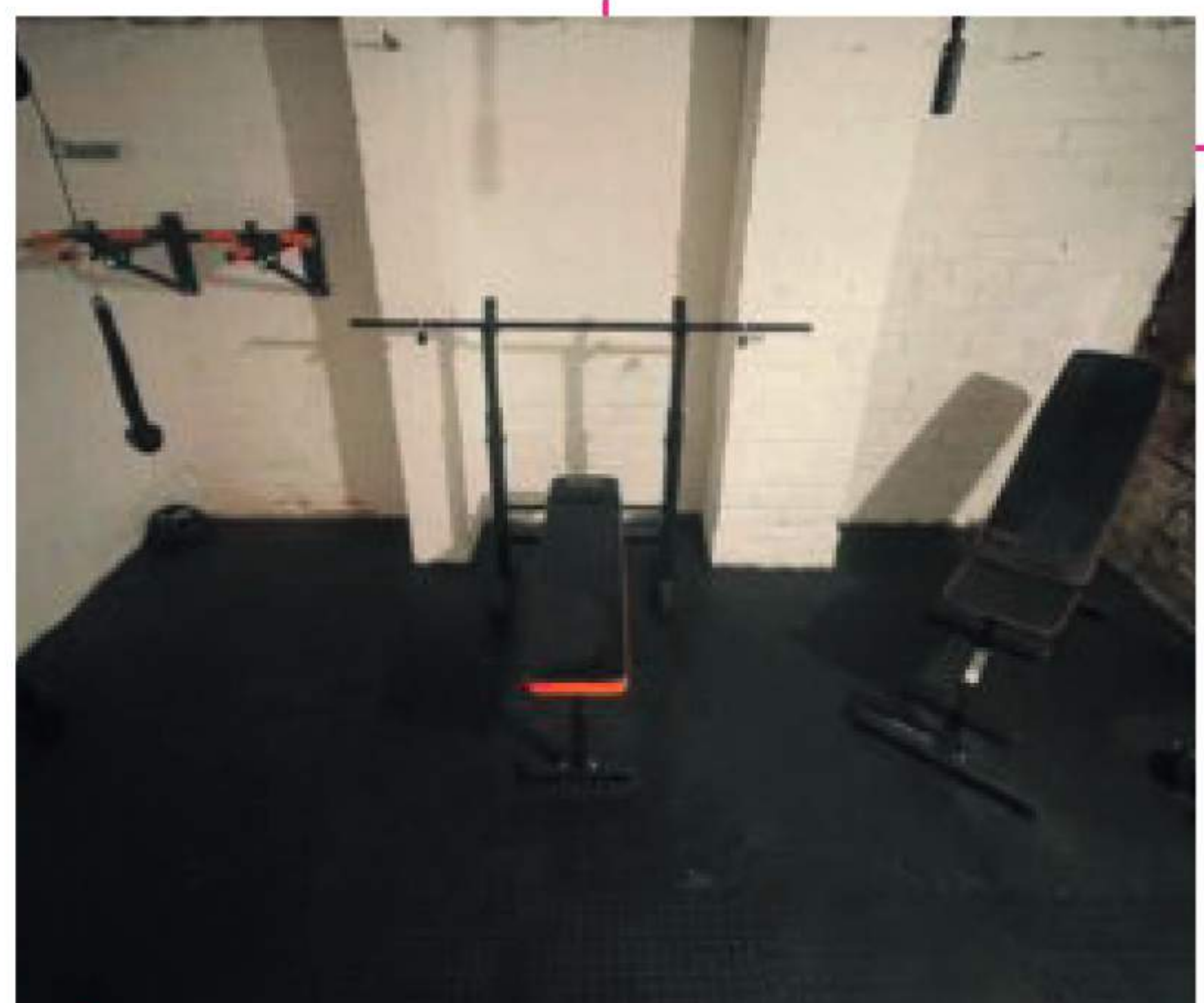
Our Way Leeds' (OWL) Gym Project

Spaces and environments which support and encourage a focus on physical activity and mental wellbeing share many similar qualities with trauma-informed practice, including promoting relationships, reducing social inclusion, and creating empowerment.

Creating such spaces and opportunities enables people to have choice and autonomy over ways to build and add to their mental health and well-being. This is something being achieved at OWL. Which is, one of our services within Foundation, where they have co-created a client gym space.

For the clients at OWL, physical activity and access to a gym could reduce social isolation and improve clients' overall wellbeing. These are key areas that meet our Every Child Matters Framework. Matt, Housing Support Worker leading this project, believed that changing the location of support sessions to somewhere like a gym would improve engagement and conversations with clients.

Coproduction with clients during support sessions garnered interest and Matt was attending the gym with clients; but this was ultimately at a cost to them, and without funding this was unlikely to be maintained. In May 2023, the initial idea was to get clients discounted gym memberships to reduce the barriers to exercise and movement and encourage clients to access this type of activity.





How did you come to be supported by Foundation?

I was homeless and directed to Foundation by the Council. I signed up and was lucky enough to be placed in the Mercury House Hostel.

What goals did you set when you first came to Foundation? Was there anything specific you wanted to achieve?

When I first came to Foundation, I was direction-less. I didn't really have any goals in mind. It was only with ongoing support that I am now in a place to set positive goals.

What does your support entail? Has anything really stood out to you/benefited you?

Regular weekly meetings with lots of flexibility for catch ups and support. My support worker is very helpful in many ways. One way being her aid in navigating the tricky familial conflicts that have come up as part of my ongoing concerns with co-parenting and social services.

How have things changed for you?

My mental health has improved dramatically, directly, and indirectly because of being housed here. Beyond my own self-acceptance, attending sessions within Foundation lead to further opportunities for self-improvement.

CLIENT INTERVIEW

This is a client's experience working with Foundation Scarborough, Mercury House. Foundation Scarborough offers the North Yorkshire Young People's Pathway, Pathway 2 which offers supported accommodation to young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Do you feel things have improved since engaging with Foundation?

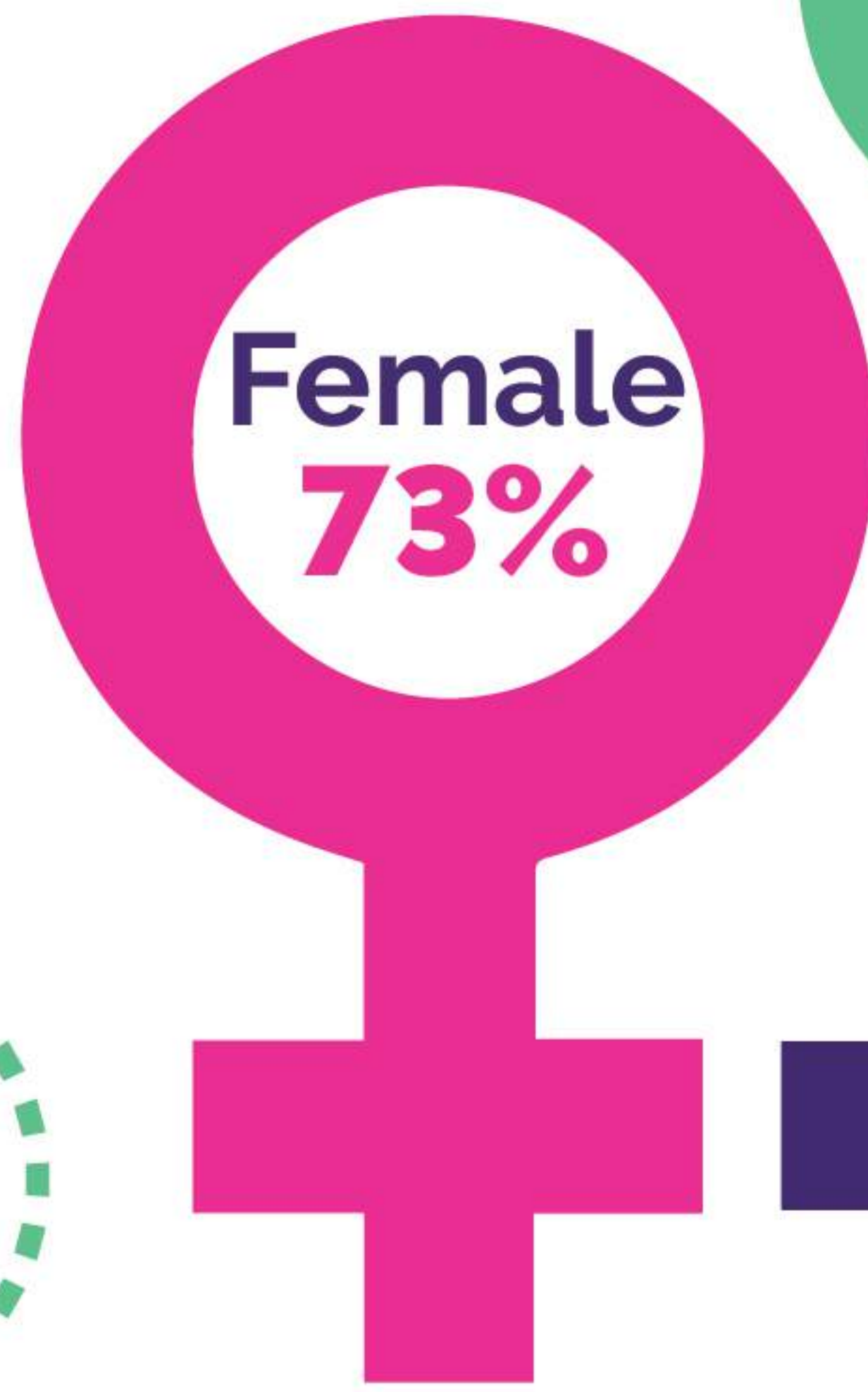
Absolutely, even prior to my homelessness, I did not like the person I had become. It is only through having the outstanding support here that I was able to grow into the woman I am today. For the first time in my life, I can honestly say that I like myself, love myself even. I can smile now, and I am very grateful for everything.

FOUNDATION EMPLOYEES OVERVIEW



NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES

166



FULL
TIME
37%

PART
TIME
63%



Achievements



WHAT'S NEW



**Calderdale
Dementia
Hub**

Outside Influence Website Launch

Community Links' Team Leader at York Housing Wellbeing Service worked with Lived Insights from Experience (LIFE), Outside Influence and Good Organisation to develop and co-produce a collaborative piece of work capturing people's direct experience of community support and services in York. This involved listening to the stories of individuals about the broad and complex support services in the city. Listening to the whole story has allowed the team to piece together how a person's life is impacted by the interplay of support and services. They will collate and compile these stories onto a platform where they can be shared and showcased, and later launched across the city of York.



Research into early onset dementia and related respite care

A new study to evaluate the needs of people living with early-onset dementia Leeds started this year. This study aims to establish what is working well for people living with and affected by dementia and what could be improved. This study is a collaboration between Young Dementia Leeds (YDL) and Leeds Beckett University. The study will be compiled by Leeds Beckett University and a questionnaire will be shared and sent out to get people's opinions on respite care. The study will begin early 2024.

Coverage of this study included features in the Yorkshire Post and an interview on BBC Radio Leeds with Inspire North's Sinéad Cregan and Chris Naylor, whose wife Tracey uses Young Dementia Leeds. Chris and Sinéad also took part in filming for BBC Look North at YDL, for a piece that was eventually broadcast in January 2024 to an average of 991,000 viewers.



Aspire's Voyage of Recovery

Aspire clients and colleagues returned to the sea for their week-long Voyage of Recovery sailing trip down the East Coast of England. Service Manager, Michael and an Aspire client appeared on BBC Radio Leeds to discuss the benefits of adventure therapy and their experience of the voyage.

'The voyage helped me grow as a person and knowing we can accomplish anything as a team if we put our minds to it.'

Men's Talk and Barings Foundation

Men's Talk was one of eleven case studies in a new report by the Barings Foundation: The Barings Foundation is an independent foundation working to improve the quality of life of people experiencing disadvantage and discrimination. They aim to achieve this through making grants to voluntary and other civil society organisations and by adding value including through promoting knowledge and influencing others. Creatively Minded Men asks whether men with mental health problems are as equally engaged in creative activities as women. As part of their study into men, creativity and mental health, Men's Talk were one of only twelve organisations nationally who were asked to submit a short case study about their project. Barings will be starting a grant programme in the future and will use case studies to inform the process.



"We've worked hard over the past months to get here. Now everyone in the cast raises their game. We come together as an ensemble. No-one better than anyone else. Just a cast of ordinary men doing their best to produce relevant theatre about mental health".

Quilting with Community Links Engagement and Recovery Service (CLEAR)

CLEAR worked with Kirklees Council to host 'The Suicide Bereavement Memorial Quilt' Roadshow. The quilts were made by families and friends bereaved by suicide and are very beautiful and moving to see. They held talks and workshops about loneliness, mental health and sport and shared some mindful activities.

'Extremely powerful images of love for those who have been lost. Very privileged to have seen this quilt today.'



Cognitive Simulation Therapy at Calderdale Dementia Hub

Calderdale Dementia Hub started providing Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) Sessions in August 2023. CST is group-based therapy for people with early to mid-stage dementia. The therapy consists of 14 x one-hour sessions and has been found to stimulate memory, thinking skills and allow people to connect with others. The sessions consist of activities such as: discussing current affairs, mental arithmetic, word challenges, reminiscence and following instructions.

Feedback from participants and from carers has been amazing:

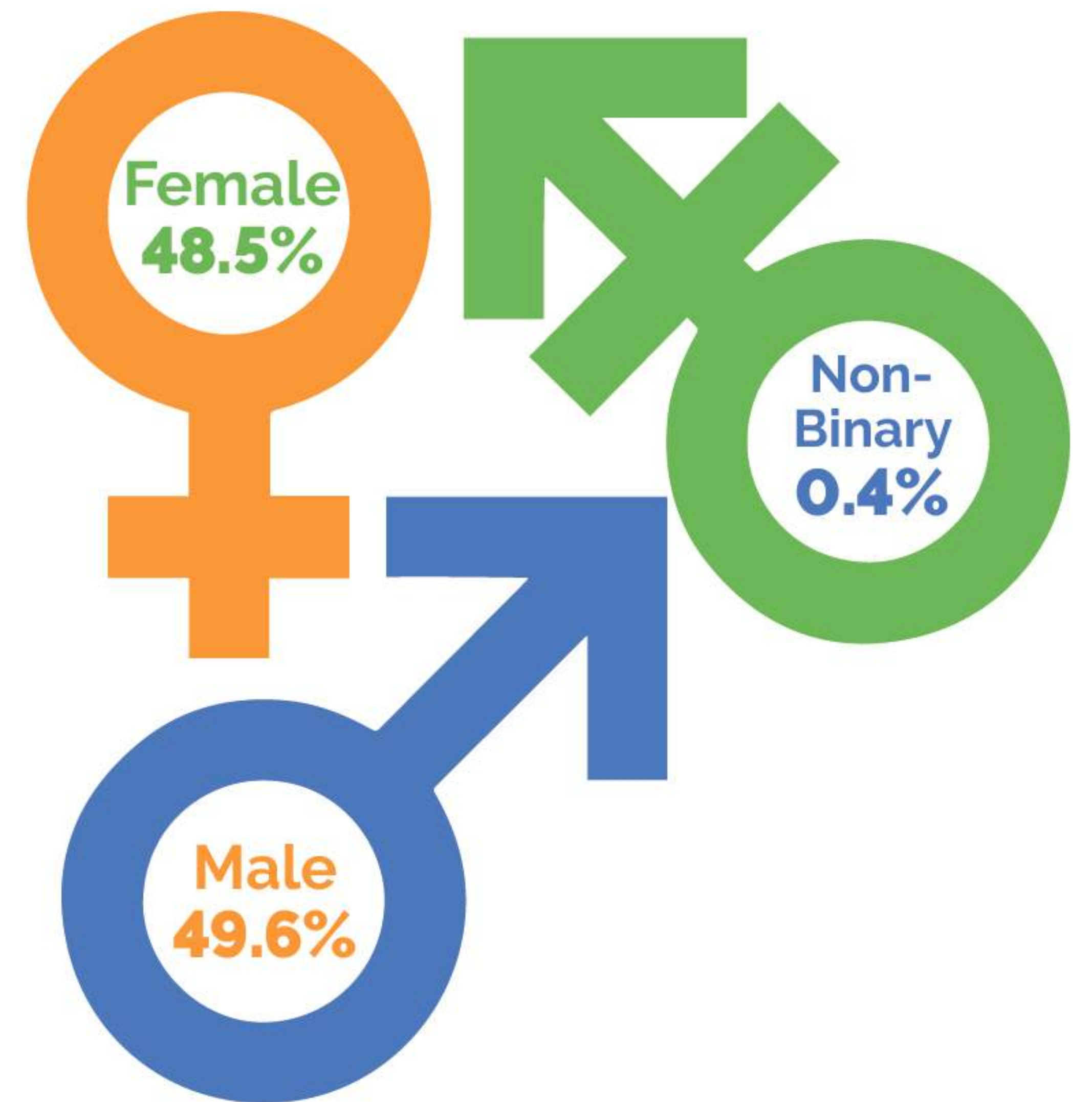
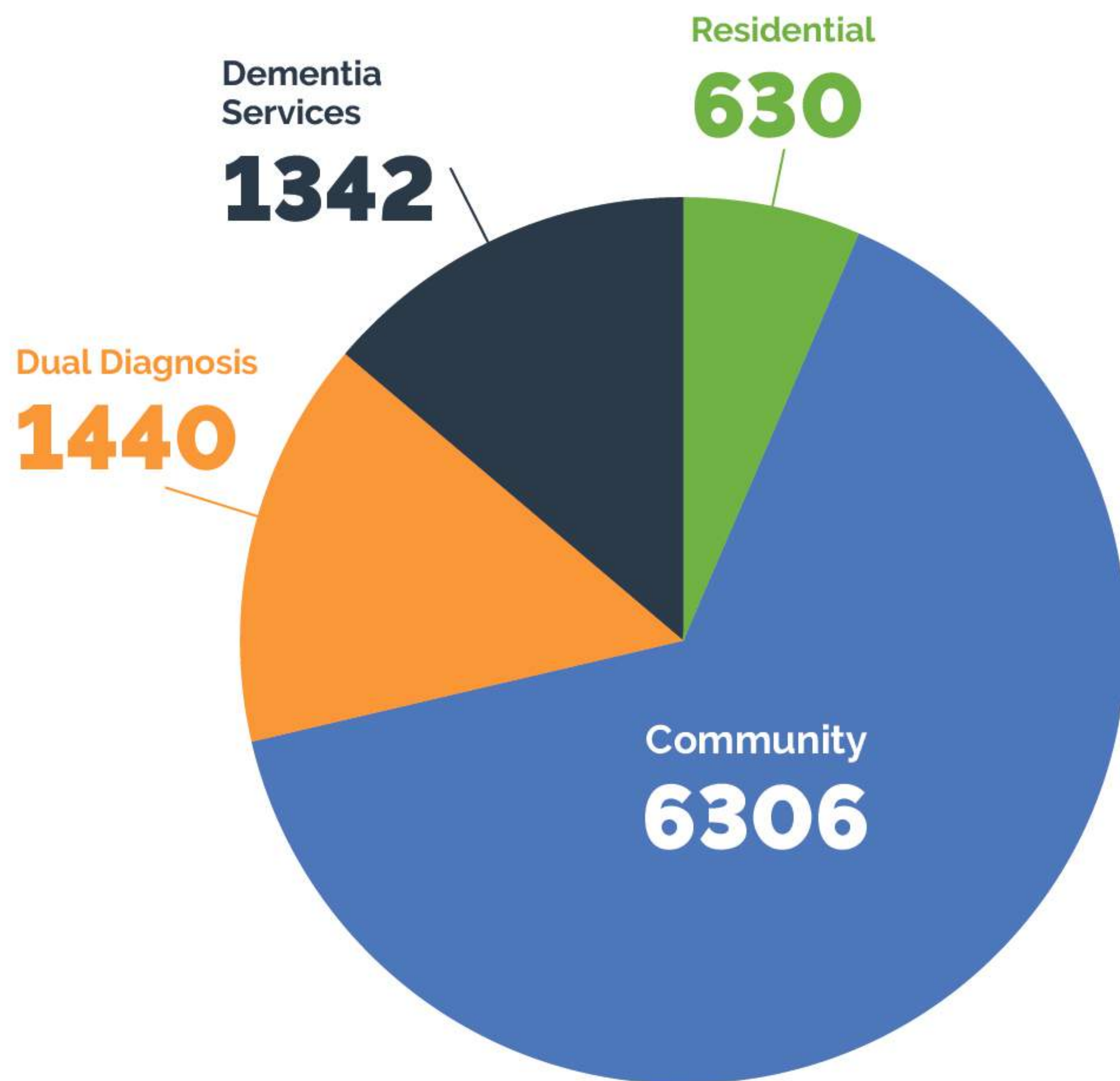
"I live for this. It's my favourite part of the week".

"I enjoy the conversation. Interaction within the group always cheers me up!"

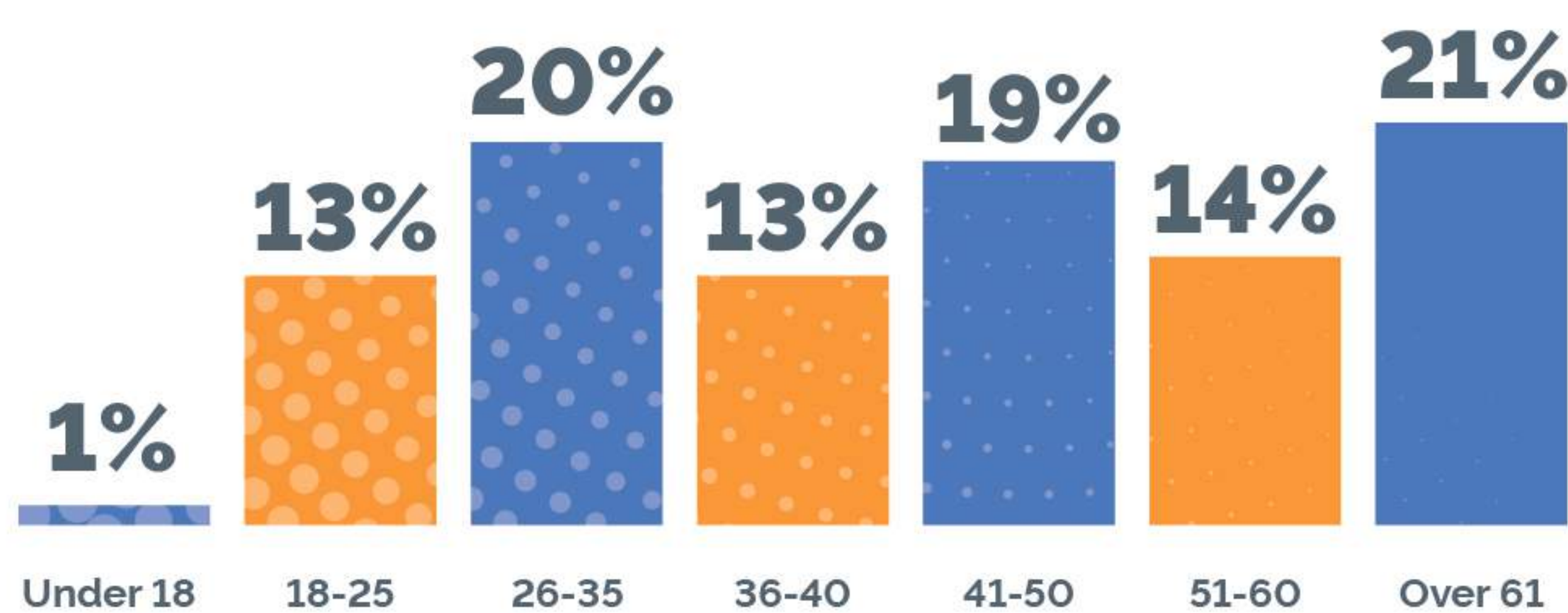


OUR CLIENTS, RESIDENTS AND TENANTS: An Overview

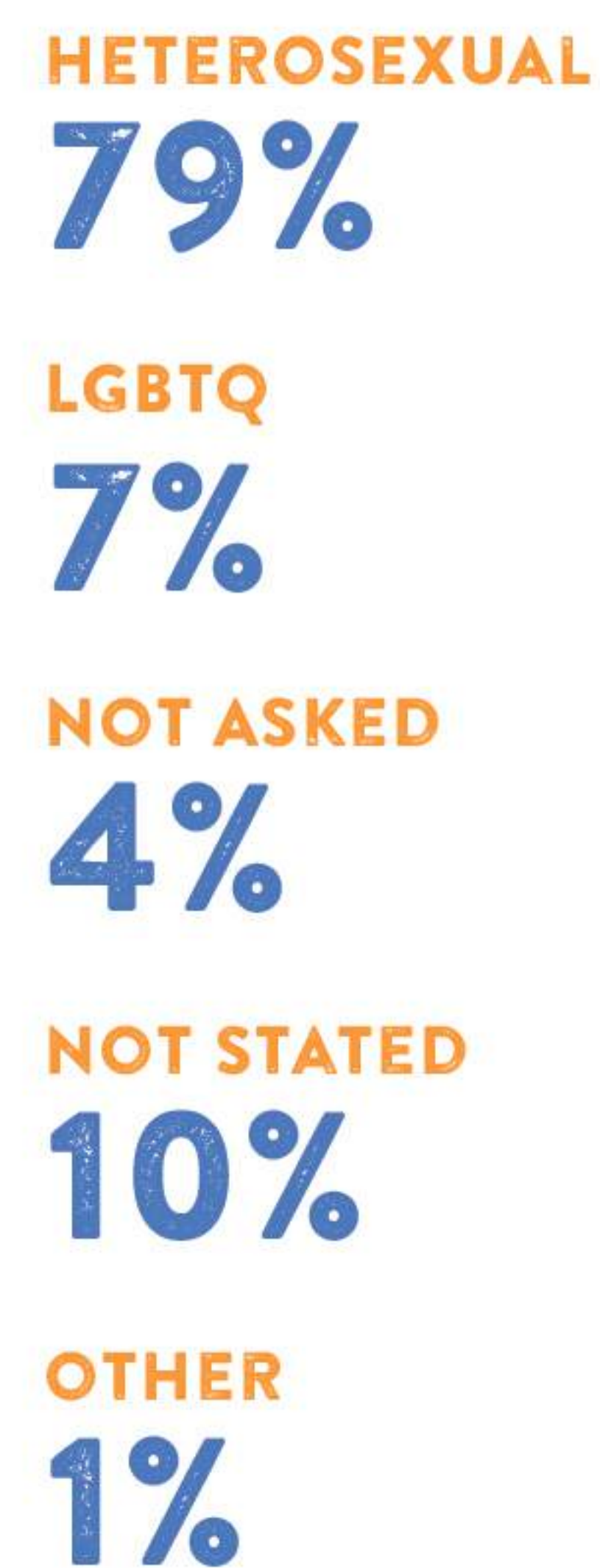
23/24 snapshot



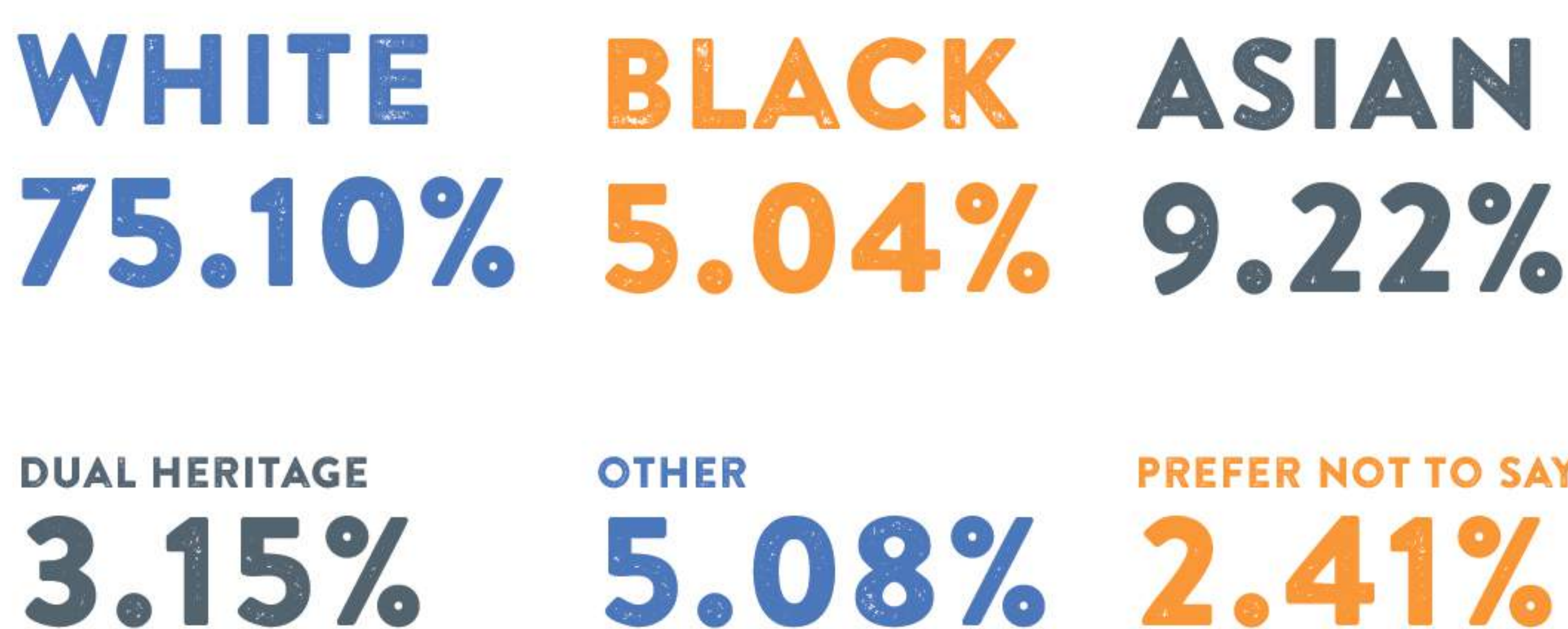
Age Breakdown



Sexuality



Ethnicity



Community Links Annual Satisfaction Questionnaire 23/24

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT US?

76%

I feel that my story is shared appropriately so I don't have to repeat myself

80%

I make my own choices and feel supported through the choices I make

78%

I believe that workers go the extra mile - no one gives up on me

80%

I value the relationship with my worker and feel listened to when I have ideas

88% of clients said they were **likely to recommend us** to their friends and family.

12% either didn't respond or said they would be 'Neither Likely nor Unlikely' to recommend.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY?

88%

My accommodation is at a high standard

88%

I feel safe and secure where I live

75%

My repairs are done quickly

72%

My accommodation is easy to heat

81%

I am treated as a person and with dignity and respect

HOW DID WE DO?

80%

Overall satisfaction

Data based on 576 responses. Percentages based on positive responses ('Agree', 'Great', 'Good', 'OK', 'Extremely likely' and 'likely').

"I would be lost without the support of CLEAR and I'm sure lots of other people feel the same way, the service is second to none" - CLEAR

"We talk about dementia, there's nowhere else we can do that!" We open up about our circumstances and this helps. We are all of a similar age". - CDH

"I am a resident at The Maltings and helping grow tomatoes and pumpkins and plants. I find getting into the garden every day to water these plants helps with my mental health and gives me support in my day-to-day activities. Being in the fresh air clears my head and gives me fortitude to help face any troubles I have." - Maltings Close

"It has changed our lives totally. The support we get is more than we could have expected. My husband loves his time there and the friends he has made there have given him some self-worth." - Young Dementia Leeds

"So much has changed, you have helped me with everything. You have helped me with my head, my thoughts and I go out a little bit more. I am trying to trust people more too." - Changes

COPRODUCTION



The Human Library with Calderdale Dementia Hub

A Conversation took place at a Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project (DEEP) meeting regarding the way people speak to people living with dementia. There can be a tendency to ask the carer how they are doing, or if they take sugar in their tea, instead of speaking to the person with dementia directly.

The members of the group expressed how they would like the opportunity to have an open conversation about their diagnosis of dementia 'face to face' with people, and not be overlooked, or ignored whilst a conversation takes place between the person and their carer.

Calderdale Dementia Hub took the idea and as part of Dementia Action Week in May 2023, arranged for the members of the DEEP group to be part of a 'Human Library'.

The members of the group acted as a 'book': or the source of information and they invited members of the public to come along as 'the readers' or the ones seeking information.

The subject of dementia was open for discussion, with both parties aware they could ask about the person's experience of dementia and the person would answer honestly. Interestingly many of the conversations that took place were ordinary discussions about sport, TV, childhood, and the weather.

They had fantastic feedback from both 'books and readers' that they had gained a lot from the experience, it served to raise awareness and reduce stigma about dementia and gave the members of DEEP group that 'face to face' conversation they wanted.



CLIENT INTERVIEW

This is a client's experience working with Maltings Close. Maltings Close provides accommodation and support to people 18+ with a range of mental health difficulties. Maltings Close offers varying levels of support:

Level 1: This includes mental health and independent living rehab support and is staffed 24/7.

Level 3: Floating mental health support arranged with key worker 2-3 times a week.

Level 4: Floating mental health support from a key worker 2-3 times a fortnight.

weight and improve my physical health and maybe join an IT course to improve my computer literacy.

What does your support entail? Has anything really stood out to you or benefited you?

I still benefit greatly from the support provided by Maltings staff as I can have difficulties in recognising when my physical health is declining. Recently, I had been in hospital to receive surgery for a long-standing injury, which later developed into further complications. Thanks to the intervention provided by staff, I was able to be re-admitted to hospital and receive further life-saving treatment. I also find staff support useful when making and managing appointments as well as for benefits support.

Do you feel things have improved since engaging with Community Links?

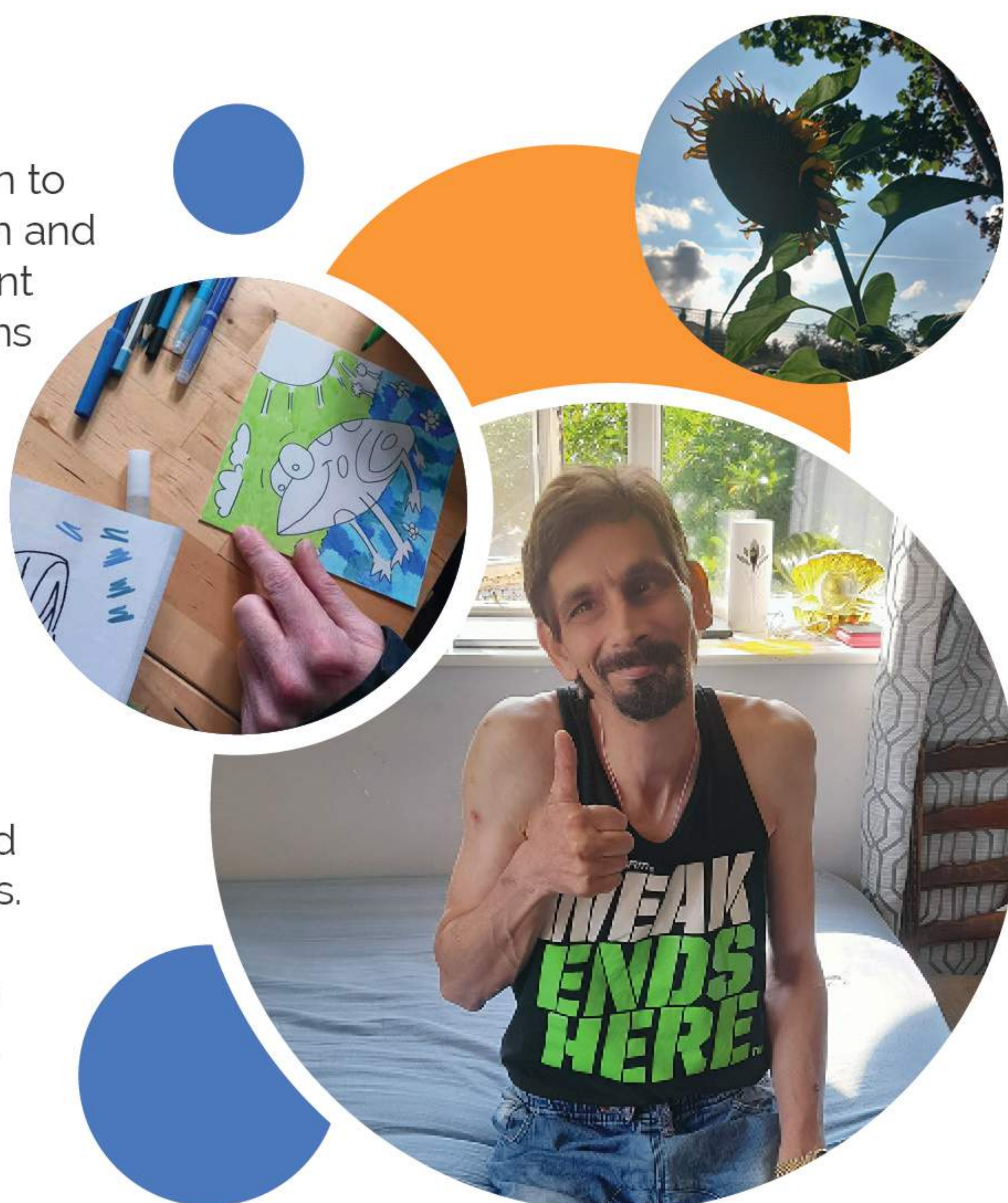
Since moving to the Maltings in 2019, I have been able to transform as an individual. I have remained well; I understand the importance of taking medication daily and engaging well with support provided by staff. I am still at the Maltings, and I am grateful for the help it provides me as I continue to develop my independence.

How did you come to be supported by Community Links?

Prior to moving into the Maltings, I had been in prison before moving to Forest Lodge and then to the Becklin Centre. I had a chaotic presentation and felt paranoid, disinhibited, and expressed violent behaviours. This resulted in frequent admissions to hospital as well as multiple incarcerations. I would refuse medication and refuse support from staff, sometimes becoming aggressive. I moved into the Maltings as I had nowhere to go after leaving hospital.

What goals did you set when you first came to Community Links? Was there anything specific you wanted to achieve?

I have always wanted to live independently and that was the goal when I moved to the Maltings. Eventually I would like to move on from the Maltings and live somewhere with slightly less support to further my independent living skills. Whilst at the Maltings, I would also like to lose



COMMUNITY LINKS EMPLOYEES OVERVIEW

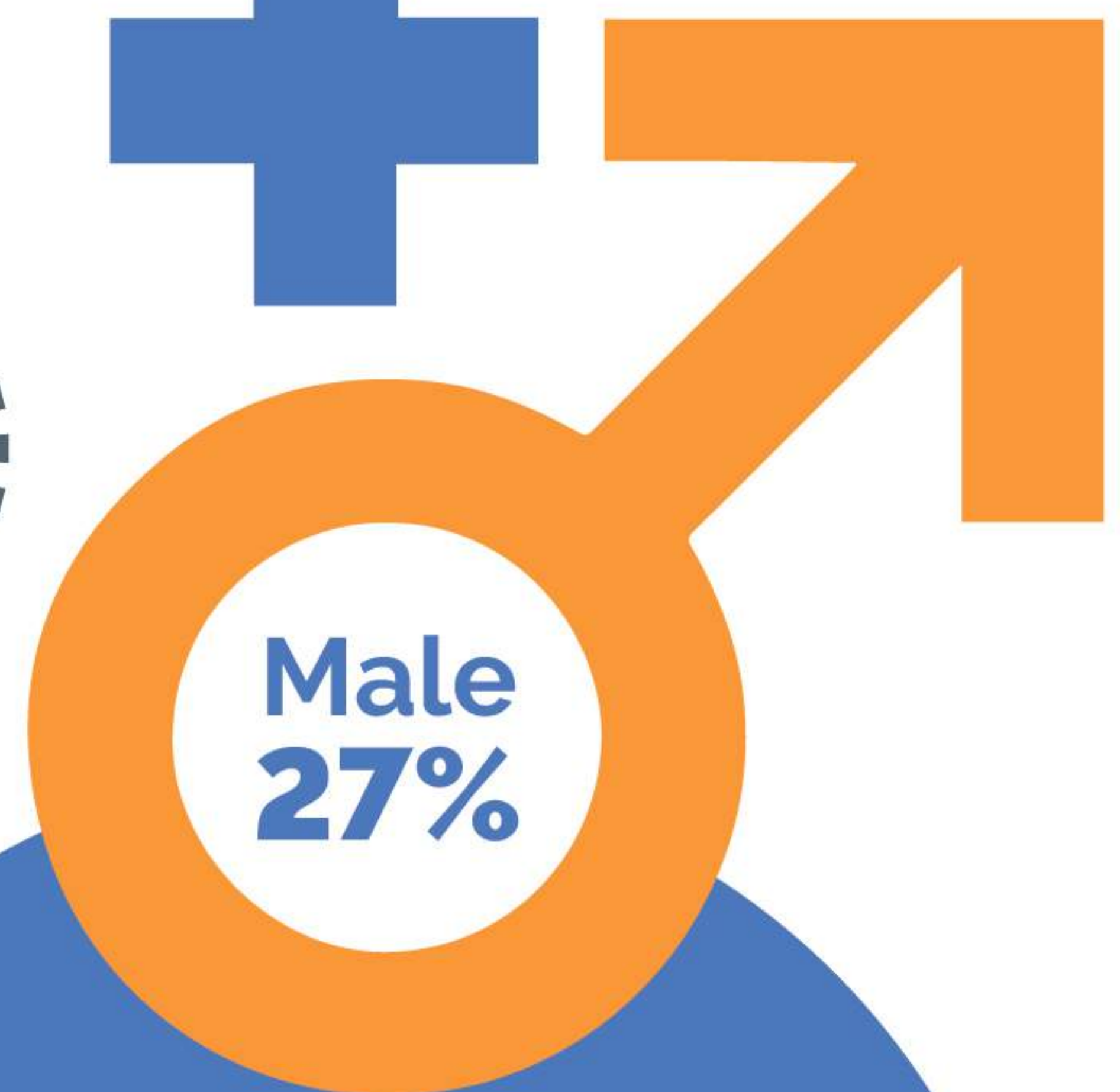
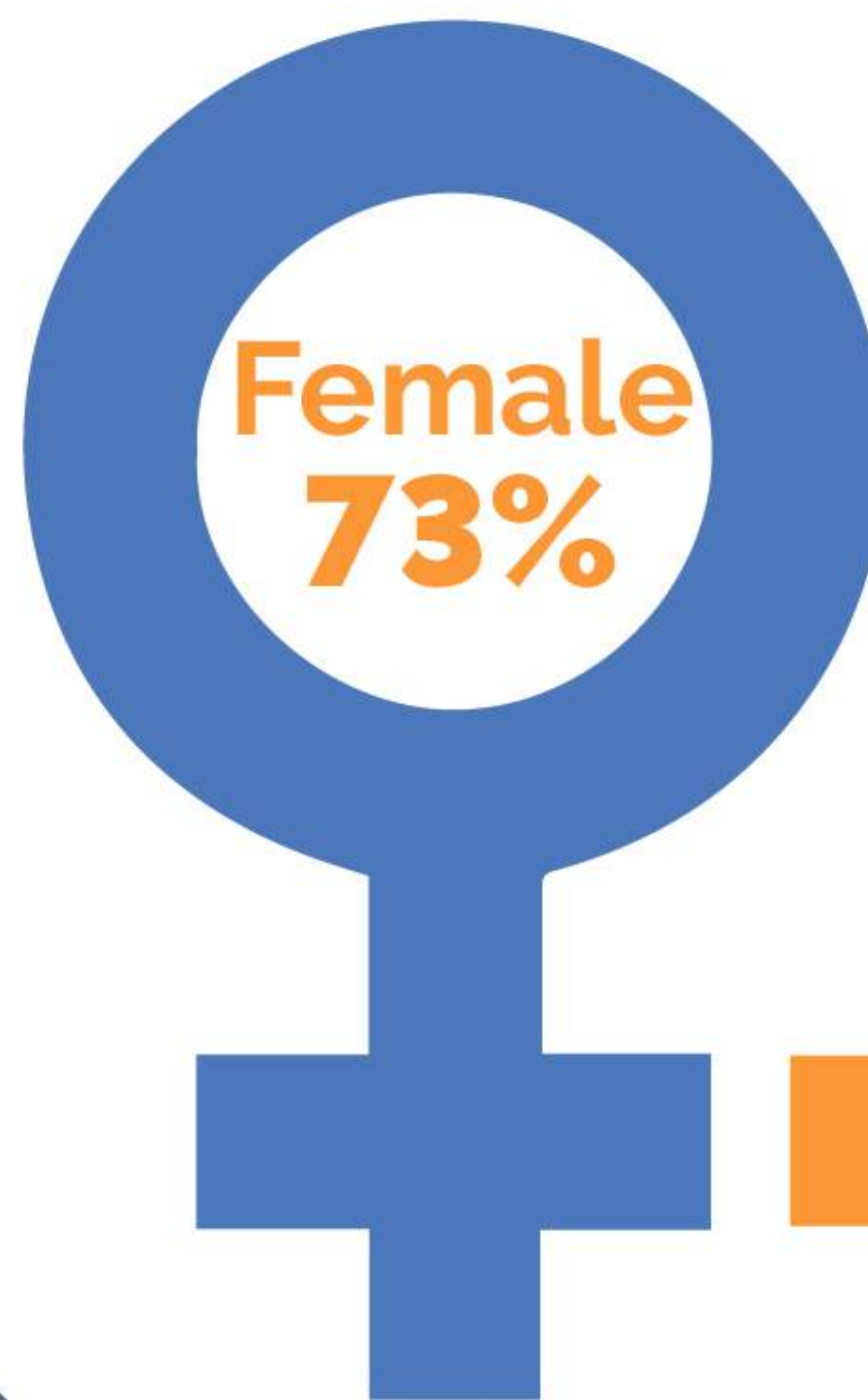


NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES

305

FULL
TIME
71%

PART
TIME
29%



Achievements

Investing in Volunteers

We welcome and value volunteers, who attend training as part of their induction. Many of our volunteers are former clients. To find out more about volunteering with us visit www.commlinks.co.uk/volunteering.



WHERE TO FIND US

Inspire North Head Office

3 Limewood Way, Leeds, LS14 1AB

Tel: 0113 273 9660

Email: info@inspirenorth.co.uk

www.inspirenorth.co.uk

Service Locations

Batley
Bradford
Calderdale
Craven
Darlington

Dewsbury
Doncaster
Durham
Grimsby
Harrogate

Huddersfield
Hull
Kirklees
Leeds
Richmond

Scarborough
Scunthorpe
Selby
Wakefield
York





Inspire North

3 Limewood Way

Leeds

LS14 1AB

0113 273 9660

info@inspirenorth.co.uk

www.inspirenorth.co.uk

X @InspireNorthUK

Instagram @inspirenorthuk



Part of the Inspire North Group

