

Impact Annual Report 2008



Introduction

Welcome to Impact's 33rd Annual Report! We have always had a fundamental commitment to involving residents, tenants, customers, service users in our activities – what we provide and how we provide it. We thought it only reasonable to ask those people to write our Annual Report this year.

From 1st December 2008, the Housing Corporation will be replaced by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Tenant Services Authority (TSA). This is a major change – the Housing Corporation was set up to develop and regulate Housing Associations the year before Impact came into existence. No-one is yet sure exactly what changes these new structures will bring. However, we are sure that there will be an expectation on Housing Associations to have a much stronger customer focus than they have ever had before.

This annual report and how we have written it is a sign of our commitment to that way of working.

Mike Muir, Chief Executive and Mike Rose-Troup, Chairman



Interview

How long have you been on the board Mike?

Just since the AGM in July when I was elected to be Chair.

So are you new to Impact then?

Well not really! I was one of the original 7 founder members of Impact back in 1974 and I worked for the association from 1975 to 1990. I took a break then but got involved again in a couple of the committees a few years ago.

Have things changed much since you worked for Impact?

There are so many exciting things going on now it's hard to keep track of them all. Since I took over we have approved an extra £½m to be spent on repairs, opened a new furniture re-cycling store in Workington and won an award for the rural Foyer in Penrith along with much more....

Is being on the board different than working for Impact?

Yes, for a start you don't get paid! Our job as board members is to make sure that the organisation is run properly, keep to the rules and keeps its promises. We decide the objectives and plans for the business each year, which are carried out by the staff. Then we monitor how it is going.

What are your priorities for 2009?

We are carrying out a review of how the board and committees work - and looking at new ways of involving more residents and people who use Impact services. Look out for more information about this early next year.

Interview with Mike Rose-Troup, Chair of the Board

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Sometime in 2009, Impact will develop its 3000th property. Our housing is the bedrock of our service – our Mission Statement commits us to “Meeting Greatest Need” and we will continue to provide, modernise, adapt and replace our housing to meet the needs of our local communities.

Key issues for Impact for the future will be: upgrading our properties to modern day standards, particularly to make sure that tenants can afford their heating bills at a time when energy costs are continuing to rise. We continue to have a modest development programme which is currently concentrating on rural needs, the elderly, young people and various supported housing needs.

Interview

How long have you lived in the property?

I've lived in my current impact property since October 2008 and lived at Trafalgar Street for six months prior to that.

Did you go through Impact's choice based lettings procedure and how did you find it?

It was really easy and straightforward via the internet and it was done in 3-4 weeks. I'm close to Carlisle and I rejected a few places before accepting the Spencer Street property.

How do you like your property, neighbours and Impact staff?

It's good, better than I thought. I've settled in really well and everyone is okay, helpful and supportive.

How has getting this property helped you?

I was in shared accommodation. I've also started as an Electrical Engineer at College which is great.

An interview with Robert Szkrybieneic, Spencer Street Carlisle

Interviewed by Damien Morris, Resident Involvement Officer

Photographss taken by Jim Davis



Elderly Services



The demographics of Cumbria are quite stark. We have an elderly population that is living longer. At Impact we have always tried to meet needs as they evolve. We now have four schemes of very specialist elderly accommodation – three for rent and one for sale. Our latest scheme at Jenkins Crag is a state of the art scheme (extra care) which houses elderly people as their physical needs increase. We also have a large number of bungalows and Support Services for elderly people to stay and thrive in their communities. For example, on Salterbeck, where we own 800 properties, we have built over 100 bungalows.

Interview

How long have you lived here?

I've lived here on Salterbeck for 7 years just gone in September.

What do you think of the bungalow?

Marvellous, best move I ever had.

Where did you live before?

I lived in a flat upstairs at Ashfield, also lived at Wetherriggs Road and Coronation Drive on Salterbeck and also in Workington town centre.

Do you have family on the estate?

I have a grandson, one son at Low Moresby, 1 Standbeck Meadows which are local, then I have a daughter in Blackpool, one in North Carolinar USA and another in Arnside.

Is there anything else you'd like to say?

I'm 94 years old! It's great at Salterbeck, Impact have been very good to me. Its the nicest place I've lived. Staff are very good and I enjoy the facilities available on the estate. I go to Bingo twice a week at the the Oval Centre and have been part of the "cracking do" group at the Centre for the last four years!

Interview with Barbara Carruthers, Salterbeck Bungalow

Interviewed by Anna Holmes and Kaiya Jones, Salterbeck Youth Project

Photographs taken by: Jim Davis



Supported Housing



Impact is Cumbria's biggest provider of Supported Housing with the largest contract funded through Supporting People for support services to vulnerable groups. We have a significant stock of housing to meet the needs of people from a wide variety of backgrounds. We also provide "floating support services" and have an active development programme of new schemes to meet emerging needs. Pipeline schemes include those for people with Cerebral Palsy, Spectrum Autism Disorder, physical disability, replacement women's refuge in Carlisle, replacement scheme for people with ensuing mental health issues and so on. Perhaps our two most ambitious are new Foyers in Whitehaven and Kendal – extending our network of integrated services run for and with young people.

Interview

What do you think of the scheme?

I think the scheme is excellent.

How did you end up living at the scheme?

I was living with my brother but unfortunately his house was taken off him.

What do you think of the neighbours and the staff?

I think the neighbours are okay, I did a job for one of them. Its quite a posh street. Its a really good place here, the staff are spot on, excellent!

Where do you see yourself being in 2 years time

I would like to have a job and my own place. I would really like a CS card (for construction).

Anything else you would like to add

I'm very grateful for whats been done for me.

Interview with Duncan Sutherland

Interviewed by Fiona Wilson, Senior Supported Housing Assistant

Photographs taken by Jim Davis, photographer

To Whom it concerns,

First let me express my grateful and sincere thanks to all who have been involved in helping me to come to circumstances with my recent being made homeless. Without the support of your staff all of whom have listened to my downfall and have guided me back up, god knows where circumstances would have led.

I would like to express my special thanks to Bob and Lucy for their time and understanding of my plight. Please could you pass on my thanks to both of them.

Thank You, D Sutherland

Approximately 25% of the people we house receive tailored support



Many of the people that Impact works with are at a point of transition in their lives. One of our key commitments is to help young people making the transition to adulthood. So, we provide services in schools, we provide Supported Housing schemes for people leaving home for the first time, we provide furnished supported flats, we provide “floating support services” for young people living elsewhere, we provide training, we provide Foyers, we provide youth activities, and so on.

Sometimes it is very difficult to find the funding from different sources which will provide the integrated package that young people will need to make their transition. However, we believe we are extremely good at supporting young people through difficult times.

Interview

Could you say something about your background and why you are in Pategill House?

I've lived at Pategill for a few months. Things weren't working out at home with my mum and when I wasn't working she kicked me out. I ended up staying with another family member on her sofa but that was time limited. I was pleased when I was offered a place at Pategill House.

What do you think about the scheme, your staff and neighbours?

I think the building is in a good state of repair and I have nice new furniture and new carpet in my room. The staff offer us good support and are around whenever we need them. I feel safe, can control my finances better and have been involved in lots of social activities.

What do you see yourself doing by the time you leave our service?

With the help and support I want to be able to live in permanent accommodation and work full time. Whilst I'm here at Pategill I want to work towards getting some qualifications so I can get a good job.

Anything else you would like to add?

I would really like to be able to have a dog at the scheme, not only will it keep me company but it brings responsibilities. I also like to do the activities such as fishing and camping.

Interview with Ashley Fry, Eden Supported Housing, Pategill House

Interviewed by Jayne Douglas, Senior Supported Housing Assistant



Impact is like a book of success stories. We work with people who are very often struggling to live proud, independent lives and...everyone of those stories that we have is in its own way a success story. As a society, we are sometimes not very good at celebrating peoples successes. At Impact we are just learning to celebrate.



National Success at the Eden Rural Foyer

Eden Rural Foyer has been recognised nationally as a centre of excellence by the Foyer Federation, for its work with young people and the local community.

Eden Rural Foyer is the only foyer in the county. They provide housing with support to young people between the age of 16~25. They offer young people a springboard into independent living, learning and work, using a holistic approach to meet their needs and aspirations.

Although the focus is on young people they seek to draw a broad range of people together, working with as many members of the community as possible, to develop an inclusive approach and to help to fund the work they do with young people. This was recognised by Supporting People when they awarded the Foyer with an Equality and Diversity award for partnership working.

The foyer also houses a dynamic cyber café open to the general public and serving excellent quality food using local produce. It offers I.T training, Entry to Employment, a young parents group, meeting room hire and through working in partnership a multi cultural drop in service.

Follow on student from Close Street to Old Brewery

Joanne Maxwell is now 19 years old and has lived since the age of 13 in various friends' homes or hostels and foster care. She has very little contact with her family.

She did not gain any gcse results, however became involved with the Living Well Trust and studied for an NVQ in customer services. She worked on a voluntary and part paid basis working with youth groups, young children and the elderly.

Between part time jobs Joanne started a course at Carlisle College in Health and Social Care. For a number of reasons, this did not work out. She has worked in various jobs, but always wanting to get back into full time education. Joanne gained a place at Close St hostel during the summer and applied for a course at the new University of Cumbria.

Joanne was accepted on a 3-year course in Social Sciences, child and family studies.

This was based on her NVQ qualification and her voluntary work. She has now transferred to the Old Brewery residences as a full time student and has settled into life surrounded by other residents who are studying a variety of different courses, from Performing arts to Graphic design and Journalism.

We are pleased that by working together with other areas of Impact, we can help make a difference to others.





Strategic C

Providing a wide range of affordable housing for people in our urban area

Providing a range of support services for independent and vulnerable people

Placing customers at the heart of our business with a customer focus in delivering excellent service

Removing barriers to services and ensuring people from all backgrounds are valued, respected and supported

We will work with local people in the community to build confidence, enhance social inclusion and support people to be self-reliant and better able to access services

Developing efficient use of energy and resources by contractors, tenants, residents and customers

We will operate to sound financial principles and ensure the use of our resources for the benefit of the community and our organization

We will develop a competent Board with the ability to deliver in robust and accountable ways

Promoting impact as an Employer of choice and supporting staff to achieve excellence with the organization



Objectives

housing services to meet the needs of
and rural communities.

s to enable people of all ages to lead
and fulfilling lives.

our organisation, ensuring a strong
excellent services and outcomes.

and ensuring people of all ages and
and free from discrimination.

their communities to increase their
ion and empower them to be more
access and influence services.

and resources and assisting our staff,
customers to live and work sustainably.

principles, ensuring the most effective
of our customers and the sustainability
organisation.

with Staff members working creatively
ountable systems.

Choice by developing and motivating
within an entrepreneurial culture.



Jenkins Crag Court

It was a blustery day with driving rain but nothing could have dampened our spirits in celebrating the opening of our first new build 'extra care' housing scheme in Kendal in October. The development, of 33 one-bedroom flats and four two-bedroom bungalows, was the first timber-framed structure for Impact and indeed the largest one built in the county to date.

Jenkins Crag Court brings together housing, support and care for older people. Schemes such as this mean that older people can remain active and independent as they age. Impact has the housing and support role, with a domiciliary care provider being contracted by the local authority to provide personal care to residents on-site. Residents have a wide range of needs, with some only wanting the safety and security that sheltered housing offers, knowing that if their needs change in the future, they can remain living at home. For others, living in extra care housing often avoids the need for a move later in life to residential or nursing care – as these services can be delivered in their own home.

The scheme was officially opened by Mr Jonathan Brook, Chair of South Lakeland District Council. Tim Farren, MP was also in attendance to wish the scheme every success. The age range of residents spans more than 30 years, and our oldest resident, Miss Audrey Marshall, was presented with a small hamper to mark the event.

Photos taken by Charlie Headley



Youthtastic Open Day

Following the failure of their Foyer bid, Youthtastic picked themselves up and went about transforming the top floor of the Nook Street offices into a Youth Zone. Using funding they had secured they transformed this area into a fantastic space for them to meet.

The top floor at Nook Street is now a jazzy, upmarket place where young people can meet and get involved in Youth activities. The main room painted pillar box red and black has a funky soft area where young people can chat and plan activities, an area where young people can surf the net, an area where craft activities can take place and an area where you can challenge your friends on a Wii. There is also a kitchen for healthy eating or maybe just sit and chat.

On 1st of September Youthtastic officially launched their new space with a fantastic open day. Representatives from local agencies and most importantly young people were involved in a fun and exciting day. Following a welcome speech by Youthtastic members and the official opening of the day by Workington Speedway riders, guests were left to munch on a fantastic buffet supplied by the Hub Hub at Centre 47. Young people tried their hand at circus tricks; people had their face painted, nails decorated, got involved in craft activities and challenged one another on the Wii – all done to the non-stop music delivered to us by Impact's resident DJ – 'Damo' supported by a number of assistants during the day.

Well done to all Youthtastic members for their work to make this day a success.





Impact provides Cumbria's only Refuge for women fleeing domestic violence. We also run a network of "Safe houses". We provide a Floating Support service for women in their own homes. And, we provide a counselling service for men and women suffering domestic abuse. As with all of our activities we have a passionate commitment to this issue and, because of the way in which we can integrate our different services, we believe we can make a real difference to people's lives.

Interview

Ella, you are a member of the Pow Wow Support Group – tell us about it?

It is a partnership between Barnados and Impact Housing, for women who have, or are still, experiencing domestic abuse. It aims to provide a resource where they can access support, information, empathy and involvement in a social network. Members have the opportunity, time and freedom to discuss and work through issues, build self esteem and confidence and make decisions about their future in a safe and supportive environment.

What has the group done to assist you?

It helped me move on from the past and rebuild my shattered confidence. It gave me a chance to meet new people and make new friends. The original members of 'Pow Wow' have benefited so much that we no longer needed the support of that group, however we wanted to continue to meet in a social setting.

Why involve Impact?

Impact Housing is a great organisation, working hard in the community. Through Eleanor Tyler, I have learned what else Impact has to offer, such as the café and furniture warehouse.

What is this book about?

The book tells the personal stories of domestic abuse from women living in Cumbria, pieces from professionals working in this field, content from celebrities and useful information. It opens people's eyes to the suffering that still goes on today for those living with domestic abuse.

How did the launch go?

The book launch was brilliant. Andrew Johnstone, star of Britain's Got Talent (see photo above), sang Eric Clapton's Tears In Heaven. His mother, Morag, spoke from the heart about how pleased they were to launch such an important, thought provoking book. The launch in Tullie House was well attended and it was a lovely atmosphere. It was very emotional.

Interview with Ella Nelson, previous member of Pow Wow support group.

Interviewed by Eleanor Tyler, Domestic Violence Outreach Worker, Carlisle.

Photographs taken by Rachel Johnston



Recycling Services



At a time when personal finances are getting tighter, when as a society we are becoming more aware of the need to recycle rather than dispose of consumer goods, Impact has been operating its recycling services for 8 years now. We have furniture outputs in Carlisle, Penrith and Ulverston and have recently opened a new outlet in Workington. We recycle furniture, white goods, bicycles and bric a brac. The business is so successful that we will have a turnover in 2009 of nearly £1m. Every year we divert over 600 tonnes of second hand goods from landfill.

Interview

What is your background?

I'm married with two children, a boy and a girl. Used to work in pharmaceuticals, children's home and now Impact.

What do you get out of the job?

Satisfying, due to helping the environment.

What sort of tasks do you do?

I'm a driver and we deliver and collect furniture in the local area.

Who buys the furniture?

We see people from all walks of life in here. Some people have absolutely nothing, others just looking for a bargain. All our customers seem to go away very happy!

What do you think it does to help the local communities?

Helps people on low incomes and those who are disadvantaged.

What sort of people work at your furniture store?

At my store, we have 3 staff and lots of volunteers – 4 people with learning disabilities, a work placement, a probation placement, a placement from the local school and a polish volunteer who wants to improve her English.

Interview with Shaun Gaskell, Driver, Impact Furniture Services, Ulverston

Interviewed by Darrell Robinson, Resident, Young People's Supported Accommodation, Miller Court, Kendal





Because of our particular interest in young people, we have always sought to provide as wide a range as possible of services for young people who are growing up. Our contract with the Learning and Skills Council has recently been renewed and we provide services for 17-19 year olds in Workington, Whitehaven, Barrow, Penrith and Carlisle. We also provide limited training services for older groups and, in this time of increasing unemployment, we are looking at widening that range of services even further.

Much of what we do is about developing people's skills and confidence to lead fulfilled lives. The Training Services are an integral part of that commitment.

Interview

How long have you been on the project?

About five months

Say something about what you do in a typical week?

I do things at Whitehaven Training Centre such as job search, literacy and numeracy and we do team building too!

What do you hope to achieve from the scheme and what do you want to do next?

I just really want to get a good job.

Is there anything you would like to say to others considering going on one of our schemes?

It is a really good way to earn money and the tutors are really helpful and nice.

Anything else you would like to say?

Come to e2e. It helps towards qualifications which will hopefully lead to a job.

Interview with Jenna Benn, e2e learner

Interviewed by Katie Donovan and Jade O'Donnell, Salterbeck Youth Project

Photographs taken by Jim Davis



The future of rural Cumbria?



Fuel costs are rising, heating costs are rising, utility costs are rising. In rural Cumbria a third of households don't have access to mains gas. Many of our tenants on limited incomes, are finding it increasing difficult to afford their heating costs. Impact is committed to finding creative and innovate ways of addressing these issues. In Thirlmere and Eskdale Green we are playing our part in creating sustainable rural communities. We are working with the local communities to create sustainable biomass heating systems (wood).

Affordability issues are not restricted to our rural communities. We are setting up an energy company which will develop partnerships with statutory agencies and the energy providers to provide affordable heat for communities throughout Cumbria.

Interview

What's your involvement in Thirlmere?

I work as Parish Clerk and Chair of Wythburn & Thirlmere Heritage Group and involved with the refurbishment of the old church.

What do you think of the area?

Compared to other lake district areas, I feel Thirlmere hasn't really changed since the 60s. It's very beautiful and is a place of special interest.

What do you think about Impact and what we are doing with properties in Thirlmere?

I am very pleased with what Impact is doing regarding the housing, such as upgrading heating systems. I'm a little concerned for the new families moving in – they don't really seem to last long given the isolation and lack of services – so future generations are at risk.

What do you think Thirlmere will look like in the future?

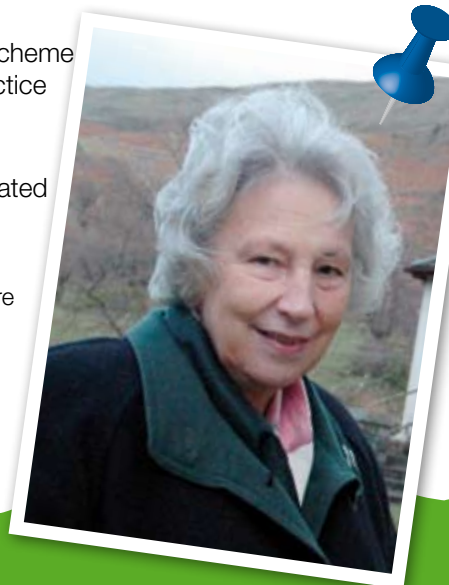
Very positive about United Utilities and Impact's heating project. The scheme will help Thirlmere to lead the way, becoming an example of good practice for other villages with similar issues.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about rural Cumbria?

I enjoy living in area – the rural perspective and complex issues associated with day to day life, that are not understood by wider partnerships.

Interview with Sally Bickerdyke, Parish Clerk and Chair of Wythburn & Thirlmere Heritage Group

Interviewed by Damien Morris, Resident Involvement Officer





Student Life

Overlooking the River Caldew and next door to Carlisle Castle, the Old Brewery Halls of Residence, our student accommodation in Carlisle, is an ideal place for students to stay during their time in Carlisle. The Halls offer a high standard of student accommodation in modern self catered flats.

Due to its relatively small size, the Old Brewery has developed a friendly, community atmosphere which provides an opportunity to make friends with students from different programmes and backgrounds. The Halls also welcome a variety of students from overseas and this mix of culture, languages and interests help to create a stimulating environment for all students, enhancing their study and social experiences.

Interview

Where are you from?

Suffolk.

What course are you studying?

DGCE Primary Education at the University of Cumbria, Fusehill Campus.

What do you think of residences, staff and other neighbours?

Neighbours are perfect, - fun living, full of laughs. Haven't mixed much with younger residents. The Staff are amazing!

What do you think of Carlisle?

I love it! Great atmosphere, architecture and lovely surroundings. Great Charity shops too! I'm in walkable distances to everywhere.

Anything else we should be doing to make like better for students?

Lots of students currently smoke outside which causes noise problems.
Need a smoking area away from main square.

Impact is currently constructing a "smoking porch" in a quieter area!

Interview with Mr Robert Charmichael, Student, Old Brewery Residences, Carlisle.

Interviewed by Dee Carruthers, Residences Manager, Old Brewery Carlisle

Photos take by Dee Carrutehrs, Residences Managers, Old Brewery Carlisle



We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the Annual Report and thank everyone who has been involved with us – past, now... and into the future.

This photo shows Michael Bonner at our recent Awards Ceremony. Michael recently retired from Impact's Board and Committees after 13 years service, including several years as Chair.



For more information about us, please get in touch as follows:

Head Office: 01900 842100

Carlisle: 01228 633600

Salterbeck: 01946 833100

Email: enquiry@impacthousing.org.uk

Website: www.impacthousing.org.uk

Our Head Office is:

Nook Street, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4EH.

Tel: 01900 842100 Fax: 01900 842101

Industrial & Provident Society Reg No. 21411R Housing Corporation Reg No. L0917

Impact Operates as a Charity



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