Welcome

Derek Lum - Our Chairperson

2015/2016 has been an exciting time for the charity with a number of new services starting to operate and the foundations laid for the next phase of our development. In a sector which has had a significant number of high profile examples of unacceptable service, Bethphage has been successfully growing high quality person centred services consistent with our vision of a society where people with disabilities have the same opportunities to develop and use their talents and skills as all other people.

In 2014, we said goodbye to Reverend Tom Bruch after 13 years of service as a Trustee of the charity. We have been delighted to welcome James Laing, General Secretary of the British Council of Lutheran Churches, to the Board of Trustees and we have also strengthened our local expertise with the appointment of Tony Aston as a Trustee. This year has also seen the appointment of a new Chief Executive who we believe has the commitment and vision to lead the organisation through a new phase of growth and development.

During the last year, we have opened a modern and innovative new service in Market Drayton and prepared for further new services in Oswestry and Shrewsbury. We are also delighted to have put in place all the arrangements to acquire our first property, a bungalow which will provide new long term high quality accommodation for people we have already supported for a long time.

The principles which drive us today are unchanged. We aim to deliver the highest quality services and have a passion to make a positive difference to the life of every single person we support and the career of every member of staff.

Bethphage’s greatest asset is its people and on behalf of the Board I would like to thank each member of our staff for the enormous effort and personal commitment that they make to Bethphage and at a personal level to the people we support.

Peter Loose - Our Chief Executive

I am delighted to represent an organisation with the high standards and values which have made Bethphage the respected and effective organisation it is today. The clear focus and sharp vision of the charity make Bethphage an attractive organisation to join and I have really enjoyed my first few months as CEO.

Whilst the limitations of public funding present us with significant challenges, it is good to work for an organisation that understands how to combine efficiency with quality and a simple mission to be an excellent provider of services for people with disabilities. The new National Living Wage brings a welcome focus on one of Bethphage’s long standing aims, to increase the income of many of our staff. I believe that we are able to approach this and the sector-wide challenge of staff recruitment with confidence and from a position of strength.

Our aim remains to continue to develop the organisation over the next few years to meet current and future requirements. This will start with a new business plan for 2017 in which our priorities will include safe sustainable growth, good communications with each other and our partners, investment in our staff, continuing to establish Bethphage as a Positive Behaviour Organisation, financial sustainability and continuous improvement. In all we do, we will always be looking to maximise independence and bring potential to life.

I would like to thank everyone connected with Bethphage for making me so welcome here and I look forward to our journey together.
Bethphage’s Mission is to be an excellent provider of services for people with disabilities and we seek to deliver services based on four core values:

1. **Personal Growth:** We create a safe and healthy environment, where we provide positive feedback, support each other to reflect on actions and learn and grow from them.

2. **Respect:** We respect and value the diversity, individuality and views of everyone we come into contact with; fully considering each perspective before arriving at an agreed outcome.

3. **Honesty:** We work together in an open and honest way; taking responsibility and remaining accountable for our actions.

4. **Active Involvement:** We work together, actively engaging and involving others to solve problems and deliver positive solutions within Bethphage and across the wider community.

Bethphage’s Vision is of a society where people with disabilities have the same opportunities to develop and use their talents and skills as all other people.
Key strategies in 2015/16

Our primary activities are to support people with disabilities to achieve their potential through the direct provision of supported living services, registered care homes, community inclusion, and day opportunities.

At 31st March 2016, we were delivering 6,000 hours per week of support to over 90 people in Shropshire, Telford, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham. We aspire to extend our provision into areas neighbouring our current areas of operation. We also support delivery by other organisations in Kenya through our participation in the IMPACT alliance.

During 2015/16, the charity continued to implement the objectives set out in its 2014/17 business plan. The Key Strategies and Activities we adopted to achieve our Aims and Objectives were:

1. Continued transition to becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation (PBO), a concept we believe to be unique to Bethphage which runs through the services we deliver and our employment practices.

We base the way we deliver services (and our employment practices) on the principles that underpin Positive Behaviour Support and have our own, in-house, team of specialists to provide the professional expertise to augment the skills of our highly trained support staff.

2. To increase the number of people we support.

3. To improve our ongoing Quality Assessment procedure and internal scoring of Bethphage’s services.

4. Continued investment in the professional development of Bethphage’s staff.

5. To improve communication to internal and external stakeholders to inform them of developments, successes and opportunities.

6. To ensure financial sustainability and increase financial strength while remaining competitive, maintaining and improving service quality, providing value for money and social value to the wider community.

Public benefit

Bethphage’s vision is of a society where people with disabilities have the same opportunities to develop and use their talents and skills as other people. We achieve this through our direct services and support for the development of learning disability services in the UK and through our support for the work of IMPACT in under-developed countries.

Being an excellent provider of services for people with disabilities in the 21st century involves not only direct service delivery, but also supporting people to access universal services and achieve the same outcomes as the rest of the community. This is particularly true of health services in which people with learning disabilities have not always enjoyed the same life expectancy or treatment as others. Through our health action plans and promotion of healthy lifestyles we aim to increase the quality of life and health outcomes of the people we support.

We believe that whilst our turnover reduces when we enable people to become more independent, these achievements advance our vision and mission, improve the lives of the people we support and deliver economies for our commissioners. That is what we mean by ‘Bringing potential to life’.
Achievements and performance

The charity has continued to grow during the year achieving an increase in the overall number of people supported and the number of support hours provided each week. Following a successful bid in 2014, we have opened a prestigious new service for people with complex needs in Market Drayton in a purpose-built property and expanded our range of day opportunities in Shropshire. During this period, half of our registered locations have been inspected by the Care Quality Commission and all have been judged “good” in all areas of inspection.

We believe our practices as a Positive Behaviour Organisation mark us out as a unique organisation with values, principles and practices which drive our mission to be an excellent provider of services for people with disabilities.

Objective 1: Positive Behaviour Organisation

Two years ago, Bethphage set out on a course of development to become a Positive Behaviour Organisation (PBO).

The vision is to create a whole-organisation approach to the way we interact with people. This approach is based on the principles behind Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), with a focus on positive values and expectations of behaviour for everyone involved with the organisation, and additional support for those who need it. While some schools have adopted a “whole-school” approach to PBS (mainly in the United States), to the best of our knowledge we are the first to adopt a “whole-organisation” approach. This makes us the Positive Behaviour Organisation.

We use PBS at Bethphage in line with good practice guidance and legislation. Bethphage decided to go a step further, and take a whole-organisation approach to PBS. All our staff have received training in PBS, and we promote the use of proactive approaches (active support, skills teaching, effective communication, reducing triggers and reinforcing positive behaviour) throughout all areas of our work. In addition, we extend the approach to how we work with each other within the organisation.

We believe our practices as a Positive Behaviour Organisation mark us out as a unique organisation with values, principles and practices which drive our mission to be an excellent provider of services for people with disabilities. We see being a Positive Behaviour Organisation as a process of continuous improvement which means our mission will never be complete, as tomorrow’s excellence is always better than today’s, and it is our responsibility to strive for greater aspirations and better outcomes for the people we support, for our staff and our other stakeholders.
Following a successful tender, we were pleased to open our new residential service in Market Drayton, commissioned by Shropshire Council. The service started in July 2015 and is successfully meeting the needs of people who previously required more restrictive care and support.

The building was commissioned and built by Shropshire Council, through grant funding from the Bradbury Trust, and the service forms part of their strategic plan for “transforming care” – to re-provide for people who have been placed out of county. More developments are underway to extend this provision, which will ensure that people who have complex needs and issues of concern are able to remain in the area from which they originated while receiving high quality support, in excellent accommodation, within close reach of their families. The service will allow some of the most vulnerable people in our society to have closer connections to the most important people in their lives, remain in an area and be connected to the community resources which are familiar to them, all of which supports people to have better outcomes and improved well-being.

In addition to this tender win, we have been delighted to be selected as the provider of choice for several smaller projects during the year, developing new provision or providing moving-on opportunities for people in Oswestry, Market Drayton, Whitchurch, Shrewsbury and Ludlow.

As a result of earning contracts for the provision of day opportunities we expect that the number of people receiving smaller packages of support from Bethphage will continue to increase. We hope that people receiving these services will have meaningful days, build interests and skills, and be active and included in the larger community. Should the time come when some of the people receiving our support need supported living services, Bethphage will be prepared to design a package of services for them should they choose.

We remain committed to growing Bethphage at a sustainable rate, consistent with extending our reach to benefit more people and delivering economies of scale and efficiencies whilst sustaining our core values and standards. Our growth plans over the next few years will be to extend our range of services in our core operating areas, to build economies of scale especially in Telford, Walsall, Birmingham and Wolverhampton and to expand into neighbouring areas such as Staffordshire, Cheshire, Wrexham, Powys, Hereford and Worcestershire.

Bethphage has enjoyed a successful year, increasing the number of people we support and the number of support hours from 5,300 to just over 6,000, an increase of 14%.
The Q Team Checkers – a group of people with a learning disability and experience of using services, who Bethphage employ to check the quality of the services we provide - are a vital and integral part of Bethphage’s quality assurance systems and bring a different perspective to bear, based on direct personal experience of using services. In 2015 the Q Team undertook 36 visits to services and they report their findings not only to management, but also to the annual staff conference and to the trustees.

**Objective 3: Quality**

Following Pauline’s retirement, we have appointed a new quality manager from within. This allows us to continue our programme of Continuous Improvement whilst bringing a new set of eyes to an established and successful framework. Overall there has been good progress and the majority of services have made significant and continued development in the quality of service they deliver. The new Quality Assurance scoring system, introduced by Pauline, enabled us to raise the bar in line with CQC expectations in their inspections, but we are acutely aware that true quality is about doing it right when no one is looking.

The new system of audits combines a systematic review of documentation in the registered office with observations of practice and feedback from families, staff and people we support. These changes have resulted in a saving of time for the Service Managers, and visits to each service are less intrusive for the people who live there. The service visits now concentrate on observation of practice and feedback from the people we support, rather than the paperwork. The addition of telephone calls to family members and a selection of staff has brought a dynamic new dimension to the quality review and added value to the overall audit.

Prior to the audit Service Managers carry out self-audits which encourage them to review and score their own services. This is proving to be very successful and useful. The feedback from managers is that this enables them to proactively identify improvements, and is motivating them to review systems and practice in their area.

Findings during the first half of 2016 are demonstrating improvements in the management of medication, privacy and dignity and the emergence of creative new ways of supporting and involving people. Specific improvements that have resulted from the quality audits include individualised medication cabinets in a shared service, more detailed and inclusive person centred plans and pictorial menus. An important role of the audits is to identify areas where further improvements can be made and as a result of recent audits we have focused attention on restoring the take-up of training, which had been adversely affected by a period of staff shortage, and further work is being undertaken on the complaints and feedback systems to ensure that we also capture lower level concerns, comments, suggestions and feedback that are being dealt with in the services.

CQC carried out inspections in four of our eight registered locations during 2015/16. All four – North Shropshire services (Whitchurch office), Old Farmhouse, Plas Newydd and Bradbury Lodge - were judged good in all five areas of inspection – safe, caring, effective, responsive and well-led. We are pleased with these outcomes which are well above the national average.
Objective 4: Employees

As a Positive Behaviour Organisation, Bethphage recognises that investment in the induction, training, support, guidance and direction of our staff is the key to operating high quality services and achieving positive outcomes for the people we support and their funders.

It is the staff team who directly provide the services for which we exist. We were therefore delighted to win the Shropshire Star’s 2015 Excellence in Learning and Skills Award in April 2015. The judges said “Learning and skills have been embraced through every level of the business”. This award has brought recognition of our investment in staff development, both within the care sector and in the wider business economy of Shropshire. We have begun preparations for renewal of our Investors in People accreditation in 2017. Since achieving Gold in 2014, the standard methodology has changed and we are advised that the bar has been raised, which we see as a positive challenge to continue to improve.

The Trustees are pleased to report that the staff and executive team continue to provide their dedicated expertise and have enthusiastically embraced the strategies developed to ensure Bethphage fulfils its aims. We set ourselves the ambitious target of at least 80% of support staff qualified at Level 3 Diploma in Health & Social Care (or equivalent), in addition to the suite of essential training we offer, as prescribed by CQC and the needs of the people we support.

The overall percentage holding a L3 qualification reduced slightly during the year, due to higher churn in the workforce. However, we continue to invest heavily in training with 64% of staff having achieved a L3 Diploma in Health and Social Care, a further 18% holding a L2 and 7% working towards a qualification (overall 89% hold or are working towards a L2 or 3 qualification).

Around 67% of staff have attended our in-house bespoke Positive Behaviour Support Framework training and this is now established as core training for all staff.

Recruitment and retention of staff is probably the biggest challenge facing the care sector in the UK today. Through the positive and innovative work practices that Bethphage employs, we have been working hard to build an engaged workforce of people with the skills, knowledge, experience and above all the right approaches and attitude for delivering our vision. Because of workforce shortages, there has been a significant increase in use of agency staff during the last year. Nevertheless Bethphage continues to have greater success than most care providers in recruiting and especially in retaining good quality staff in sufficient numbers. We recognise that building our workforce will remain a big challenge during the next year, especially as we work to increase our capacity to manage growth in demand. A concerted focus by our recruitment and operational teams on attracting new staff is showing promising results and our approaches as a Positive Behaviour Organisation and Gold Investor in People have resulted in an excellent retention record which are helping to meet this challenge.

The introduction of the National Living Wage and the severe limitations of local authority funding have increased the challenge. As pay levels in other sectors continue to move above the level funded in adult social care, the number of people able to work in the sector continues to decline, irrespective of the individual motivation and determination to work in this field. Funding for care services is increasing in most areas, but at a much lower rate than pay.

“The staff do such a good job they couldn’t do anything any better. They’re brilliant.”

Mrs Payne

At Bethphage, we are delighted to enjoy the benefits of a skilled, committed and stable workforce. 22 of our staff have completed more than 10 years of service, which is very nearly 10% of our total workforce and represents a particularly high proportion of the 2005 workforce given the scale of our growth since then.
Objective 5: Communication

Communication remains a key priority for the charity. It was the theme of our 2015 staff conference and will remain a priority for the organisation as we move into a new business planning cycle. We are in the business of supporting people and effective communication using communication methods and media that work best for the recipient of the communication is a key skill for our organisation.

Over one third of our entire workforce were able to attend the 2015 staff conference and learned from the specialist Speech and Language Team of South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare Trust about a variety of communication methods and from Janet Gurney, an expert on ‘intensive interaction’, an insightful and successful approach to engaging with people who have autism.

During 2015/16 we undertook a review of our website enabling us to launch a new website in the late spring of 2016.

We have continued to produce staff bulletins and use social media, but an increase in the number and range of internal and external communications is a priority for the next financial year as we are better at achieving good outcomes than we are at telling others about them.

IMPACT

Bethphage’s vision is of a society where people with disabilities have the same opportunities to develop and use their talents and skills as other people. Our work to deliver this vision is currently carried out predominantly in the West Midlands and Welsh borders area of the United Kingdom. However, Bethphage has also always supported promotion of this vision in less well developed countries through its membership of an international alliance called IMPACT. Bethphage has provided managerial and professional advice and managed IMPACT’s core funding of a joint project with our indigenous partner organisation, the Diakonia Compassionate Ministry in Kenya. The target is to support 30 people a year in Kenya over three years and build one house per year for young adults whose living arrangements are poor and livelihoods in jeopardy. Four homes have been built in recent years. During 2015/16, in the absence of a CEO for most of the year, monitoring visits have been undertaken on our behalf by a retired executive from Mosaic and this arrangement will continue until the end of 2016.

We will also continue to support access to education for children with disability and the funding of teaching assistants in some schools. Four teaching assistants had been funded in recent years, two of whom are now funded by Kenya’s Ministry of Education which, in respect of sustainability, is excellent news.

Bethphage acts as the fiscal intermediary for the IMPACT partners and maintains separate accounting records and bank accounts. Details of the funds can be found in note 20 of the Financial Statements.

During 2016/17, Bethphage will review the arrangements for continuing to support the work of IMPACT. Our intention is to consider new ways of supporting positive outcomes for individuals and increasing the interaction between our core services in the UK and our work in developing countries by using technology and modern communication methods.
As detailed below Bethphage continued to grow during the year and in doing so also strengthened its reserves. Public sector finances remain under pressure and Bethphage will continue to focus heavily on tight cost controls to ensure we provide high quality services at best value.

The announcement of a new mandatory minimum National Living Wage during the financial year and its implementation in April 2016 have had a significant impact on the care sector. The Executive Management Team and Trustees had to prepare for this increase in costs during a period when all of our funding authorities were under financial pressure and unable to commit to fee increases of the same magnitude as the increase in minimum wages.

Due to continued pressure to reduce public spending, the local authorities with whom we contract have been unable to award inflationary increases to match the extent of the increase from the NMW to the new NLW or the associated impact on national insurance, pension and holiday pay and in one case fees have been capped at a lower rate than our existing provision.

The trustees have been mindful of the need not just to comply with minimum wage legislation, but also to attract and retain sufficient people with the attitudes, skills and commitment to deliver our mission and make our vision a reality. We were able to set a budget for the beginning of the next financial year which achieves those objectives whilst also forecasting a surplus sufficient to achieve the requirements of our reserves policy. However, the margin is tighter than ever and control of expenditure requires greater management scrutiny than ever.

During the year, Bethphage has pursued its long term aim of acquiring its first property, agreeing the purchase of a bungalow early in the 2016/17 financial year. Bethphage intends to be a small scale investor in property with three objectives:

- To provide sustainable high quality accommodation to enable people we support to enjoy a long term home and high standard of living
- To achieve a greater return on investment than could be achieved by investment of our reserves in a bank.
- Where ownership of property would reduce our operating costs.

Our investment in property is intended as a self-sustaining activity which neither subsidises nor is subsidised by our core activities. When this bungalow is fully operational and the management arrangements have been tried and tested, the Trustees will consider further small investments in property.

Paying a higher rate to experienced and senior staff and those supporting people with complex needs have also been priorities.
**How we measure up**

Bethphage is proud to have achieved Investors in People Gold standard, confirming our commitment to employing the best and most effective management approaches. We believe that this creates an environment that enables our staff to enjoy their work, feel valued and deliver the highest standards of support for the people who use our services.

The assessors noted Bethphage’s culture of people supporting and respecting everyone. The report goes on to say “It is remarkable how effective managers are at facilitating requests for temporary or flexible working arrangement” and “People feel confident that they can call upon managers for support, if required, and that it will be there when needed.” The assessors were particularly impressed with the genuine commitment everyone brings to their role, stating “providing support, above and beyond what is expected and required is the normal for people at Bethphage…. People take a real pride in being part of something that is more than just a job, there are some exceptional people working at Bethphage!”

We believe that excellence can only be delivered through well trained, committed and motivated staff. We were thrilled to win Shropshire Star’s 2015 Excellence in Learning and Skills Award. Judges said ‘learning and skills have been embraced through every level of the business.'

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**Year-on-year expenditure comparison**

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<tr>
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<th>Year to 31/3/2016</th>
<th>Year to 31/3/2015</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wages and other</strong></td>
<td>£4,003,635</td>
<td>£3,703,264</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reserves</strong></td>
<td>£199,775</td>
<td>£151,226</td>
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<td><strong>Governance</strong></td>
<td>£21,079</td>
<td>£14,087</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Admin and raising funds</strong></td>
<td>£116,041</td>
<td>£102,178</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodation</strong></td>
<td>£143,125</td>
<td>£133,956</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Service user costs</strong></td>
<td>£81,935</td>
<td>£87,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>£4,565,590</td>
<td>£4,192,271</td>
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**Breakdown of expenditure**

- **4.4%** Reserves
- **0.5%** Governance
- **87.7%** Wages and other
- **2.5%** Admin and raising funds
- **3.1%** Accommodation
- **1.8%** Service user costs
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With thanks to all the staff, families, service users & tenants of Bethphage and:

Board of Trustees
Derek Lum – Chair
Irena Sobolewska – Vice-Chair
Donna Werner
Gordon Hermiston
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Tony Aston

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