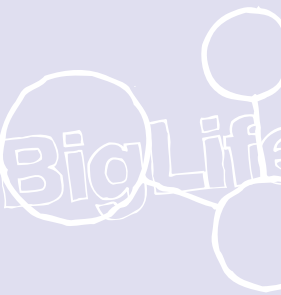


FUTURE

Annual  
report  
2004/5

**The  
BigLife  
group**

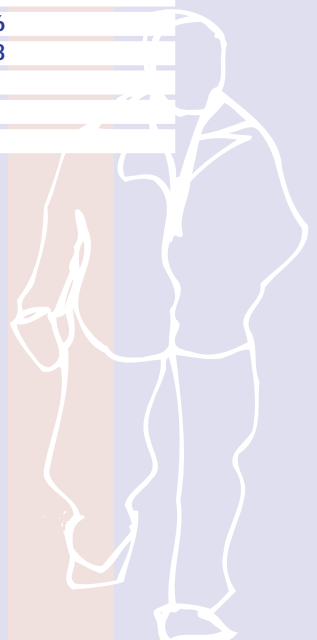
social businesses  
and charities



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SPECIFY PROBLEMS, UNIQUE RESPONSES, EARLY SUCCESS, DIVERSIFYING OUR BUSINESS, FUTURE



# Introduction to The Big Life group



The Big Life group was formed in April 2002 and now includes five social businesses (The Big Life Company, Big Life Employment, The Big Issue in the North, Aisha Childcare and Northern Solutions) and two charities (Big Life Services and The Big Issue in the North Trust). By working together, the group maximises the opportunities it can offer to people to change their lives, is more cost effective by sharing corporate functions, and has a bigger voice to influence the government and statutory agencies.

The group aims to increase the sustainability of its work by securing most of its income from independent trading, or by securing contracts for service delivery from statutory agencies. In 2004/5 the group had a turnover of £8million, of which £5m was from trading, £2m was from contract work, and £1m was from grants.

In 2004/5 The Big Life group employed 263 people, of which 31.6% were from a Black Minority Ethnic background.

The group has a commitment to develop its staff to enable them to deliver first class services. This year 526 staff attended training on 61 internal courses, ranging from health and safety to personal development.

Our staff survey showed that 93% of the staff felt proud to work for the group and 98% committed to its aims.

# Objectives, targets and achievements

The Big Life group has set itself four objectives over its first five years, with specific targets under each objective which staff across the group work towards achieving. Quarterly progress reports on targets are presented to Boards and staff teams.

This is a summary of the progress towards the targets we have made.

## Target

## Progress

### Creating Opportunities for people to change their lives

Create 150 new jobs, a minimum of 50 for people who have been excluded from the jobs market for reasons such as ill health, addiction, mental health, disability and discrimination.

This year 29 new jobs were created, and since 2002 we have created 91 new jobs, 60% of our target figure.

Provide 1000 supported employment places, for people who have been excluded from the jobs market, with 30% going onto mainstream employment.

Through Big Life Employment, 140 people have been on supported employment this year, and 74 of those have moved into mainstream employment.

291 people have been in supported employment places since 2002, and 209 (72%) of those have moved into mainstream employment.

Offer training to 1500 people, from a menu of 100 courses/projects, with 1000 people achieving a recognised qualification.

545 people have undertaken training this year, from a menu of 81 courses. 146 people have achieved accreditation.

Since 2002, 1107 people accessed training, with 390 people achieving accredited qualifications.

Create six new innovative centres for delivery of Big Life group activities in cities across the North of England; with at least one being outside Manchester, Liverpool or Leeds. Centres will be developed in partnership with other agencies.

This year we have built a new Surestart Centre in Longsight, Manchester and we are currently building a new Aisha Childcare nursery in Trafford, which will be completed in May 2005.

Since 2002, we have opened two other centres: Summergrove and the Space Life College.

Develop a comprehensive menu of activities and services available through Big Life Centres for people from excluded groups, using a 'change exchange' approach.

A range of services are now on offer from many of our centres: Sure Start Longsight, Kath Locke Centre, Zion Community Resource, the Space Life College, and The Big Issue in the North in Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds.

We have had 200 volunteers working across the group this year.

Develop and implement a model for measuring improvement in quality of life throughout The Big Life group.

A model for measuring quality of life has now been rolled out in five service areas. Next year it will be rolled out across the group.

### Doing Good Business

Develop three new profitable businesses within The Big Life group.

We continue to support the development of Big Life Employment, Aisha Childcaring and Northern Solutions.

Achieve a turnover of £10m (5.5m trading, 3.5m contracts, 1m grants) with a 10% profit on each business.

Business trading: £4,536,640  
Contracts: £1,151,677  
Grants: £1,872,362  
Actual turnover: £7,560,679

Support the development of 20 social enterprises, sharing expertise, practical support and providing incubator facilities for emerging businesses to assist them in becoming sustainable businesses.

Input continued this year into four social enterprise networks: Liverpool Plus, Manchester Social Enterprise Forum, Wyselink Leeds, and the Social Enterprise Coalition.

The Big Life group has supported the IT business Nornir and Community Health Action Partnership in Salford this year. To date we have supported 10 social businesses.

Create an asset base and sufficient cash reserves for The Big Life group.

A new £1.6M asset was added to The Big Life Company balance sheet this year.

No one customer to be responsible for more than 20% of each business.

No one customer is responsible for more than 20% of any business within The Big Life group.

### Improving what we do

Achieve two recognised quality standards

We have achieved the Matrix Training qualification this year.

Establish a comprehensive staff-training programme, ensuring all staff are fully supported to achieve their responsibilities.

We have run 61 courses this year, and have trained 502 staff.

Since 2002, we have run 180 courses which have been attended by 688 staff.

Ensure all our activities undertake monitoring and evaluation. This will include establishing customer feedback systems.

An internal audit of policies and procedures has been completed and an improvement plan has been developed.

8 evaluations have taken place this year (Summergrove user satisfaction survey; Big Life Employment, Information Advice and Guidance, Video Dairies, Job Inclusion and Big Leap Skills; Sure Start user satisfaction survey, Counselling, and Speech and Language).

This takes the cumulative total for all years to nine.

We will have Non Executive Director involvement in all our businesses, and user and community input into all services. We will have a network of ambassadors keeping us up to date with innovations and best practice.

We have Non Executive Directors in The Big Life Company, The Big Issue in the North, Northern Solutions, and Big Life Employment.

Trustees of The Big Issue in the North Trust and Big Life Services are now joint working - three new trustees joined at the AGM including one ex-service user.

Have a culture which reflects our organisational values and works towards achieving our objectives.

30 staff have undertaken vision and values training this year, bringing the total to 90 since 2002.

A staff survey has been completed: 80% of staff felt loyal to organisation.

The Business Plan for The Big Life group has been printed and new marketing material has been produced for Aisha, Summergrove, Therapeutic Services, Northern Solutions, The Big Issue in the North Trust and Big Life Employment.

### Changing the World

Launch three major campaigns which highlight and tackle issues of discrimination, disadvantage or poor quality/effectiveness/efficiency.

A campaign strategy was agreed by The Big Life Company Board in January and a number of expert panels established.

We have produced a manifesto for the forthcoming General Election, and were featured in the Social Enterprise Coalition manifesto.

We have joined with Crisis to carry out The Big Voice Tour – bringing homeless people to meet with parliamentary candidates in cities across the country ahead of the General Election in May 2005.

Work in partnership with external agencies, businesses and authorities to develop services and opportunities for excluded communities.

We are attending 78 partnership forums on a regular basis across Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds.

Publish research on three topics affecting the lives of people who are disadvantaged.

Research on 'The impact of enforcement interventions on street homeless people' has been funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and will be undertaken by York University, beginning in April 2005.

The Vendor audit for 2004 have been completed and printed.

Promote the brand of The Big Life group, its subsidiaries and associated charities in order to improve the lives of the people we work with.

The Big Life group website has been launched.

Big Life Employment was runner up in the Guardian Public Service awards. Summergrove won the Business in the Community Northwest Award for Excellence at Working in Partnership. bloom were runners up in the Community Care Award for the Urban Explorers group.

# The Big Life Company

Annual turnover  
£2,140,246

The Big Life Company provides the core services to The Big Life group of social businesses and charities including: human resources, research, finance, communications, corporate governance and development.

Company Number: 04227431

#### Board of Directors:

Fay Selvan Chief Executive  
Kevin Wilson Non Executive Director  
Hadas Altvag Non Executive Director (appointed 08/02/05)  
Neil Turton Executive Director  
Donna Ngan Finance Director

#### Highlights

- > Manifesto launched to influence decision makers
- > 3 Big Difference Awards attended by over 600 people
- > 44 conference talks and workshops delivered by The Big Life group's staff

In order to achieve the five-year group objectives, this year The Big Life Company focused on improving the cost effectiveness and efficiency of the group. The executive team was restructured to enable a smaller, more strategic cross group team to be established, and a leadership team was created to oversee the operational work of the group. An internal audit was carried out to evaluate how effectively policies and procedures were being operated, and a comprehensive improvement plan was developed which will be implemented next year.

Considerable progress has been made on improving the effectiveness of Boards and Trustees across the group this year. Two new non-executive directors were appointed to The Big Life Company Board and, following a meeting with the charity commission, the Trustees of the two charities have

begun working together through joint meetings. A plan for improving governance across the group was developed which included recommendations from the Higgs Review Of The Role And Effectiveness of Non Executive Directors (January 2003). Implementation of this has begun. In this year we have amended the Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and financial delegation, introduced a register of interest for all Trustees and non-executive directors, and improved reporting on progress to targets and Health and Safety to the directors.

The development team successfully managed two development projects, (with a total value of £3.2m) completing the new Sure Start centre in Longsight which opened in October, and progressing with the new Trafford nursery due to open in the new financial year.

A considerable amount of research and evaluation has been carried out internally over this year. The vendor audit was undertaken on behalf of The Big Issue in the North; a detailed evaluation of the first year of Summergrove, The Big Life group's supported housing scheme for families whose lives have been affected by drugs, was also completed. The research manager met with staff from across the group to review current evaluation and monitoring methods. The evaluation working group has also begun to pilot three tools for measuring changes in quality of life across the group. This work will be completed next year and will enable staff to measure the impact of their work on changing people's lives.

The communications team have broadened the press coverage of the group gaining coverage for some of the

new businesses and smaller parts of the charities for the first time. This year the group was mentioned in 1002 press articles, with an equivalent advertising value of £830,000. The Big Difference Awards were held in three cities, celebrating the work of amazing people from across the north who make a big difference to their communities.

In March the group published its first Manifesto in time for the general election. The Manifesto incorporates key policy changes that would make a significant improvement to the lives of the people we work with.

#### The Big Life group urges the Government to:

- > Ensure that by 2010 single homeless people have access to good quality, supportive housing schemes and that they work with homeless people and agencies to deliver this.
- > Review funding and services for vulnerable adults and children to ensure that by 2010 funding and the Government agencies are joined up to provide effective support for families to stay together.
- > Ensure that by 2010 vulnerable people such as drug users and people with mental health needs are provided with funded packages of support to enable them to develop skills for life and work.
- > Review public sector procurement policies to ensure that every contract for every service is handled in a timely and business like way.
- > Ensure that by 2010 a percentage of all statutory contracts are tendered to social enterprises.

#### What next?

- > Achieve Investors in People accreditation
- > Launch The Big Life group website
- > Develop an intranet
- > Develop a new HQ





# Aisha Childcare

Annual turnover  
£235,086

Aisha Childcare offers high quality and flexible childcare through its day-care, after school and play schemes, employing local people and providing training opportunities.

Company Number: 04713084

#### Board of Directors:

Fay Selvan Chair  
Priti Butler Non Executive Director  
Donna Ngan Finance Director

#### Highlights

- > New nursery opened at Longsight
- > Development of purpose built nursery underway
- > 10 local people accessed childcare training
- > 7 local people recruited

This was a successful year for Aisha, with the opening of a new 46-place nursery in Sure Start Longsight. This new nursery gave Aisha the opportunity to increase the employment and training opportunities it offered to local people wanting to work in childcare. The new nursery employs six local people and has rapidly achieved occupancy targets.

This year also saw development underway for a new 100-place nursery in Trafford, which is due to open in summer 2005 and will be the flagship centre for Aisha Childcare. Initial marketing of the centre to local parents and key stakeholders resulted in a high demand for childcare places and for training opportunities. A Jobs Fair was held to recruit four local people for permanent positions and four people for employment placements. The event proved so successful that no further recruitment advertising was required.

Aisha has focused on developing its afterschool clubs and as a result has launched a new club in partnership with a primary school and has two further clubs in development.

Aisha is working towards achieving Quality Counts standards in all its nurseries. Quality Counts gives practitioners the tools to achieve quality

throughout every aspect of a childcare setting, from management structure to early educational practice. Achieving accreditation is much more than being awarded the kite mark. It demonstrates that Aisha has committed to a continuous process of evaluation and reflective practice that will challenge, support and develop the nursery and enhance the service delivered. This year we have trained staff and started to implement the new standards for 0-5 year olds.

Aisha has also been selected as a national pilot by the Community Action Network's Beanstalk Programme to support social enterprises to explore franchise opportunities. This will support Aisha to look at possibilities for growth and expansion in the future.

Aisha continues to employ a diverse bank of staff which reflects the communities in which it works.

#### What next?

- > Open a new 100 place day nursery in Trafford
- > Extend the Longsight nursery with a further 54 places
- > Open 5 new afterschool clubs
- > Achieve Quality Counts standards
- > Explore opportunities for the development of new nurseries

#### Statistics

- > 7 trainees went on to full time paid employment with Aisha
- > Over 20 ILM (supported employment) placements were offered throughout the year
- > 8 new employment positions were filled by people living in the communities in which Aisha works
- > 47 children were cared for







## Big Life Employment

Annual turnover  
£1,360,292

**Big Life Employment provides training and employment opportunities to people who have been excluded from the jobs market.**

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**Company Number:** 04118653

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**Board of Directors:**

Fay Selvan Chair  
Priti Butler Executive Director  
Donna Ngan Finance Director  
Barry Collins Non Executive Director

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**Highlights**

- > Internet Café opens at Zion Community Resource
  - > Runner-up at The Guardian Public Services award for Equality and Diversity
  - > Space Life College opens
  - > 140 people take part in supported employment programmes
  - > 72% of people on supported employment placements move into permanent jobs
- 

This year Big Life Employment expanded with the launch of an Internet Café at the Zion Community Resource in Hulme, and the Space Life College for young people in Manchester.

The Internet Café provides local people with the opportunity to learn about computers and the internet through basic skills training.

The Space works with 13–19 year olds who have been referred from the Youth Support Team (formally known as the Arrest Referral Team). Big Life Employment manages a mentoring service for the young people and provides career development and Information Advice and Guidance services there.

IT suites in The Big Issue in the North's centres in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester, where BLE delivers a range of training from, have been updated with new computers giving excluded people the opportunity to keep up to speed with the latest technology.

The Big Life Employment team in Leeds is now firmly established and offered 30

supported employment placements this year, with 12 people moving into permanent jobs in Leeds. Big Life Employment in Leeds has worked with 100 socially excluded people including Big Issue in the North vendors offering a basic skills programme which resulted in 18 people moving into work.

In Liverpool, Big Life Employment worked with 30 Big Issue in the North vendors to deliver basic skills training. 58 accreditations were achieved.

In Manchester, 114 people accessed supported employment programmes. The Manchester team have expanded their services with the appointment of a full time Information Advice and Guidance worker responsible for offering personal support on training and employment opportunities at several locations across Greater Manchester.

Big Life Employment also secured runner up in the The Guardian Public Services award for Equality and Diversity this year.

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**What next?**

- > Develop the mentoring scheme for young people
  - > Develop a recruitment agency
  - > BLE will continue to be involved in the development of new support packages for people who are excluded from employment
- 

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**Statistics**

- > 140 people accessed supported employment placements
  - > 74 people have moved into mainstream employment
  - > 328 people have registered on a programme or project
  - > 314 people have received assessments, which using various information, advice and guidance tools assess peoples' training and employment needs and career aspirations. From this an action plan that outlines a programme of development (personal and professional) is created
  - > 545 people have entered into internal and external training
  - > 146 people have achieved qualifications / accreditations
-





## Northern Solutions

Annual turnover  
£189,857

Northern Solutions is a buildings maintenance company offering caretaking, maintenance, cleaning and landscaping services, while providing training and employment to people who have been excluded from the jobs market.

Company number: 04118649

### Board of Directors:

Fay Selvan Chair  
Andy Peers Executive Director  
Donna Ngan Finance Director  
Tim Platts Non Executive Director  
Martin Ainscough (appointed 06/09/04)  
Non Executive Director

### Highlights

- > 1 new external contract secured
- > Ainscough Crane Hire pledge £100,000 to develop 'Giving a Lift' project with Northern Solutions
- > 6 new staff employed

This year Northern Solutions developed new contracts and contract performance systems to improve the quality of its customer care.

Northern Solutions launched the 'Giving a Lift' project with support, and a donation of £100,000, from Ainscough Crane Hire. The project provides year-long work experience and training opportunities for people who have been excluded from the workplace, with the aim of allowing them to move back into permanent employment. In addition to this, the project delivers services free of charge to local housing associations and communities to help them improve their physical environment, helping to create a more pleasant place to live and work.

People on the programme also have the opportunity to undertake training and gain qualifications linked to the industry, focus on their personal development and access a range of information,

advice and guidance services, equipping them with the skills they need to move on into mainstream employment.

Over the last year Northern Solutions has been able to provide opportunities for 6 people to come back into the workplace through providing supported work placement opportunities.

This year has also seen members of staff who initially used Northern Solutions as a step back into employment, progress into supervisory and management positions. Northern Solutions' management team now reflects the diversity in culture and backgrounds of the communities and individuals that The Big Life group is committed to working with.

### What next?

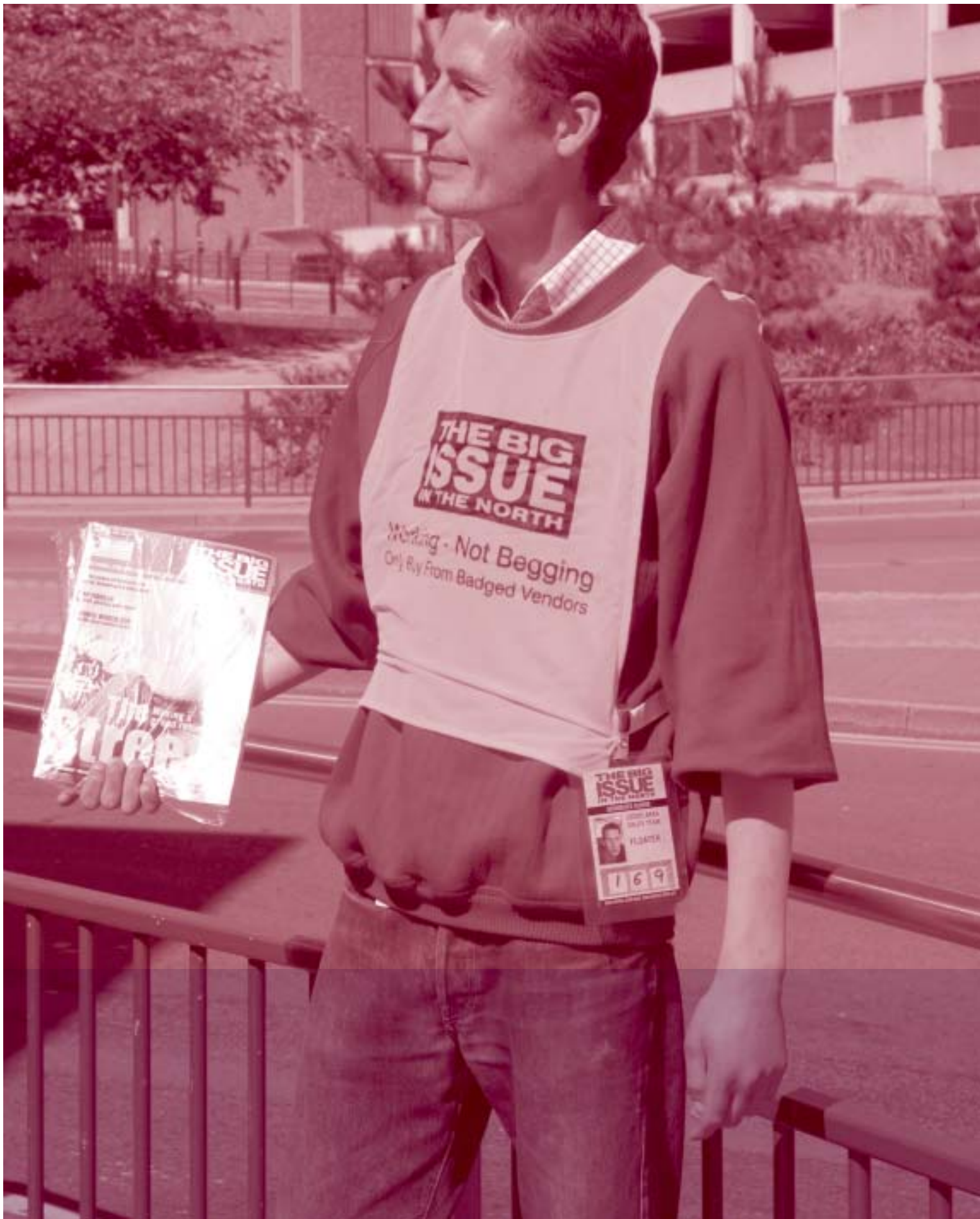
- > Attract new contracts from agencies external from The Big Life group
- > Create 3 new full time equivalent jobs
- > Offer opportunities, above the current level, to people through the Ainscough 'Giving a Lift' project through securing private sector sponsorship and new work for the project from local communities
- > Expand the delivery of Northern Solutions' services into Leeds and Liverpool

### Statistics

- > 4 people employed on Ainscough project
- > 6 people employed on supported employment placements







## Big Issue in the North

Annual turnover  
£1,570,260

The Big Issue in the North is a weekly magazine sold by homeless people across the North of England, giving people the opportunity to earn a legitimate income

Company number: 03026628

### Board of Directors:

Fay Selvan Chair  
Donna Ngan Finance Director  
Richard Brown Managing Director  
Alan Beswick Non Executive Director  
Kevin Wilson Non Executive Director

### Highlights

- > Campaign with Crisis aims to put Homelessness on politicians' agenda
- > Big Health Kick engages homeless women in health activities
- > Homeless World Cup sees England goalkeeper named Keeper of the Tournament

Following a proactive campaign to recruit new vendors, the number of active vendors The Big Issue in the North worked with increased steadily throughout the year, rising from 228 in the first quarter to 309 in the final quarter.

Following requests from vendors, TV listing pages were added to the magazine. Editorial highlights included an expose of Barclaycard after vendors reported they were being offered credit cards without having proof of ability to pay. The magazine also featured a series of special reports, ranging from an investigation into the effects of foetal

alcohol syndrome to why GPs are recommending laughter therapy for sufferers of severe depression, and a campaign to bring justice to the families of homeless people who were beaten to death on the streets of Brazil.

This year the team responsible for selling magazines to vendors, developing new sites for selling the magazine and supporting vendors on the street, merged with The Big Issue in the North Trust vendor support team who deliver a range of services to help vendors move into good homes, good jobs, good health and a good life. This means we have been able to deliver a better service to vendors with all staff trained in sales and support roles. A comprehensive training programme was delivered to staff.

The Big Health Kick event, a health intervention programme for homeless women, aimed to educate people about healthy living and recruit homeless women to sell The Big Issue in the North. The event took place at two venues in Liverpool and Greater Manchester and engaged over 60 women. The Big Issue in the North worked with Kellogg's, Manchester United and Everton FC to deliver this unique programme.

For the second year running, The Big Issue in the North managed England's Homeless World Cup Team with the support of Manchester United. In the run up to the event, the England team got tips from Manchester United Players

Alan Smith and Wes Brown. The team secured 6th place at the World Cup which took place in Sweden.

The Big Issue in the North teamed up with homeless agency Crisis to campaign about keeping homelessness on the agenda in the run up to the General Election. In April 2005, a London bus will tour cities across England, including The Big Issue in the North's regions of Manchester and Leeds. Prospective Parliamentary Candidates will be invited to meet homeless people and discuss the issues that affect them. Not only is this a campaign on the issue of homelessness as part of the General Election, but it will also raise the profile of The Big Issue in the North and is an opportunity to work in partnership with Crisis.

Over this year The Big Issue in the North has had to restructure its business to reduce costs as a result of falling magazine sales (from 35,647 in 2003-2004 to 29,958 in 2004-2005). In addition, the company lost £60,000 it had invested in the development of a new Liverpool headquarters after a failure to agree a lease. Although it made a loss this year, the cost reductions it undertook mean that it is in a strong financial position for the new financial year.

### What next?

- > Increase number of vendors selling The Big Issue in the North
- > Increase the circulation of the magazine
- > Develop a new centre in Liverpool



# Charities

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## The Big Issue in the North Trust

Charity Number: 1056041  
Company Number: 03164559  
Income: £610,383

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The Big Issue in The North Trust is a registered charity that raises funds to provide services for vendors of The Big Issue in the North magazine to help them move away from homelessness for good.

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## Big Life Services

Charity Number: 1062333  
Company Number: 0311884  
Income: £1,454,555

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Big Life Services is a registered charity which includes:  
Kath Locke Centre  
Zion Community Resource  
Therapeutic Services  
Self Help Services  
Summergrove

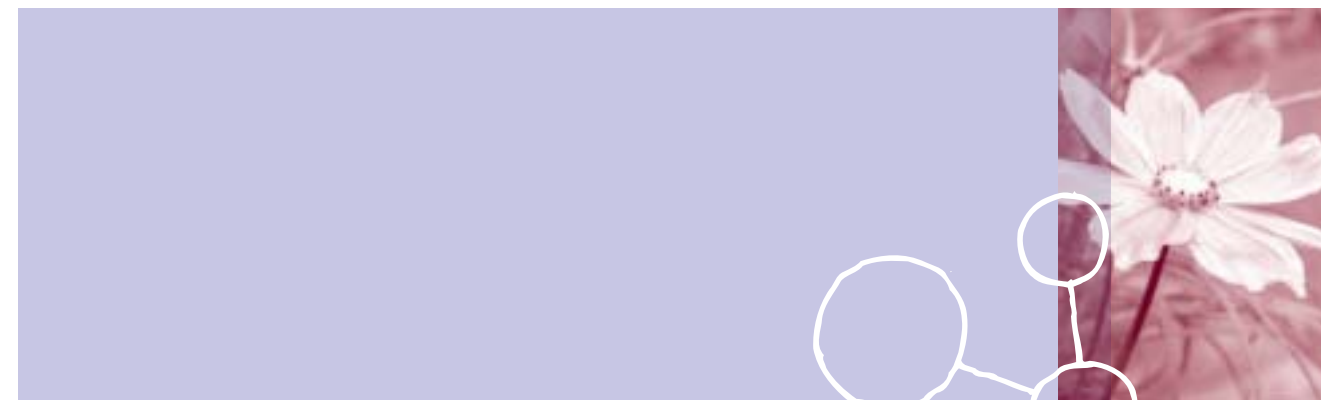
The two charities, The Big Issue in the North Trust and Big Life Services, are separate organisations but share one board of directors.

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### Trustees:

Paul Goddard Chair  
Adrian Jennings Treasurer  
Mark Fitzgibbon Secretary  
Fay Selvan  
Angela Young  
Mumtaz Bashir  
Laura Nuttall  
Barry Collins  
Brian Harvey (resigned 10/05/05)  
Bruce Learner (appointed 21/01/04)

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# The Big Issue in the North Trust

## Highlights

- > Big Life Plan Launched
- > Trust supports new project for service users to influence drugs services in Liverpool

Following the evaluation of the previous resettlement programme for vendors of The Big Issue in the North, The Big Life Plan has now been launched. The plan will offer a tailored package of support in line with each individual person's needs. Each vendor involved in the plan has a keyworker who supports them through an initial assessment, setting and achieving goals, and helping them to access a range of services and opportunities.

In order to deliver this service effectively, The Trust's vendor services team merged with The Big Issue in the North's sales team to create one staff team, who are developing a range of skills in order to offer a full support service to vendors. A bespoke training course was developed in partnership with Healthwise, to provide the newly formed sales and services team with the skills necessary to deliver The Big Life Plan. This consisted of 4 single day sessions with all staff attending. The sessions covered issues pertinent to the delivery of support to people who are often vulnerable and chaotic.

## This year The Big Issue in the North Trust helped:

- > 21 people into permanent accommodation
- > 69 people into temporary accommodation
- > 9 people into training
- > 15 people into employment
- > 47 people into detox

The Big Issue in the North Trust secured funding from the Liverpool Drug and Alcohol Action Team for the Relay Project which supports service users in Liverpool to be included in the development of drug services in the city. The project team, based in The Big Issue in the North's Liverpool office, support service users to influence

decision making through attending conferences, forums, meetings and steering groups. Members of the service user group also sit in on interviews for drug agencies to help recruit new staff. This partnership is a great example of how a public sector funded project working with the third sector can provide innovative approaches to increasing service user involvement in the design and development of services.

A variety of projects ran in all of The Big Issue in the North's centres. Highlights included a music group, funded by Community Chest, which gave Vendors the opportunity to learn to play keyboards, drums and guitar. A creative writing group, run by an existing vendor, invited vendors to create prose or poetry with some work created during the sessions being printed in The Big Issue in the North magazine. A women's group aimed to get women to discuss and explore issues important to them, to build social circles, communication skills and confidence, and to enjoy a healthier and more fulfilling lifestyle, saw female vendors go on day trips, hold beauty sessions and coffee mornings.

## What next?

- > Move away from grant funding to securing contracts with the public sector
- > Secure full funding for The Big Life Plan
- > Evaluate the effectiveness of The Big Life Plan on individuals changing their lives
- > Carry out research with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into the impact of enforcement interventions (for example, anti-social behaviour orders and Drug Treatment Testing Orders) on the lives of people who are homeless





## Kath Locke Centre

The Kath Locke Centre is an NHS primary care facility managed by Big Life Services.

The centre has a range of primary care services including chiropody, dentist, audiology and orthoptics; complementary healthcare services including counselling, massage, self-help; a community mental health team; and a range of voluntary agencies including Black Health Agency and the African Caribbean Mental Health Services. It is also the base for bloom healthy living network and Aisha Childcare's afterschool service.

### Highlights

- > A new service for asylum seekers joins centre's existing services
- > Sugar Group set up as an independent organisation
- > Additional dentist joins dental practice

This year a new service, the Welcome Centre, was launched. Run by the Primary Care Trust, the project provides services to asylum seekers from over 20 different countries. Services include: health screening, carried out by the Manchester Asylum Induction Team; a GP service which addresses any

urgent health problems people have; an interpretation service; and a signposting service which directs people on to other relevant services. Many clients have experienced war trauma or imprisonment and as a result are referred on to voluntary organisations which support refugees and asylum seekers around Manchester. People using the Welcome Centre also get personal records, enabling them to have access to information about their health wherever they may be living.

The Sugar Group, a self-help group that caters for African Caribbean people who have diabetes, has been operating in the centre for five years. This year it formalised its structure by adopting a constitution and setting up its own steering group to help it secure funding for the future. The group's activities extended from one session per week to include an extra exercise class, health walks and swimming.

Events at the Kath Locke Centre included 'Celebrate Being a Woman' which saw 50 local women take part in activities including classes in Tai Chi, relaxation, hand, neck and shoulder massage and Reiki.

### What next:

- > To set up a steering group for the centre
- > To provide accommodation for a GP
- > To expand the Welcome Centre
- > To increase the number of health promotion events run for the centre

### Statistics

- > 19,000 callers to the centre
- > 38,105 visitors to the centre







## Self Help Services

Self Help Services is a network of user led self help groups operating across the North West.

### Highlights

- > 37 groups now running
- > Website launched
- > Anxiety group runs at second venue
- > Support group for female refugees launched

This year saw the launch of Self Help Services' website [www.selfhelpservices.org.uk](http://www.selfhelpservices.org.uk), which enables service users to find out about the services on offer via the internet. This is particularly important for service users who are marginalized to be able to find out about, and access, the extensive range of services.

Four new groups were set up this year including a second anxiety support group, a support group for female refugees and two survivors groups.

The year also saw the launch of a structured support group for people who have a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. The group, run by a psychologist and a psychotherapist, delivers a package of structured sessions based on Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT). Facilitators of the support group worked with the National Institute for Mental Health in England's personality disorders

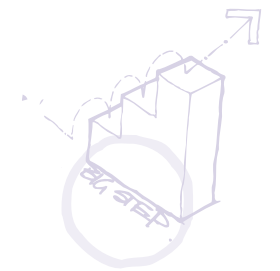
programme. A facilitator will be undertaking intensive specialist training in the area of personality disorders.

### What next?

- > Develop new self-help groups to run in Blackpool alongside those currently running
- > Secure funding for new services and to support existing groups

### Statistics

- > An average of 8 people attended each group
- > A total of 33 support groups ran
- > 13,728 people accessed services during a year





# Therapeutic Services

Therapeutic Services deliver counselling, massage, relaxation, Reiki, homeopathy and art drop-in sessions.

### Highlights

- > New contract for counselling service secured
- > Exhibition of ZAP (Zion Art Paintbox) artists' work
- > Piloted delivery of complementary therapies in GP practices
- > 1257 calls made to Therapeutic Services requesting information, advice and support

### Counselling

This year Therapeutic Services delivered 2344 counselling sessions to 264 people in a variety of settings, including GP practices and community centres across Greater Manchester. Counselling was delivered from two new venues in Cheetham Hill and from Brunswick Health centre.

More people (81) from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities used the counselling service this year. And there was an increase in 16-25 year olds accessing services (47 people). The service received 536 referrals, with three quarters of these coming from GPs.

For the second year Therapeutic Services offered a counselling service to employees of Manchester City Council and received 164 referrals from Occupational Health, 156 of which accessed the service. The counselling service also won a contract for Hyde Road Sure Start to deliver one to one counselling and group work to families.

Building on Therapeutic Services' current work in Liverpool with BME communities a pilot research project with the National Institute for Mental Health England was secured. The project will work with BME women in Liverpool to research the appropriateness of mental health services for their communities.

Following the introduction of a new appointments system, the counselling service increased its effectiveness and reduced its 'did not attend' rates from 7% to 5.9%.

### Homeopathy

Funding secured from Awards For All led to the appointment of a homeopathy team leader to manage the services delivered at Sure Start Longsight, and a team of 8 volunteers who run the children and families homeopathy clinics, and men and women's clinics at the Kath Locke Centre. The team leader also set up, in response to local demand, an Asian women's homeopathy service run by an Indian doctor. A total of 49 people accessed this service this year.

The homeopathy service continues to reach children and families on a low income and benefits who don't have access to this service privately. The service continues to reach young people (23 children under 16 year) and BME communities (25 clients)

### Massage

This year Therapeutic Services continued to deliver massage services in five locations to 85 people.

### Reiki

75% of people using the Reiki service came from BME communities this year, a rise on previous years. More older people also accessed the service, with 60% of the clients being 46 or over.

### Other news

This year Therapeutic Services trialed the delivery of a range of complementary therapies; reflexology, homeopathy and massage in GP practices in Salford, Greater Manchester. The project reached 130 clients. A full evaluation will be produced next year.

Zion Art Paintbox (ZAP) offers the opportunity for people to relax, express themselves and socialise in an artistic

environment. An exhibition, which ran for three months, celebrated the creative talents of ZAP artists and people were able to buy pieces of the artwork. ZAP also secured funding to run a mosaic project aimed at older people. This year 27 people accessed this service, with 50% of people from BME communities.

### Service users ethnicity and gender:

- > 48% male
- > 52% female
- > 40% white
- > 22% Black Caribbean
- > 11% Black other
- > 4% Black African
- > 19% mixed parentage
- > 4% other

### What next?

- > Secure new contracts with employers to deliver services to staff
- > Win tenders to continue existing counselling and massage services
- > Explore opportunities for a new location to deliver services



BIGLINE





# Zion Community Resource

The Zion Community Resource is home to a variety of services including: Zion Art Project, Self Help Services, National Phobics Society, Manchester Drugs Services, Black Health Agency, Specialist Midwifery Service, HARP café, DASH (Drugs Advice and Sexual Health), African Caribbean Mental Health Services, Barnardos, The Youth Contact Team, Baby Belles, Falls Clinic, Therapeutic Services, The Learning Zone and Aisha Childcare.

### Highlights

- > 5 new services join the centre
- > 10 new volunteers offer support to services
- > Therapeutic Garden launches
- > New IT suite opens

A busy year for the Zion Community Resource with new services and outreach sessions bringing in 22,879 visitors and nearly 10,000 calls. New services operating from the centre included Barnardos, The Youth Contact Team, Baby Belles, Therapeutic Services and The Learning Zone which delivers IT and Internet Training.

Stalls at the Moss Side Carnival and Hulme Festival, and open mornings raised the profile of the Zion Community Resource within its immediate community and within Greater Manchester.

Ten new volunteers recruited during the year gave the Voices and Choices women's group and the Sista' Club a helping hand. In exchange for volunteering and putting forward their ideas for new groups and services, volunteers get the opportunity to develop new skills and access The Big Life group's training courses.

The Zion secured funding to run 'Walk a Weigh', a project that will focus on weight management in a fun and holistic way. If successful, the project, which is due to start later in 2005, will be rolled out across community centres in Manchester.

After a year's preparation, the Zion's Therapeutic Garden launched to the public with a summer garden party. Visitors got the chance to buy plants, grown in the garden and ask their gardening questions to celebrity gardener, Tom Leigh from BBC Greater Manchester Radio. The garden was created by Q Gardens and Therapeutic Garden Project trainees.

The Zion continued to develop its services with a series of consultation events to identify what topics the centre's visitors wanted to address. Over 100 people were interviewed. Four areas were identified to explore: a film club, smoking cessation, creative writing and Herbs for Health. A partnership between the Zion Community Resource and Bolton Metropolitan College was forged, resulting in a number of paid student placements which delivered in line with the identified areas. Creative writing ran three times a week, and smoking cessation ran as a 12 week course.

### What next?

- > To create a new steering group for the centre
- > To ensure the centre is financially self sufficient
- > To support the development of the specialist midwifery service
- > To support the development of National Phobic's 24 hour helpline



# Summergrove

Summergrove contains 11 supported flats for parents who have undertaken a detox to live with their children and rebuild their lives. The building is owned by Maritime Housing Association, and the family support worker is seconded from the NCH (National Children's Home).

**Highlights**

- > 17 families supported
- > Summergrove (in partnership with Liverpool City Council, Maritime Housing and National Children's Home) wins the Business in the Community Award in the North West for Excellence in Working in Partnership with Public, Private and Voluntary Sectors.

During this year Summergrove provided supported accommodation for 17 families which included 32 children. Of these families, 15 were lone parents and 60% were referred from Liverpool. 21% of parents were from a Black Minority Ethnic community. Almost all parents at Summergrove had been using drugs for more than 15 years, before going through detox and then coming to the project.

Summergrove aims to support parents to re-establish their lives. During this year it has delivered a number of courses to tenants including a cookery course focussing on nutrition and a healthy eating course. Regular community meetings are also held for tenants to discuss any issues they wish to raise, and the project provided a summer play scheme and an after school club for children.

Summergrove has proved beneficial to the children of families living there. Two children were removed from the Child Protection Register, two children, who had previously given their school cause for concern, received Certificates of Achievement from their school. One 9 year old decided he no longer needed long term counselling support following his mum's four month drug free status, one child who had a history of truancy received scholarship to a local grant assisted school.

Summergrove has also assisted in families being re-united. One family were reunited with their children following months of living on the street prior to living at Summergrove and one parent has been re-united with a child after three years' separation.

During the year, Summergrove successfully re-housed eight families, one family returned to live with relatives and one moved into temporary accommodation.

**What next?**

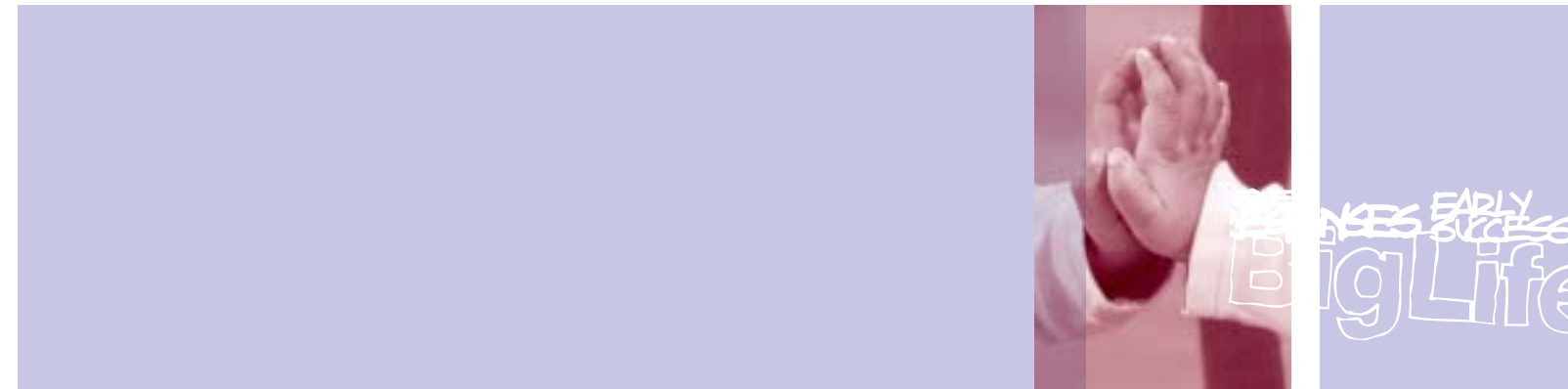
- > Achieve 90% occupancy
- > Implement DANOS (Drug And Alcohol National Occupational Standards)
- > Secure funding to landscape Summergrove's garden
- > Gain national recognition of the Summergrove model





# Partnerships

The Big Life group is committed to working in partnership. We believe this will ensure we use the best expertise available and help us influence other agencies, and that models of good practice are more easily replicated when people can see examples. We do not have one single form of partnership. In some we are the lead agency, employing staff and accounting for finance, in others we are simply working in an advisory capacity. We always ensure however, that we carry our values into the work that we do, and that each piece of work contributes to our objectives. Partnerships include bloom healthy living network, Sure Start Longsight and the community Health Action Partnership (CHAP).





## bloom Healthy Living Network

bloom is a Big Lottery funded project that aims to promote healthy living in four wards in Greater Manchester: Hulme, Moss Side, Whalley Range and Old Trafford.

This year bloom launched its website: [www.bloomnetwork.org](http://www.bloomnetwork.org) which enabled people to find out about local services on offer, alongside those offered by bloom.

It is a partnership project with central Manchester PCT, Trafford North PCT, and local groups. The Big Life Company is the lead agency, employing the staff and managing the finances. The project is overseen by a multi-agency steering group.

bloom's Urban Explorers project scooped second place in the Community Care Awards (mental health category) sponsored by the NHS National Institute for Mental Health in England.

### Highlights

- > 2212 people access bloom's services
- > Urban Explorers scoop second place at Community Care awards
- > Men's Health Week attracts 203 new service users

Urban Explorers brought together a group of local people of mixed age, ethnicity, gender and health needs. The group produced a booklet which recorded local walks and landmarks in text, poetry and photographs. The group aimed to increase a sense of community by developing shared history and local knowledge.

bloom targets four priority groups: families living in poverty, young people, people speaking English as a second language and people with mental health needs. It aims to work with local voluntary agencies, recruiting volunteers and improving access to statutory services. This year it has had 12 volunteers and has supported 10 voluntary agencies with IT services.

'Give us a voice' explored what it was like to be a refugee or asylum seeker living in Old Trafford. Using story-telling techniques and digital images to capture and illustrate people's experiences, it provided a platform for refugees and asylum seekers to tell their stories to other community members. Exhibitions were displayed during refugee week at Shrewsbury Street Old Trafford, Sale Water Park, Fallowfield, Old Trafford and Altrincham Libraries.

The project team offered 2,212 people a range of support services including one off advice and referral sessions plus in-depth assessments and support as part of bloom's 'Quality of Life Programme'. The balance wheel, a tool for identifying the areas of your life you want to improve, was used to support this work. Of the people accessing bloom's services 21% were young people, 10% were families living in poverty, 40% were people with mental health needs and 29% were people who spoke English as a second language. It also provided 752 people with IT sessions.

A Men's Health Week, held at Asda in Hulme attracted 203 men from different ethnicities and ages for basic health checks including blood pressure checks, sugar levels, health information and advice and signposting to relevant services and activities.

### What next?

- > To ensure that the work of bloom is seen to be contributing to national health targets.
- > To explore options for sustainability of the project





# SureStart Longsight

**Sure Start Longsight is part of the National Sure Start Programme which aims to give all children aged 0-4 the best possible start in life.**

Sure Start Longsight provides the following services: a play unit, early years librarian, parent and toddler groups, a range of family support services, welfare and benefits advice, community parents (providing health support to parents and children), employment advice and jobs workshops, children's information services and accredited volunteering schemes.

The Big Life Company are the lead agency, employing staff and managing finances and the project is overseen by a multi-agency board.

**Highlights**

- > New Centre opens
- > Volunteering opportunities open up

**Achievements**

This year Sure Start worked with 872 under 4 year olds, which is above the target for the programme. 80% of families accessing a service were from a BME community. The Sure Start team achieved an 100% record in visiting babies within the first two months of their life.

Working in partnership with local head teachers, Sure Start identified a need to provide sessional play services to children who didn't speak English at home, before they went to school. As a result Sure Start delivered a sessional play service for pre-school children. Following this work, local head teachers noticed an increase in the socialisation and English language skills in children starting school, which has considerably supported their learning. The project is being evaluated to identify how it has improved learning over a three year period.

October saw the launch of the new Sure Start Centre, the culmination of four years hard work by the staff team and parents in the Sure Start Longsight community. The new centre enabled Sure Start to offer the full range of services, identified by parents, under

one roof. The success of the centre and the activities delivered won recognition by the National Sure Start Unit as an example of good practice. The building was designed by local parents, children, staff and volunteers and is a landmark in the local community.

The opening of the centre gave Sure Start the opportunity to respond to the requests it had received over the years from people wanting to volunteer with the programme. The Training and Employment team designed and delivered volunteer training to parents. 20 parents passed the course and now volunteer actively within the team. A further 22 are currently accessing the course, helping to achieve Sure Start's vision of parents having increased involvement in the delivery of services.

Sure Start will be extending the building to accommodate a further 52 day care places which will bring the total childcare places to 98. Existing services will be extended. Sure Start was also successful in bidding for NRF(Neighbourhood Renewal Fund) monies which resulted in the development of a range of out of school activities being delivered by them, helping to make the centre more inclusive.

Parents who had had long-term support from Sure Start's Family Support services began to run services for other parents to access this year. This was a major achievement and demonstrated the hard work of parents and the commitment of staff members in being able to help change people's lives. A parent involved in the group said: 'Sure Start and the family support team have been a pillar of strength to me, they have encouraged me to participate and have supported me throughout my second pregnancy and post natal depression. I would ask anyone who has problems of any kind to access Sure Start Services as they are there to help support you.'

**What next?**

- > To extend the building to offer a further 48 nursery places
- > To achieve Children's Centre Status
- > To evaluate the outcomes of Sure Start in its community

# Community Health Action Partnership (CHAP)

CHAP is a small social enterprise that aims to improve health and well-being for the residents of Charlestown and Lower Kersall, in Salford, Greater Manchester.

CHAP provides a range of services including; Expert Patients Programme, small grants and carer support. It is working with the local Primary Care Trust and New Deal for Communities to develop two new healthy living centres. The Big Life Company has been contracted to support the development of CHAP. Throughout this year it has employed CHAP's staff, supported the board, line managed the project co-ordinator and managed CHAP's independent evaluation process.

## Highlights

- > 15 grants given to the local community
- > New CEO appointed

During this year The Big Life Company has helped CHAP to develop its business plan and employ a new CEO. It has supplied training to the board and to the staff. CHAP have worked in line with The Big Life Company's policies and procedures.

CHAP has continued to deliver the Can Do small grant programme and in the past year have provided 15 grants to individuals to promote health improvement projects.

CHAP has also provided support to local carers and managed an expert patient programme which helps people with long term health conditions manage their conditions better and improve their lives.

Two more projects have been run by CHAP this year: Nurture, which aims to improve the health of young people and parents; and Re-energise, which promotes healthy living through exercise and nutrition.

CHAP's Healthy Living Project reached 170 local residents, accessing services such as exercise on referral, collective exercise classes and health walks etc.

## Statistics

- > 9 people completed Expert Patients Programmes' (Jan'05) first course since March '04.
- > 12 local mums graduated as Breastmates Peer Counsellors.
- > 36 local parents accessed family support.
- > 32 people accessed Waterbabes swimming group.
- > More than 278 people accessed the Can Do Projects – with 10 local people as project leaders.

## What next?

- > In partnership with the PCT and NDC, open two new healthy living centres, one within the next year.
- > Directly employ its own staff from October 05

