

# Strength through collaboration



SOUTHSIDE FAMILY PROJECT  
Annual Review 2022/23

# Contents

|    |                                           |      |
|----|-------------------------------------------|------|
| 01 | Chair's Foreword                          | p 04 |
| 02 | Message from our CEO                      | p 05 |
| 03 | How we make a difference                  | p 11 |
| 04 | Thank you                                 | p 26 |
| 05 | Financial Review                          | p 29 |
| 06 | Thank you from someone special            | p 30 |
| 07 | And finally, in praise of older people... | p 35 |





# Chair's foreword

01

On behalf of all the Trustees, I am delighted to report that Southside has had another successful year. This is due to the sustained dedication and skill of our staff and volunteers, who demonstrate in all aspects of the work they undertake their determination to make a positive difference to the lives of families across Bath and North East Somerset affected by trauma and abuse.

Our achievements include:

- being awarded the new five-year contract for Bath and North East Somerset's Independent Domestic Abuse Support and Advice Service.
- designing, developing and starting our pilot of a new Lived Experience Peer Mentoring Scheme for children who have been involved in serious violence or at risk of becoming involved in serious violence.
- opening a new after school Community Hub Group in Keynsham to add to the two already established and thriving in Writhlington and Foxhill, Bath.
- introducing a process to inform local GPs of families we are currently supporting, with updates should safeguarding concerns become apparent.
- training 15 new volunteers through our bespoke Supporting Families Course.
- continuing counselling sessions remotely and expanding our offer of face-to-face counselling sessions using Meade House in Bath and a new doctor's surgery in Radstock.
- trialling an Outcomes Framework Assessment with new clients referred into our Domestic Abuse Service.
- four workers obtaining their Safelives IDVA Level 3 Accreditation qualification.
- bringing families together for a special community picnic at the Holburne Museum to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 and summer picnics for our Community Hub Groups in Writhlington and Foxhill, Bath, to alleviate holiday hunger and isolation due to food poverty and the cost-of-living crisis, with summer play ideas and recipe cards for healthy and affordable meals to cook at home.
- our Chief Executive Officer, Penny McKissock, being awarded an MBE for her service to the community in Somerset.

The support and generosity of all our funders are crucial in helping our charity maintain its high standards and efficacy in empowering local people living in difficult circumstances to improve their life chances, and we thank them for their vision and compassion in championing our cause.

Jill Oldham  
Chair of Trustees



# Message from our CEO

Partnering as the new normal...

02 

*“If you want to go fast  
go alone, if you want  
to go far go together.”*

African proverb



The role of the community is often overlooked. For many of the individuals and families who Southside supports, most of their meaningful relationships do not exist in a professional context, but rather an informal one within the community. It is this invisible network of support that keeps us well. Southside is part of this network, lived experience mixed with learned experience, and our approach is informal, a very particular approach that is ordinary and helps us to connect with children, young people and adults who are facing the most complex challenges in their lives. We know from research that when it comes to effecting change, community members are five times more powerful than outside providers.

Southside does not want to go it alone; we are passionate about forging and sustaining partnerships that work for our communities. We know that the causes of social problems are interdependent; they cannot be addressed by uncoordinated actions amongst isolated organisations. It will be challenging, but we will need to abandon our individual agendas. We know from experience that developing trust among voluntary organisations and statutory agencies can be a monumental challenge!

We must share a vision for change. We know that we will not agree on everything, but we must discuss and resolve our difficulties and not splinter our efforts; we must agree on the main purpose of our collective impact. Working collaboratively, we can exponentially increase the resources required to bring about meaningful change.

We plan to be part of a series of meetings over time in which we and our partners will gradually develop, negotiate and shape the partnership. We will bring in additional partners where we see gaps in services and resources. It will not be about the number of collaborators involved but the coordination of our different activities through an agreed plan of action.

There is much talk of participation. Southside wants to go much further and see individuals and communities that are truly connected. We will start with our Community Hub Groups where our approach is supportive, non-judgmental, accessible and effective. Our approach is maintainable, well-grounded and enhances protective factors, but we need to increase the provision through our three established Community Hub Groups and provide more of them in other areas.

AND.....for the future, what might social change look like if funders, voluntary organisations, Government, local authorities, businesses, and individuals, embraced collective impact?

In the words of Charles Darwin, “It is the long history of humankind that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”

Penny McKissock MBE, CEO



“It is the long history of humankind that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”

Charles Darwin





# Famous Collaborations

Marie and Pierre Curie, what a couple,  
discoverers of Radium, cancer now in trouble.  
Laurel and Hardy, another great double,  
always together, and often in a muddle.

Lennon and McCartney, took music to a new height,  
collaboratively working, "*Hey Jude*," it's a "*Hard Day's Night*."  
Armstrong and Aldrin, left the earth behind,  
"*One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind*."

Ant and Dec, entertainers extraordinaire,  
presenting together, few can match their flair.  
Torvill and Dean, champions of the nation,  
skating the Bolero, they received a standing ovation.

Individually, we can create greatness,  
working together, the limits are endless.  
As the Eighties band Starship vow,  
"*Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now!*"

Tracey Vowles, Family Support Manager





## Southside Stories

# Sonia and Alex's Story

Mum Sonia and Dad Alex have three children: Emily, aged nine, Jack, aged seven, and Ted, who is three years old. Emily had a stroke at birth resulting in multiple disabilities and, on occasions, aggressive behaviour. Mum 'admitted' that she and her husband come from highly-educated, successful families and that they are struggling to accept their daughter's disabilities and fear for Emily's and the family's future.

Following a couple of home visits, the parents agreed to try a few sessions using the non-violent resistance (NVR) approach. Unlike many other parenting approaches, NVR does not try to change the child or young person. The ultimate goal of NVR is to improve and develop relationships between parents/carers and their children. Where there is challenging behaviour, these relationships are highly likely to suffer.

The worker is only a few sessions into the NVR approach with Mum so far, covering escalation and de-escalation techniques, increasing parental

presence, reconciliation gestures and the importance of self-care for parents. Mum and Dad are fully engaged and confidently using the methods discussed and expressing positive changes. Mum has researched the approach in her own time and clearly has the capacity and commitment to follow the techniques the worker has discussed with her.

Initially, our worker was daunted by the academic and professional backgrounds of the parents and found having a 'toolkit' from a recognised parenting approach helpful as a focus for the support. The worker is building a relationship with Mum and Dad that is allowing them to offload their emotions and talk about their fears about the future for Emily.

More recently, Mum and Dad have felt they can talk about the grief and loss of not having the 'perfect' child and expressing acceptance, and movingly, their deep love for Emily.



# How We Make a Difference

The need for Southside's services has grown significantly through the impact on our local communities of the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. We have seen the direct impact on people's mental and physical health, safety and financial circumstances through steeply rising costs contributing to increased food and fuel poverty. As for many other organisations, our capacity to respond to this surge in need was under pressure throughout 2022/23 through rising costs for the charity, increasing complex referrals and caseload for our team, and a challenging funding environment. Everyone rose to the challenge, focused on ensuring that the children, young people and families we supported throughout the year could find the help, support and safety they needed.

Our Theory of Change sets out how Southside makes a difference to help individuals and families facing complex challenges through trauma-informed support and services, based on evidence, lived experience, expertise and insight to ensure that they can build the capacity to change and make progress towards our long-term outcomes of safety; resilience; family wellbeing; identity; relationships and connections.

Southside is embedded in our local communities and highly values the unique expertise developed through personal experience. Our strengths-based approach enables people with lived experience to share their stories, influence and advocate for change and use their personal expertise and understanding to help others.

# Theory of change

03





How We Make a Difference

## Family Support and Play Service

Southside Family Project supports families facing multiple and complex challenges through the Family Support and Play Service for Bath and North East Somerset, working in partnership with Bath Area Play Project (BAPP).

Over 400 families were referred in 2022/23: 79% with experience of trauma/poor attachment or social isolation, and over a third with mental health issues for parents and/or children; with children experiencing significant issues at school with attendance/progress; and/or having a special education or disability need (SEND). Almost a quarter of families referred for support were not in education, struggling with employment or training or on low income and at risk of financial exclusion.

We supported over 840 people dealing with multiple and complex difficulties during the year, helping them to make positive changes through

specialist family support, strengthening the attachment between children, young people and their parents/carers.

For each family, one of our experienced team works with the family to assess and understand multiple and complex needs and strengths for each family member - children, young people and their parents/carers - and works together with them to develop a whole family single plan. The plan will provide whole family support and include a range of therapeutic activities and trauma-informed interventions to support each individual family member's needs and strengths. This could include:

- outreach, visiting the families at least weekly.
- coordinating multi-agency support, ensuring that families access appropriate services through Southside (e.g. therapeutic groups for children affected by trauma, counselling,

## Family Support and Play Service

coaching, food support, hub groups) and local specialist services as appropriate to individual needs.

- attending (or chairing) multi-agency meetings involving the families or children.
- regular family reviews to discuss progress and any other emerging needs with family members.
- observing family dynamics; discussing, exploring, challenging; and role modelling appropriate ways of forming healthy attachment relationships, parenting and behaviour.
- trauma-informed whole family support tailored to each family members' individual needs and aspirations, using evidence-based approaches including theories on attachment, cognitive behavioural therapy, resilience, child development and play, and non-violent resistance (NVR).

We work together with all agencies involved with each family, and the Family Support Worker supports parents/carers to make use of available specialist services to meet their children's and their own needs, helping to

overcome any reluctance or avoidance and accompanying them to appointments where necessary. Together with the whole family, the worker regularly reviews progress towards identified outcomes in the plan and develops the support to meet individual needs and build on achievements.

The Family Support and Play Service uses our Outcomes Framework to measure the identified outcomes in Southside's Theory of Change. We measure 21 intermediate outcomes at assessment, quarterly and final review on completion of the support, which all contribute to our five impact areas.

The 'distance travelled' for each family is based on the individual outcomes, and together with our case studies, this provide a clear quantitative and qualitative assessment of impact at an individual family level. We bring together the data for all families to provide the overall outcomes for our Family Support and Play Service. Out of families supported through intensive work, with cases closed and full evaluation data for 'distance travelled' assessment:



'Distance travelled' assessment



How We Make a Difference



## Domestic Abuse Services

In 2022/23, the Police recorded 1,674 domestic abuse crimes across Bath and North East Somerset, over half of which involved children and young people. The Police and Lighthouse Victim Care refer victims for support from Southside. Individuals can seek support directly, and we also receive referrals through local GP surgeries through our IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) service. We received over 630 domestic abuse referrals in 2022/23.

Our Domestic Abuse Service provides crisis support for victims at high risk of serious harm or death, many experiencing multiple forms of abuse, including physical and sexual abuse, harassment and stalking and coercive control (jealous and controlling behaviours). We also support people affected by domestic abuse who are at lower risk and help them to access the care and support they need to keep themselves and their children safe.

The impact of domestic abuse on victims and their children is severe and can include long-term physical and mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, suicidal behaviour, low self-esteem, inability to trust others and emotional detachment. Victims are often isolated from family, friends and their support networks, and struggle with work or study, impacting them both socially and financially. Living in an abusive home affects children's development, education, health and relationships. Victims often fear for their own and their children's lives, and the risk of homelessness. Children affected by domestic abuse can become aggressive, struggle in school, become emotionally detached and/or experience depression or anxiety. We have continued to see an increase in families experiencing child/adolescent to parent abuse.

# Domestic Abuse Services

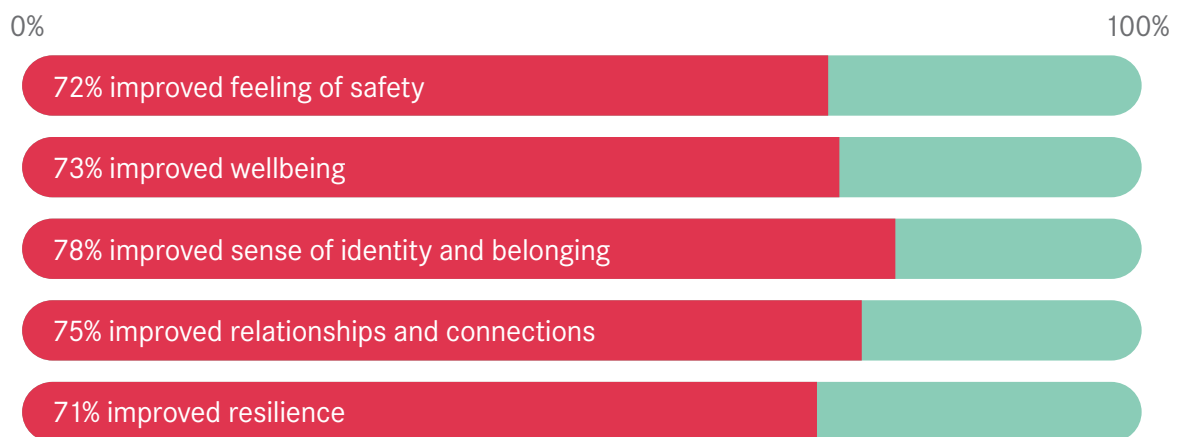
Southside's Intake Service is a central point of information, advice and signposting for victims of domestic abuse, friends or family, professionals and local agencies. This open and accessible service provides critical support for victims and people supporting them. Our team is highly trained and experienced, supporting victims of domestic abuse who are not at immediate risk until there is IDVA capacity to take on the case.

Southside's experienced Domestic Abuse team provides comprehensive risk assessments, targeted and specialist support, person-centred safety planning throughout, empowering individuals to make positive choices for themselves and their children. Enabling victims of domestic abuse to move on positively with their lives includes internal referrals to Southside counselling and whole family support, as well as

signposting to other local support services, such as The Freedom Programme through VOICES and Julian House.

Southside is the lead organisation on domestic abuse locally, working closely with local partners, and a key member of multi-agency strategic forums, including the B&NES Domestic Abuse Partnership and Early Help Board.

The Domestic Abuse Service also now uses our Outcomes Framework to measure the identified outcomes in Southside's Theory of Change. We measure 15 intermediate outcomes at the start and completion of the work to measure 'distance travelled' through the support provided. These outcomes break down into the following five impact areas with results from our evaluation forms for closed cases over the year:



'Distance travelled' assessment

# Landmark Trust Stay

Southside was part of The Landmark Trust's 2023 '50 for Free' scheme, which enables charities to use a stay in their beautifully restored historic buildings. The weekend at Elton House in Bath was amazing for a family who had never had a family holiday. They described the stay as "just out of this world" and told us:

*"When we first opened the door, we couldn't believe that we were staying in this stunning big house for three nights. The building itself was so unbelievable. Breathtaking."*

*"When we woke on the first morning and opened the curtains, we felt like celebrities as we were greeted by people with cameras taking photos of the building and waving at us."*

*"We spent our evening playing cards as there was no WiFi, which was even better that the children had to step back in time and enjoy everything that the house had to offer. The history behind it was amazing."*

*"The memories that we take away with us, we just can't put into words. It was like living in a dream for the weekend."*





How We Make a Difference

## Community Hub Groups

The after-school Community Hub Groups enabled us to bring families together throughout the year, following all the disruption and isolation during the Covid crisis. These groups are critical early intervention services in pockets of deprivation, enabling parents to come together each week to access peer support from each other as well as support through our Family Support Workers. The groups start at 3.15pm so that school-aged children can be involved, with creative play activities and experienced staff to support the whole family. While play activities and peer support take place, our professional chef is busy preparing meals for the family to sit and enjoy together at the end of the session. The children enjoy talking to him across the counter and asking him about his cooking as he demonstrates his skills and prepares 40-50 meals each session.

Throughout the sessions, Family Support Workers are available to discuss any difficulties that may be disclosed and arrange follow-up phone calls to discuss various options of support and/or signposting when required. Due to the popularity of the groups, there is little space to offer support within the groups themselves. The nutritious meal brings everyone together at the end of each group session, enabling the families to enjoy eating together and go home well fed and having connected with lots of other families and our team.

In June 2022, Southside families from our Community Hub Groups enjoyed a memorable day at the Holburne Museum at our Platinum Party that we organised in partnership with the Carers' Centre and The Holburne's Pathways to Wellbeing project, funded through Arts Council England's Let's Create Jubilee Fund.

# Community Hub Groups

Over 260 people came together for a day full of sunshine, great food, exploring the Holburne Museum and enjoying creative activities with local artists: making jubilee bunting, large clay commemorative coins, regal crowns and capes, jubilee celebration cake hats, decorating miniature boxes and designing large jubilee stamps. Southside's Community Hub Group Chef, Dan, and our team prepared a delicious lunch with a BBQ, salads and cakes.

Families also came together for summer picnics in their local communities, where they could enjoy a healthy picnic lunch, sports and creative activities. We also provided Easter eggs, Christmas gifts and wellbeing packs for families through our Community Hub Groups, thanks to donations and funding secured during the year.

Bath & West Community Energy Fund supported a project to help Southside provide targeted support with energy efficiency and fuel poverty to help families reduce their energy bills. Family Support Workers learned more about how to advise on these issues and help with solutions. We provided group members with advice and support as well as energy saving packs, including radiator reflectors, draught excluders and energy-saving bulbs to use at home. One parent said that the packs would really help as they have a big draught coming in from their back door and they are waiting for it to be fixed by their landlord.

The groups are thriving, with new families joining each week and opportunities to extend this approach across Bath and North East Somerset. Our Hub Groups are now running in Writhlington and Foxhill in Bath, with play activities run by Bath Area Play Project as part of our Family Support and Play Service partnership. We also now have a group in Keynsham, and we are working hard to secure new investment to significantly expand in 2024 to other communities. Volunteers play a key role and we could not run the Hub Groups without them and the commitment that these dedicated individuals make to our communities.



“ Having a place to go that allows the children to burn off energy and also being given the opportunity of free exploration of structured/supported play has been invaluable. The flexibility and choice mean that my children want to come back every week and allows me time to speak to other adults, something that is often challenging to do when I have multiple children and so has been really helping with both my children and my mental health. And they feed us all good quality food, another invaluable element in these financial and challenging times. A massive thank you as what this group provides means more than you know. ”



Southside's Supporting Families training programme trains and engages people across our local communities who have lived experience of disadvantage/trauma, have overcome challenges and would like to use this personal experience to support other families. We also welcome people who contact Southside to undertake the training because they would like to gain experience in other sectors or build skills and knowledge to take on new volunteering opportunities in retirement. We build strong relationships between the participants and networks in local communities through the training, involvement in our Hub Groups and the volunteering and work opportunities available once they have completed the training.

During 2022/23, 15 people undertook the Supporting Families training programme, eight of whom have already taken up new opportunities within Southside and their local communities, continuing to build experience and confidence, provide peer support and offer practical help.

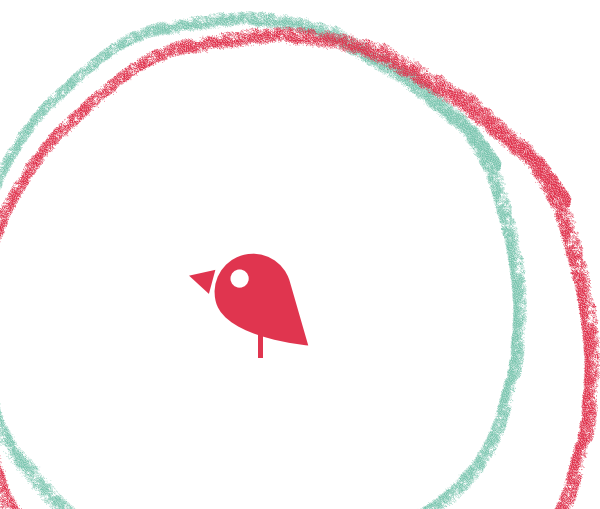
Our Building Bridges group continues to work on an equal basis with Social Care to provide expertise and insight to improve services, meeting with teams of newly qualified social workers. During 2022/23, we further developed our lived experience mentoring approach to

support children who had been exploited, involved in serious violence or were at risk of involvement in serious violence, working with the Bath and North East Somerset VRU (Violence Reduction Unit).

Leigh Zywek, Assistant Director of B&NES Council Children and Young People Services wrote: *"Working with Southside has strengthened how we can support our families and communities, and I am looking forward to 2024 to develop this further."*

Southside ensures our lived experience volunteers can access specialist training and development, particularly important as many missed out on opportunities to benefit from education and training in the past. Our Building Bridges volunteers sent this feedback to one of the trainers who supported them:

*"You have taken us to another level, developing us beyond our expectations. We have been bowled over by your enthusiasm, clarity and honesty. You have helped us to develop our confidence as individuals and as a capable team who will make a difference to the vulnerable children and families that we will support. You have helped us understand complicated processes like the threshold document for Social Care, which is invaluable."*





How We Make a Difference

## Staff and Volunteers – Southside's most Valuable Resource

Southside's staff and volunteers are highly skilled, experienced and trained in understanding the impact of trauma in childhood or adult life, with regular supervision and opportunities for training and development. Many of the team have insight and understanding through their personal lived experience of some of the complex challenges faced by families and individuals we support. We invest in training and development for our staff team and during 2022/23, four staff undertook Safelives Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Level 3 training and qualified as IDVAs.

Our team members continued to demonstrate their resilience and creativity in response to the further increase in need and complexity of cases through the long-term impact of the

Covid pandemic and cost-of-living pressures on individuals and families. We find the right people for the challenge of this specialist work, and ensure that they can grow and learn, with support and regular clinical supervision to manage the emotional burden of this work. We challenge staff and volunteers to reach for their full potential, just as they support and challenge the individuals and families with whom that they work with.

In time, some staff move onto new opportunities where they can use all their training, lived and learned experience to help others, sometimes in new communities. This included one long-term member of staff who had started at Southside as a service user and who shared this lovely message with us all when she left:

## Staff and Volunteers – Southside's most valuable resource

*"I want to say a BIG thank you for being an awesome team to work with: the support, the opportunities and development of myself wouldn't have happened without my colleagues, managers, and supervision. The investment you have put into me has given me confidence and knowledge, and I hope I have been able to share this with the families I have worked with and with you all too.*

*I also feel privileged to have worked for Southside and, on a personal note, life has not always been kind to me and the support I have had is amazing.*

*I will be taking all I have learnt and experienced in my almost 18 years (!! ) with me in my new role where I hope this will still benefit children and families.*

*I will miss you guys a lot, keep doing the fabulous work you do."*

# Strategic Development and Planning for the Future

Southside benefitted from Lloyds Bank Foundation's Enhance support to help us to develop our new three-year Strategic Plan based on the principles of organisational resilience. We were also selected for the Dot Project's OKTA Digital Strategy Accelerator Programme for social impact organisations, which provided targeted support, training and mentoring to support us to develop our first Digital Strategy alongside the organisational planning. Quartet Community Foundation's Resilience Grant also supported Southside to develop our case management system and strengthen our IT infrastructure and capacity during the year.

Southside's new Strategic Plan for 2023-26 sets six strategic goals:

1. Build our Financial Confidence and Security
2. Build Organisational Resilience
3. Consolidate our Core Services
4. Embrace Innovative Approaches to Meeting the Need
5. Actively Promote System Change
6. Raise Awareness of Needs by Enhancing our Reputation and Profile

We have clear aims and plans for each of the strategic goals, and we will be working hard to develop and support our team of staff and volunteers to achieve these together. The Digital Strategy includes a key priority for 2024 of selecting and moving to a new case management system, which will make such a difference to improving our work, particularly the recording and analysis of data and information about our complex work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse and families dealing with multiple and complex challenges.

During 2022/23, Southside continued to work closely with other local organisations through the Twerton and Whiteway Community Network to support individuals and families in our local communities, and secure investment in the longer-term development of the network. Together with Bath City Farm, Youth Connect South West, and First Steps (Bath), we secured support from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to develop a new Community Research Network and learn together during 2023, with the opportunity to apply for long-term funding in 2024.

We also work closely with other partners across Bath and North East Somerset to support families and individuals throughout our targeted Family Support and Domestic Abuse services, and we are developing new collaborations to support the future growth of Community Hub Groups across Bath and North East Somerset.



“ The importance and value of our planned collaboration can't be overstated. By bringing together our vast and varied experience, diverse expertise, and unwavering passion to see long lasting generational change we can optimise our resources, learn from one another and create new opportunities through teamwork, shared goals and mutual respect. ”

Allison Todd, CEO, Mercy in Action



# Thank You

04

AWARDS FOR ALL (THE NATIONAL  
LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND)

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET  
COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION FUND

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET  
COUNCIL

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET,  
SWINDON AND WILTSHIRE INTEGRATED  
CARE BOARD

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET  
VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

BATH & WEST COMMUNITY  
ENERGY FUND

BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

BURGES SALMON CHARITABLE TRUST

CO-OP LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

FOUR ACRE TRUST

GLOBAL'S MAKE SOME NOISE

CHARLES HAYWARD FOUNDATION

NANI HUYU CHARITABLE TRUST

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION  
ENGLAND & WALES

MARKS AND SPENCER GIFT FUND

MEDLOCK CHARITABLE TRUST

MERCY IN ACTION

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY  
DISTRIBUTION COMMUNITY  
MATTERS FUND

ONEFAMILY FOUNDATION

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND  
CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR AVON  
AND SOMERSET

PERSIMMON HOMES  
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

QUARTET COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

REALITYHOUSE LIMITED

ROPER FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST

SIMPLE RECRUITMENT  
(SOUTH WEST) LIMITED

SOUTER CHARITABLE TRUST

SPERRING CHARITY

TESCO COMMUNITY GRANT

UNIVIDUAL

WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION  
COMMUNITY MATTERS FUND

GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION

SOUTHSIDE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

& all friends, families, partners, volunteers,  
trustees, community and individual supporters.



## Southside Stories

# Pete's Story

Pete is a single Dad to Amy, who is ten years old, and Jordan who is two.

Pete did not meet his daughter Amy until she was five years old. When Amy's Mum had another child, both children were removed from the Mum, who has a history of heroin and crack-cocaine addiction. Pete was successful in getting custody of both children. He described the process of getting custody of the children as 'a war' with Social Care and other agencies. Pete is known to 'go to war' with numerous people and was particularly angry with the secretary at Amy's school after she berated Amy for wearing the wrong shoes in front of her friends. Pete swore at the school secretary, telling her "You should have \*\*\*\* come to me you \*\*\*\* bitch. I'm the adult, not Amy. You are \*\*\*\* useless." When challenged by our worker, he said that she should not be a school secretary if she cannot take 'a bit of language' and called her a 'snotty cow'.

Pete has been in prison, and his childhood was brutal and unloving. He told his worker that it was not his Mum's fault. He said that he was a 'horrible little \*\*\*\*' and that he felt it his fault that he ended up in hospital several times following vicious beatings from his Mum.

The demands on our worker to support Pete and his children have been highly challenging. He has never connected with any worker from any agency. Many have refused to work with him, but Southside persisted. Our worker's resilience, courage, sense of humour and 'expert down-to-earthness', ability to try different approaches and share information in a thoughtful way has made a significant, positive impact on this family. Invited by Pete to have a cup of coffee, the worker responded by saying "Only if the kitchen is cleaned up a bit and I get a clean cup!". The worker has found that spending part of the session with Pete cleaning up means

## Southside Stories

# Pete's Story

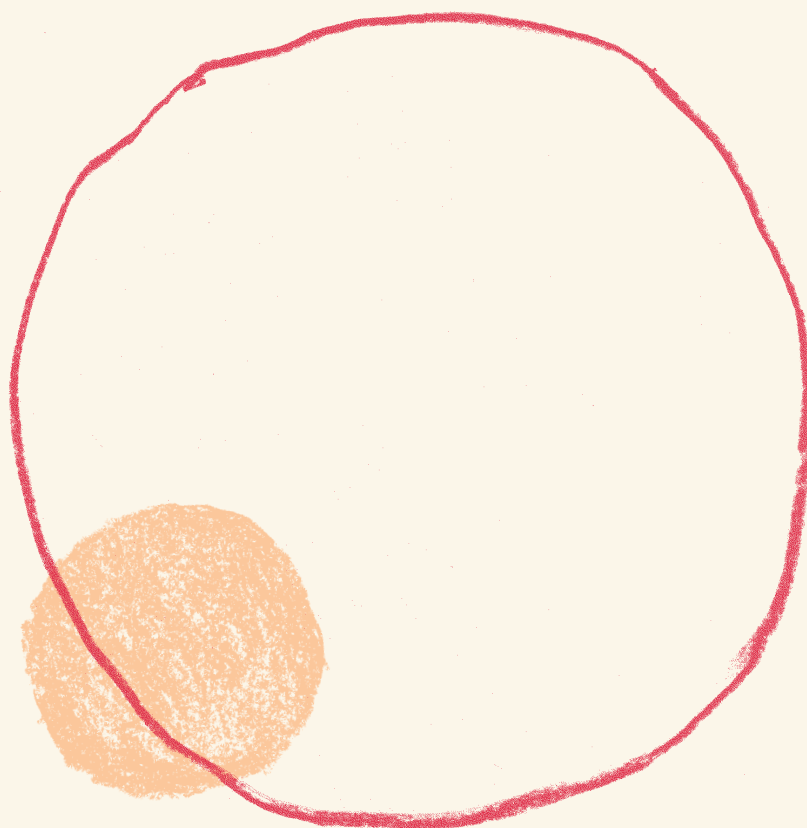
that they can talk easily, often at great depth. Asking him how his life might have been different if his mother had found support when he was young was poignant, and he said that it would have helped.

Pete occasionally 'phones our worker when he is going into school or other meetings to help him to stay calm and reasonable.

The worker knows from their own lived experience that Pete is communicating in an aggressive way because of his life of trauma – for him, it is survival. His best

might not yet be good enough, but it is the best he can currently do.

With our worker's encouragement, Pete has started gardening and has found a real talent for planting vegetables and flowers. The worker has introduced him to an older couple who are in desperate need of help in their large garden. Pete is delighted by his newly found skill and that he can be helpful in some way, saying, "I have never ever been good at anything; bit late to find it now but it's great. They [the older couple] know everything about me, and they're ok with it."



# Southside Financial Review

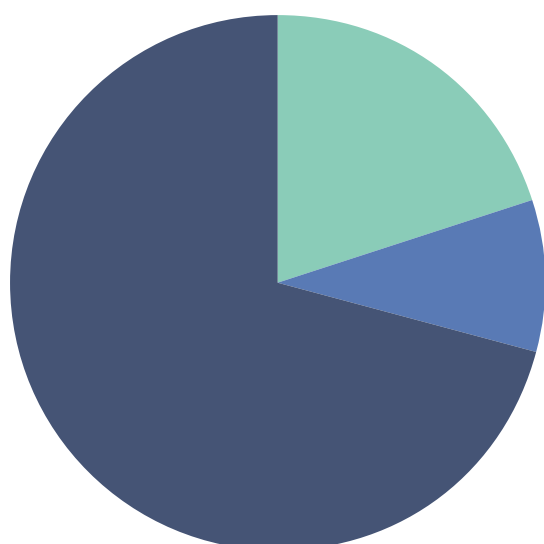
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In 2022/23, Southside Family Project successfully secured the funding needed to continue to respond to the surge in need from the impact of the Covid and cost-of-living crises on individuals and families in our local communities. In this difficult year, Southside incurred an overall deficit of £5,331.

The figures below are extracted from our audited Statement of Financial Activities and Notes. The full audited accounts are available on the Charity Commission Register

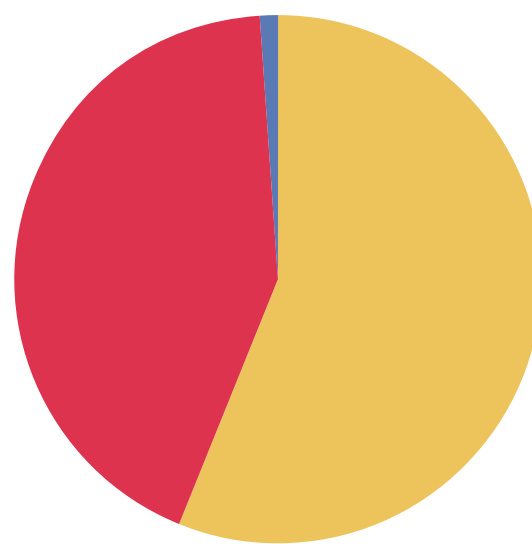
[register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk)

## Income



- Contracts – 71%
- Gifts – 9%
- Grants – 20%
- Interest – 0%

## Expenditure



- Family Support – 56%
- Domestic Abuse – 43%
- Raising Funds – 1%



|                                                    |          |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Income:                                            | £812,713 |
| Expenditure:                                       | £818,044 |
| Net income for the year and net movement in funds: | -£5,331  |

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Funds held at 31 March 2023 |          |
| Restricted Funds:           | £36,527  |
| Unrestricted Funds:         | £191,177 |
| Total:                      | £227,704 |

# Thank you from...

06

One of the people supported  
by Southside in 2022/23

I was meaning to write to you earlier, but I seem to only now have organised my thoughts. I don't know if you appreciate how much help and what an amazing difference our sessions made to me. I am a much stronger person today.

Identifying abuse as abuse was the first big step for me. Every week, I knew that whatever happened I shall be able to talk to you within seven days and I knew that help will be coming from that conversation. The fact that I could talk to you helped me not to feel alone. And talking about those things regularly has helped my mental health a lot.

I feel that you went beyond your scope of responsibilities and did above and beyond. Indeed:

1) besides our regular sessions, you were also available for emergency contact via text. I remember when John tried to put Anna into boarding without my consent, you called me back immediately and offered moral support as well as suggesting next steps such as contacting the school and legal aid firms in Bath.

2) I spoke to many solicitors and social services about how John had put Anna and Poppy in danger in the past. All those have told me that even though kids had been put in danger in the past, there is no way of recording those now. When I mentioned this to you, you pointed out that the police, however, can be informed about

those past events. I did just that. Then the police not only recorded them all, but they have also contacted the social services. Now every past event is on the Social Services record as well as the Police's. It is thanks to you that those had been recorded.

3) you have advised me that I have every right to enquire from the school about their actions and safeguarding investigation following some parents' complaint to the school about John driving off drunk with Anna in his car. Now, thanks to you, despite the school's original desire not to say anything to me, I have a report of what the school's actions/inactions were.

4) you were also very good at telling me that whilst some things are perhaps unpleasant to me, I should let them go and not obsess about them and move on.

5) when the war in Ukraine started it brought some really unpleasant memories from my own childhood. I had seen soviet tanks in action in my home town. During the conversation with you, I realised that my healing is possible through helping Ukrainian refugees. I have now successfully introduced sixteen Ukrainian refugees to their sponsors. All of 'my' refugees and sponsors turned out to be good matches. They have now lived together for over a year. This experience helped me transform my childhood trauma into something positive. That helped me very, very much. I stopped thinking

# Thank you from...

06

One of the people supported by Southside in 2022/23

about horribly tortured victims and started thinking about survivors resettling in the UK; and hopefully able to return back to their homeland soon.

Finally, and most importantly, we were able to identify:

1) my vulnerability – as a mother to a special needs child. Some predators see that weakness in me and are able to abuse that. Indeed, I used to be quite strong and resistant to any sort of emotional abuse or manipulation in my youth. I found myself less protected from it since I became a mother and especially so, since Poppy's diagnoses

2) we identified the need for counselling for two reasons:

a) I now need to heal from the abuse I suffered and move on to something good  
b) clearly my childhood wartime trauma must have affected me as I have not been able to identify and protect myself from abuse for a reason. John's gaslighting greatly resembled that USSR news channel.

I am very grateful to you. I am a much, much stronger person now. I hope to be able to move onto something good.

Wishing you all the best, Lizzie  
(all names changed)

Southside's worker reflected that she was able to build a strong and trusting relationship with Lizzie, which meant they could delve deeper into the historical trauma. When they had completed the work together and closed this case, Lizzie was able to manage well and felt more empowered, as she felt that all the issues had been resolved. In future, she wanted to be in a position to make positive decisions for herself and the girls, and not pursue another unhealthy relationship.





Southside's Development Board,  
25th Anniversary Event at The House of St John's

*“ You were my greatest supporter and advocate. You taught me not to give up on my dreams. I thank you for what you are. ”*

*“ I was drifting until I found Southside, I now have purpose in my life and really believe that I can make a difference in my volunteering role. I didn't do much at school and got no encouragement, now the sky's the limit! ”*

*“ Day by day, life gets better, starting to be myself, also my children. My parenting feels like I'm back in control. I have used some of the tools that you have shown me through the group. Fight/flight/freeze works well for me and my daughter. She has loved the group sessions. Thank you! ”*

*“ Now confident as a parent and supported by other parents. Used some of the skills learned in the group at home which has been helpful. Good to spend 1:1 time with my son too. ”*

*“ I feel optimistic about the future and am so grateful for the support that I received from my worker. It was nice to have someone to unburden myself with, and my worker did all that they possibly could to assist. ”*

*“ You've done so much for me, and it's been brilliant, and I've done lots of things like feeling confident to wear make up again, ride my bike to work, go out with friends, join a gym and a yoga class. I'm looking at courses at Bath College, I can tackle things better in my life for me and my children. My GP said that I was his most improved patient! Thank you, it, it's more than I can put into words, I'm getting back to my old self. ”*

*“ I can't put it any other way, Southside saved my life and helped me to understand what I was putting up with on a daily basis. I was getting to the point where it felt normal, I really believed that I was ugly, stupid, a bad mother, and certainly a very useless wife that my husband was ashamed of. I deserved the beatings and insults that I got. NOT NOW ..... thank you.”! ”*

*“ More confident in my parenting and more tools to deal with our problems. Thank you for all your help. ”*

## Southside Stories

# Isla's Story

"I'm the only kid who sits on a chair on my own at school. I don't get treated normally; I wouldn't have all this stuff [various agencies involved] if I was normal. I think I've got problems, but they won't tell me. Have I got anger, autism? I think there's a secret going on; they need to stop it and tell me what is going on.

School is always annoyed with me, they say I'm rude. I'm not, it's attitude. I get carried away sometimes; they just need to tell me, but they just send me out.

I sit on my own in class, I'm not allowed a partner, I could go and eat them; that would get rid of them.

I just don't want to get grounded, but I get grounded every day. I just want them to diagnose me so I can know why I'm acting like this."

These are the words of Isla, who is eleven years old. Southside offered Isla and her family whole family support, including places in one of our therapeutic groups for Isla with her Mum.

Mum Jane is a single parent and left the children's Dad after years of domestic abuse. It emerged that it was Jane who wanted Isla to be 'diagnosed'. In one-to-one sessions, Jane was able to share that she has always suffered with poor mental health, and from a young age she self-harmed and has made several suicide attempts. Despite trying to be there for her children (Isla has two younger siblings), Jane was gradually able to realise that she was not available to her children and wanted Isla to be diagnosed so that it would be recognised that "it wasn't my fault that Isla is so angry." Now that Jane feels supported, she can talk to Isla and explain some of the things that have troubled her. Jane is receiving counselling, and the worker is coordinating support for the whole family, including liaising with Isla's school.

Isla's voice has been heard at last, and positive action taken. Isla said, "It feels better now. I know a bit about why I do things, and haven't been grounded for weeks. That's good, isn't it? I think I want to be a child psychologist when I grow up. I don't want to eat people anymore!"

# And finally, in praise of older people...

07

As I reach a very large birthday, I have reflected on age and how determined I am to get even more older people involved and **collaborating** with us, particularly in our Community Hub Groups. Our latest volunteer to sign up is aged 74. We aim to make links with GrandFriends, a new charity in Bath set up by local people to build stronger intergenerational connections and friendships. GrandFriends wants us all to recognise the benefits of people of different ages sharing their experience, skills and kindness with each other, and want to encourage this more in our community.

As GrandFriends say, we should recognise that older adults are a vital but underutilised community asset. We know from research and our own experience that huge mutual benefits arise from friendships between people of different generations.

This poem about age was written by my friend and mentor not long before she died. Crysse was certainly true to her beliefs to the very end, believing that 'you don't need to have a personality lobotomy when you pass 60', as evidenced by the bright pink streaks in her hair.

Penny McKissock MBE



And finally, in praise of older people...

07

## Bungee Jumping Crumblies

Look at them, it's obscene...

Wrinklies tottering around Top Shop!

- they should act their age, not their shoe size

Should be saving their pension, not prancing at parties

Wanton and plastered, still trance dancing

Still backpacking the golden road to summer lands.

Retiring? They don't know the meaning of the word

Refusing to age gracefully, won't go quiet

Into that genteel twilight good-night

Collecting tattoos instead of bus passes

Puckering sun-dried faces for kisses

Mutton dressed brazen lamb, perpetual Peter Pans!

What do they think they're like?

This is what I think.

I'm not a sheep to be cut and devoured.

I'm not looking for a Never Never Land, like Pan

Don't confuse me with someone who wants

To be part of those fictions.

Should I change my lifelong convictions?

Curiosity. Passion. Boldness. Lust for Life.

Crysse Morrison, 1942 - 2022



## Southside Stories

# Carly's Story

Carly's Mum had several male partners, all of them violent. Her biological Dad was also violent and would turn up now and then, drink with her Mum and then start attacking her, Carly, and her siblings. Her eldest brother would 'take him on' as a fourteen-year-old and now, at 28, is serving a prison sentence for grievous bodily harm (GBH). On most occasions, the Police would arrive having been contacted by a neighbour. Christmas was always bad, fuelled by alcohol and drugs. For Carly, visits to A&E with her Mum were a regular event, usually after her Mum had been thrown down the stairs.

Our worker said that when they met Carly with her two-year-old daughter, she talked about her life in a monotone voice and said, "I didn't think much of it to be honest, I thought that everyone

had the Police call round on Christmas Day, that's how it was. In a funny way, you get used to it, you just get on with it." Carly's Mum died at the age of 45 and on the advice of her GP, Carly contacted us. She was feeling overwhelmed by feelings about her Mum, saying, "She was violent herself and didn't protect us, but she was still our Mum." Carly described feeling lonely, isolated and very depressed.

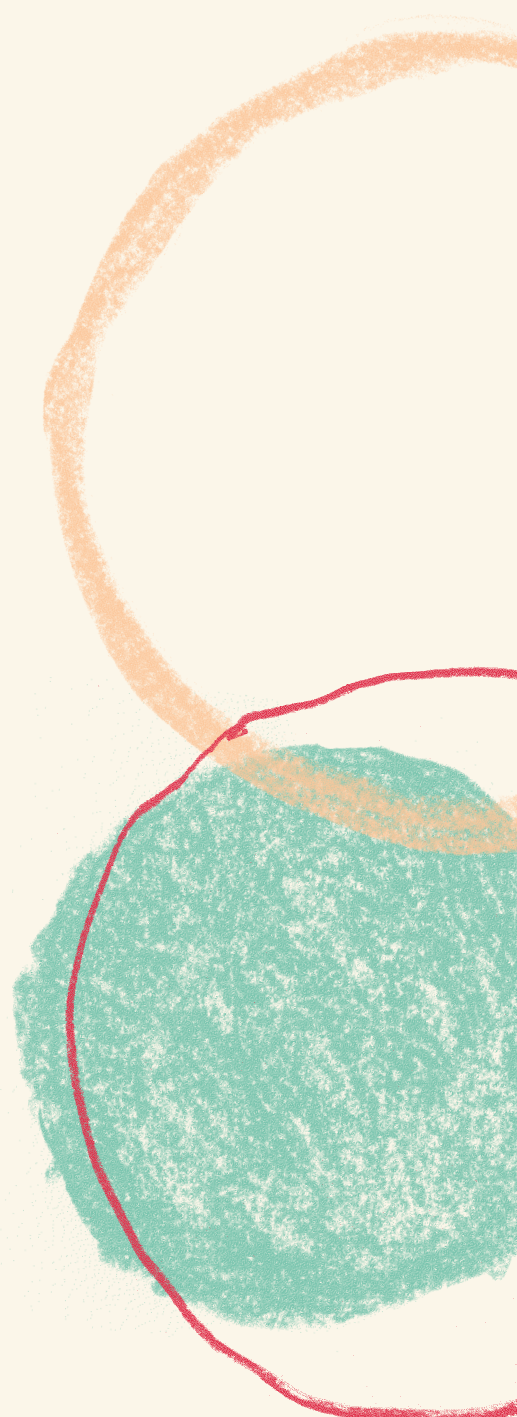
Carly said that what prompted her to talk to her GP was strange: "I was driving through another part of town that I'd never been to, posh. Don't really know why I was there. The houses were lovely; there were trees in front of them and the gardens were tidy. I had sort of remembered that I had driven through houses like that with my Dad, he was probably looking at them to rob them!

## Southside Stories

# Carly's Story

I saw a young couple by one of the houses and their parents were taking photos of them. They were all dressed up and looked really happy. I asked my Dad if it was a wedding. He told me it was probably a stupid school prom, saying it was all rubbish. When I thought about the lovely houses, I felt like my insides were caving in, I had that old, old feeling of desolation. These were houses where people lived and did normal things. This is how I saw it as a kid, that's how I see it now. I did well at school but gave up at 16, I had to do all the housework and cooking at home, it was all too much.”.

Carly contacted us not long after the end of lockdown and started to attend one of our Community Hub Groups. She told us: *“My whole life has been a lockdown; I never went anywhere or saw anybody. I truly felt that until I came to Southside that what I felt in my childhood - fear, loneliness, and isolation - would never leave me. Southside has given me hope.”.*







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