



Hayley Taylor aka The Fairy Job Mother visits the Cheetwood Centre (Photo by Jason Lock)

Impact Report

2011 - 2012

**The
BigLife
group**
business changing lives



Sure Start Longsight Children's Centre Birthday (Photo by Luke Pearson)

The Big Life group

The Big Life group creates opportunities for people to change their lives for the better. The group includes five social businesses and three charities: **The Big Life Company, The Big Issue in the North, Big Life Families, Big Life Employment, Open Door, The Big Issue in the North Trust, Big Life Centres and Self Help Services.**

These businesses and charities offer a range of services in areas across the North of England including:

Production and distribution of The Big Issue in the North magazine which provides **socially excluded people** with the chance to **earn an income** and signposting to services to help them move on in life

Providing **training and employment opportunities** to people who face additional barriers to employment

Delivery of **six health and community resource centres** offering a range of health and well being services

Delivery of **mental health services** including self-help groups, structured self-help programmes and computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy packages and counselling

Delivery of **Supported Housing schemes**, including the Harvey Project which provides 24 hour harm reduction supported accommodation to drug and alcohol users based in North Liverpool.

Delivery of **Sure Start Children's Centres**, family intervention and outreach services

High quality **childcare** delivered from day nurseries and mobile crèche services

An award winning **primary health and social care practice** delivering services to one thousand of the most vulnerable people in Grimsby.



Chris White MP and Kate Green MP spend a day with Skills2Build (Photo by Jason Locky)

Who we work with

Between April 2011 and March 2012 over **16,224** people used services provided by The Big Life group.

Where ethnic origin was monitored, **34%** of people accessing our services came from Black or Ethnic Minority communities.



Outcomes

Between April 2011 and March 2012:

We supported **16,224** people through our services

5074 people undertook assessments of their Quality of Life while using our services. **72%** said their lives had improved and they found our services helpful or extremely helpful

72 people moved into temporary accommodation and **42** people moved into permanent accommodation

205 people found employment

398 people took up training

316 people gained a qualification

“...I get up every morning and I put my fluorescent jacket on and pull on my boots, and I’m out of the house for eight o’clock to go to work. And that’s what my lad sees. And that’s what I want him growing up seeing.”

Skills to Build Trainee

Our centres

The **Big Life group** manages **six** health and community resource centres

Between April 2011 and March 2012 our centres received over **158,442** visits

The centres ran **136** events this year including health and wellbeing days, open days and summer events which were attended by over **3,861** people from local communities

69% of people using our centres who completed an evaluation, say their lives have improved and **67%** rated their centre “very good”

We also run two Children and Family Centres. This year we had **13,969** visitors. We held **1,347** events attended by **12,472** people from the local communities.

“If I’d not had this support (from Self Help Services) I don’t think I’d still be with my partner. I’d probably be homeless and have a criminal record or be in prison.

I used to be very angry, it was always at the front of my mind, but now I’m in control of it – I can manage it.”

“Darren” - following his access to the Psychological Wellbeing Service



Volunteers and placements

Between April 2011 and March 2012 The Big Life group had **379** volunteers who worked in a variety of roles, such as running self-help groups, delivering training and complementary therapies, working with Big Issue in the North vendors and supporting clients. **42%** of our volunteers were from Black or Minority Ethnic communities.

15 volunteers moved into work during this year

46 people were on work placements within the group during this year and **39** of those moved into work or onto further training courses.

“I’ve really enjoyed volunteering for The Big Issue in the North. This is a great place to work. It’s really fulfilling and the staff are really friendly and so professional.”

Sally, Liverpool Big Issue in the North volunteer



The Big Life group Staff Awards (Photo by Jason Lock)

Our staff

In 2011/12 we had **248** staff:

33% of our staff are from BME communities - reflecting the communities in which we work

2% have a disability and **10%** have mental health needs

37% of our staff have childcare responsibilities and **14%** are carers

55% of our staff live within a **2** mile radius of work - reflecting our commitment to local employment

Sickness

This year we had a sickness absence rate of **2.1%**, compared to the 3.4% national average and 3.9% rate in the voluntary sector

Flexible working

89% of staff feel able to work flexibly when they need to and **88%** feel they are provided for as a parent and carer

Commitment to the organisation

Our staff survey showed that **96%** of staff are committed to the success of The Big Life group and **93%** would recommend our services to people they know.



Manchester Big Issue in the North vendor Chris and his dog Taz (Photo by Lora Mather)

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