

Foreword

Sheenagh Simpson – Key's Chair

Annual reviews are always a time for reflection. Usually this is across the year just passed. However, this year we have had cause to reflect upon a longer timeframe. This is because some of our services, in Inverness and Helensburgh, are reaching significant milestone anniversaries. And, in its 30th year of supporting people in communities across Glasgow, our subsidiary, Community Lifestyles, became even more closely connected with Key when we removed the formal structures that meant we operated as two separate organisations. This has strengthened our shared journey, building on the deep foundations we both have of delivering flexible, responsive person-centred support.

Our review this year pays tribute to these milestones, illustrating the journey we have been on and celebrating the achievements of the people involved. For over 30 years – and in some cases more than 40 – we've had the privilege of being part of people's lives. That legacy gives us a unique opportunity to reflect on how much has changed,

and to celebrate the remarkable achievements and contributions of the many individuals who have shaped our work.

Throughout these decades, we have been guided by our vision that everyone has the right to live a full, independent life of their choice, to decide where and with whom they live, and to direct the support they receive. It's a vision that continues to guide us today. Our unwavering commitment to the 2,000 people we support is clear: we stand alongside them in realising their right to live the life they choose, connected to the people who matter most and rooted in their community.

Underpinning that commitment is our determination to keep listening to the people we support and their families, to ensure that our work is shaped by the things that are important to them now and in the future. Together, Key, Community Lifestyles and TAG's strong partnership makes sure our work remains relevant, responsive, and rooted in the experiences of those we serve.

Wendy Hall - Chair of National TAG

From 1996 when Key set up the original TAG (The Advisory Group), the voice of disabled people has been at the heart of everything it does.

I've been involved with TAG since the beginning. In those early days we were instrumental in developing 'The same as you?' training. This prepared people to be involved in interviewing and recruiting staff, become co-trainers and shape the policies and strategic direction of Key.

Over these years TAG has contributed greatly to many national issues and developments. Along with Key, we played a major role in setting up SCLD (now the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities), following the publication of 'The same as you?'. And we have worked with the Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, as well as a host of HSCPs (Health and Social Care Partnerships)

Through this work we have always looked for ways to make sure disabled people are at the heart of their local communities.

The legacy continues today. For nearly 30 years our partnership with Key and Community Lifestyles has grown and blossomed. It's a partnership that has made sure that people who receive support understand their rights, are listened to and have the same opportunities as everyone else.

Equally important to this work is the role TAG has played in finding creative ways for people to be truly involved in their communities. Since becoming a charity in 2012, TAG, through its community development work, has provided lots of exciting opportunities for the people supported by Key and Community Lifestyles, enabling them to live full and active lives, and achieve their goals and dreams.

Andrea Wood - Key's Chief Executive

The stories told in this review remind us that the place people call home has always been important.

It contributes greatly to, and shapes, our sense of identify and belonging. Our founding families understood this profoundly; they were determined that their children, and others with a learning disability, shouldn't call hospital home. Something that is equally important today as it was back then.

This year has brought renewed attention to people's fundamental human rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This is the right for every person in Scotland to have their private and family life, home, and correspondence respected. Both the Mental Welfare Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission have delivered stark assessments of how this right continues to be denied for too many disabled people by highlighting the unacceptable number of people still living in institutional settings. As an organisation that champions the everyday ordinariness of people living in their communities connected to those who matter most to them and contributing to the richness of life – it's a reality which is simply unacceptable.

Everyone deserves to live in a place they call home and have lives with relationships, routines, and opportunities that reflect who they are. The persistence of institutional living is not just a policy failure; it's a profound injustice. And one which strengthens our resolve to push for meaningful change.

One of the ways we can do this is to understand the transformative potential of Self-directed Support (SDS) in this landscape. It provides the framework for genuinely listening to people and their families and which supports them to take the lead in shaping and designing the support that they need. It's a framework which can deliver on people's rights and ensure that there are robust community-based alternatives to residential settings.

We hope the renewed focus on the 'Coming Home' implementation plan will bring increased determination and energy to changing the reality of people still living in institutional settings.

I hope you enjoy reading our annual review. It demonstrates that none of what we have achieved over the years is possible without our exceptionally dedicated staff and Board members, whose compassion, creativity, resilience, and skill is evident in everything we do.

On behalf of Sheenagh, Wendy and myself I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to them all for their dedication, passion, and commitment.





New beginnings: creating alternatives to institutional living

In the 80s and early 90s, many disabled people, particularly those with learning disabilities, lived in long-stay institutions. Of course, not everyone did; many people lived with family, often with those families receiving little or no support.

This meant that there were few options available when family networks became overstretched, broke down or were no longer there.

During this period, Key offered an alternative to this by developing housing where people could also be supported. As the programme of hospital closures progressed, a new opportunity emerged: to do things differently. People began returning to their communities, moving into housing beyond Key's own provision, and opening the door to more inclusive, community-based living arrangements.

This was how Community Lifestyles was born. Setting up a subsidiary enabled us to offer more flexible options across Glasgow to support people returning to their communities after decades in large, long-stay hospitals like Lennox Castle and the Royal Scottish National Hospital (RSNH), as well as other group living settings.

This work laid the foundation for more personcentred approaches with a focus on community participation. It marked a significant shift away from institutional care.

Alongside this, Key was continuing to build new developments and develop personalised support to meet the needs of people in communities across Scotland, many of whom were also finding a place of their own for the first time or leaving institutional settings.

In the same year Community Lifestyles turns 30, our housing developments in Inverness, Helensburgh and Fort William reach 30- and 40-year milestones.

In the pages that follow, we reflect upon how things were then and how they are now. We do this through the experiences of people who made those transitions, and the staff who supported them along the way.

A place to call home

Those first people supported by Community Lifestyles, or moving into new homes built by Key in Inverness and Fort William, may have been from different parts of Scotland, but they often shared a common backstory.



Most of them had spent large part of their lives, often from childhood, in long-stay hospital settings. Growing up when they did, that's what happened; families were encouraged to place their children in places like Lennox Castle, Craig Phadraig and the Royal Scottish National Hospital (RSNH in Larbert) as this was 'for the best'. And the expectation was that people wouldn't have been able to live independently in community settings.

From the late 1990s to early 2000s, learning disability policy began to change bringing with it a programme of long-stay hospital closures.

As people moved out of institutions, we came to learn that they had not always received compassionate, kind or dignified care and treatment while there. But even if support had been good, the fact that people, often as children, were separated from their families and communities would have caused its own trauma.

However, the stories of those who made the transition from institution to community-based support are testimony of their resilience, adaptability and desire to live life to its fullest. These experiences continue to inspire our work and reinforce the importance of person-centred, rights-based support rooted in community and connection.

Glasgow

In his younger days, **Forbes** had a job delivering soft drinks and is full of stories of the adventures he found himself in as a young man. At 21 he moved into Lennox Castle and spent most of his adult life there.

While he's unsure about the exact details of why he was sent there, he knows that his uncle spoke up for him to try to keep him out.

After almost 40 years in Lennox Castle, he left in the early 00s with support from Community Lifestyles. Now in his early 80s, he's enjoyed a full life since moving back to Glasgow and into his own home. This has included attending the former Langside College, being a regular churchgoer, which his workers support him to do, and catching up with friends at various clubs. He's travelled lots over the years too, enjoying holidays in Blackpool, Ireland, Filey and many other places.

His big passion, though, is Queens Park Football Club, based in Glasgow's southside. He is a font of knowledge about the club's history, even that at one point his team played on a bowling green! His love for the team extends beyond watching them play, he's sponsored a player, making him a well-kent face at the club.

As for Lennox Castle, he's glad it's no longer there. And of moving out and getting his own place all those years ago, Forbes says:

"It was champion"



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Glasgow

MOIRA is originally from Campbeltown and lived various places away from her home community since the age of 3.

It was a journey that took her to Lennox Castle, where she lived until 1999, meaning she spent over 40 years of her life in residential settings of one kind or another.

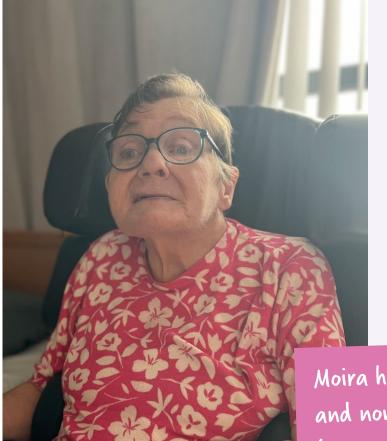
In 1999 she became of one the original people to move into purpose-built accommodation in Glasgow, with support from Community Lifestyles. She was joined by 3 other people, making up the 4-tenancy property. Over these years, the 4 neighbours formed great friendships, and enjoyed keeping each other company, while always having their own space where they could get away from it all.

Planning a programme of day trips became an annual highlight, as Moira preferred returning to her home comforts to going on holiday. This didn't stop her travelling far and wide with her team, though, who would organise for her to get to Blackpool and back in the day, as well as trips all over Scotland, with Prestwick being her favourite destination.

Moira's team have seen a big change in her over the years. They see that she's not as able to get out and about as she once was. Her physical needs have made long car journeys difficult for her. Despite this, she and her team still look for opportunities for her to enjoy days out to places within a manageable distance from her home.

They've also introduced some new activities for her to enjoy at home. She's always loved music and now enjoys a weekly visit from a musician who plays guitar and sings for her. This is something she shares with one of her newer neighbours. Together they sing along, listen, and appreciate his playing. It's a joyful experience that brings connection, comfort, and a sense of community into their home.

Another constant across the years has been her love of dogs. She's a huge supporter of the Dogs Trust and Guide Dogs charities and she still looks forward to regular updates from the four-legged friends she sponsors.



Moira has always loved music and now enjoys a weekly visit from a musician who plays guitar and sings for her.

Highland Hames

Our Housing developments in Fort William and Inverness were a response to people moving out of Craig Phadraig Hospital in Inverness, and sometimes even further afield from the Royal Scottish National Hospital in Larbert.



Over the past 30 years, those individuals have become well-known and valued members of their communities, contributing meaningfully to local life and building lasting relationships.

While some of the original individuals who made the move to Inverness and Fort William have sadly passed away, their presence continues to be felt – in the memories of those who knew them and in the communities they helped shape.

Fort William

JOHN spent most of his childhood and young adulthood in Inverness's Craig Phadraig Hospital.



Although these were difficult times for him, he does reflect on some of his experiences with affection, like Helen, who was one of the hospital cleaners. She delighted him by scooting him round the rooms on her vacuum cleaner and he appreciated the kindness she showed him given he was so young and away from his family.

He also has very fond memories of Sandy, one of Fort William's original tenants. They had both been in Craig Phadraig at the same time and since Sandy was older than John, he would carry him on his shoulders all over the hospital. Both memories highlight how, even in institutional settings, people found ways of connecting with one another and finding meaning in their experiences.

John moved into his Fort William home shortly after it was built; therefore, he's a great source

of knowledge of how things have changed. He remembers in detail how the various remodelling of the houses over the years has helped transform them into personalised homes, giving people greater choice in how, and with whom, they want to live. These changes have supported more individualised living arrangements and empowered people to shape their environments in ways that reflect their preferences and lifestyles.

He's also carved out a role for himself as the resident DJ and has livened-up many of the special events that the Fort William folks have celebrated over the years.

Life is a bit quieter for John these days, although he has dedicated a room in his home to his DJ kit and still enjoys spending time at his decks for his own pleasure.

Inverness

CATH moved into her new home in Inverness in February 1995, she is one of the original tenants of the development.

Before this, Cath lived in Craig Phadraig long-stay hospital. She had moved there from her family home on Lewis at just 11 years old and spent nearly 30 years in the hospital. Having spent most of her adult life in that setting, Cath is honest about how challenging she found the transition to living somewhere new. Her story reflects not only the complexity of such a move but also her strength in adapting to a new environment and building a life rooted in community and connection.

Thirty years on from her moving in, Cath has been a constant in the life of the service.

She's contributed hugely to how it has developed and knows so much about its history and people who live there. This includes the tenants who moved in at the same time as she did and who are sadly no longer with us.

Now 67, Cath is still living life to the full. She is a member of a local choir called The Rainbow Singers, and her spiritual life is important to her too; she regularly attends Salvation Army meetings.

A recent highlight for Cath was a visit to her family in Stornoway. While there she enjoyed a bingo night, visited the Ravenspoint Museum and the An Tagh Ceilidh (Stornoway's Gaelic Cafe).

She also found time to take a trek on the accessible pathway at the Aline Community Woodland Walk and try out the beach wheelchair at North Tolsta Beach. What an amazing trip!





A will to make it happen

Behind every story of a successful transition and a life lived well are the skilled and dedicated staff who made it possible.

Often, they supported people through major life changes without the detailed support plans, communication profiles, or background information we would expect today. Despite these challenges, their compassion, adaptability, and commitment ensured that people were supported with dignity, respect, and care during some of the most significant moments of their lives:

The stories they share demonstrate how building trusting relationships, and a willingness to learn alongside each person, are the foundations of brilliant person-led support. Support which is there no matter the challenges a person faces.

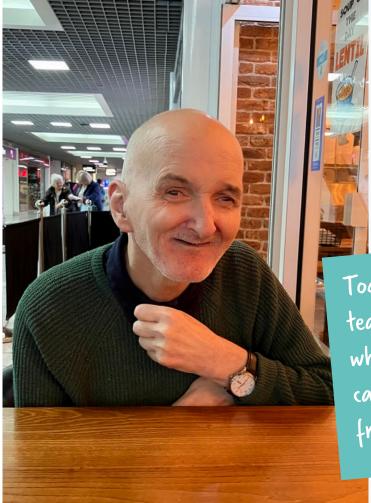
George

George had lived most of his life in institutions, and over 20 years ago moved into a new home of his own in Glasgow. Despite his having contact with services throughout his life, his new Community Lifestyles team didn't have much information about George as they began supporting him.

When George first moved in, he had a range of behaviours which were impacting on his quality of life and had largely been managed through medication.

His team, who have been constant throughout the years, worked out that routines were important to George and over time developed their understanding of how these helped him to feel calm. They were also able to support George to get an autism diagnosis which further helped the team to adapt their approach to ensuring George had what he needed to live a good life.

As a result, his reliance on medication has reduced, he experiences less behaviours which impact on his quality of life, and now has routines which help him to enjoy life and socialise with others, something which he had found difficult when he first moved in.



Together with George, his team have developed routies which support him to feel calm and get the most from his life.

lan

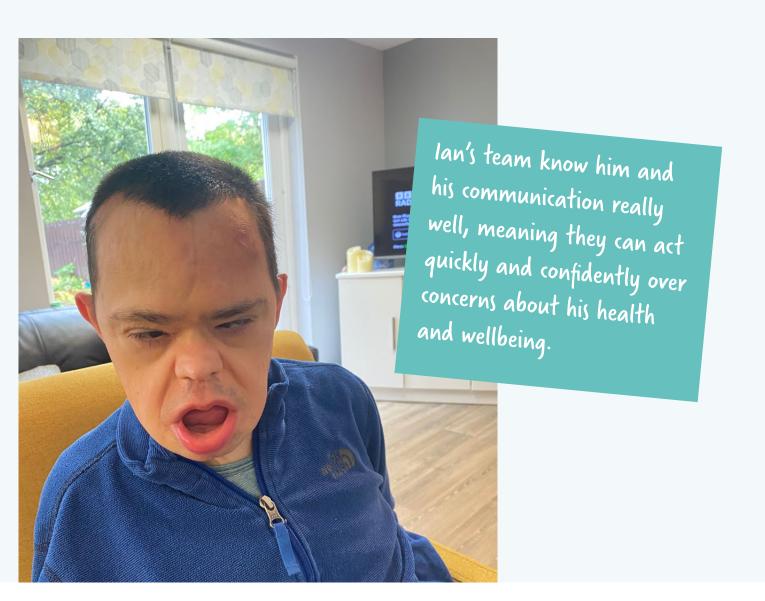
lan was just 18 months old when he moved to Craig Phadraig hospital in Inverness, and 28 when he moved into his Fort William home 27 years' later. His journey reflects a significant shift from institutional care to community-based living. And his story continues to be a powerful reminder of the importance of home, choice, and belonging.

lan doesn't communicate verbally and unfortunately there wasn't any information available to staff about his communication needs when he moved to Fort William.

However, because of the quality of the relationships he has with his workers, who have been consistent in this life, they have built a picture of how he communicates. Having such detailed, nuanced knowledge of lan has meant his team are not only supporting him to have a good life in his home and community, but they also have the confidence to speak up on concerns about his health and wellbeing.

Una, who has known lan since he moved in, recalls a time when they called a doctor to visit lan at home. He was incredibly distressed, and Una was worried he was in extreme pain. She knew something was seriously wrong - lan's behaviour was so out of character – concerns that weren't initially shared by the visiting doctor.

Her instincts proved right, though, as lan was treated for a ruptured stomach ulder, a condition that could have been life-threatening. Her attentiveness and advocacy made a critical difference in ensuring he received the urgent care he needed.



A different kind of home

Creativity and problem solving

Some of the situations people were coming from required a slightly different approach which is how Community Lifestyles became involved with a unique development in Glasgow's west end.

It originated from involvement with a Homelessness Partnership which was tasked with finding solutions for people with learning disabilities who were facing homelessness or already in temporary/inappropriate accommodation within the system. However, due to the accommodation available to the Partnership, the proposed model of support included elements of group living; something that Community Lifestyles was not typically accustomed to, given its strong focus on individualised support.

This presented a challenge in maintaining the organisation's commitment to person-centred approaches while adapting to the realities of the available housing options. For the people who were due to move there, however, it was a solution that worked for their unique circumstances.

Three of the tenants, Janice, Ronnie and Martin, were siblings whose home was about to be demolished as part of the redevelopment of Sighthill in Glasgow. They were clear that they didn't want to live together, but they did want to be close to one another. This development gave them exactly what they wanted, places of their own as close neighbours.

It provided just what Darren needed too. He had experienced lots of uncertainty and difficult situations in his past and the move to his new living situation provided the much-needed stability and support network that had been missing from his life.

Darren has truly thrived as part of a small, tight-knit community where people are always there for one another whenever it's needed. Over the years, he has used his knowledge and lived experience to make a meaningful contribution, serving on numerous interview panels and working as a co-trainer to help develop the skills of new staff. His involvement not only strengthens the organisation but also ensures that the voices of people with lived experience remain central to how support is delivered. And 19 years on from moving in he has this to say: "I wouldn't wish to be anywhere else."





It's just what we do

When recounting their experiences, staff are characteristically modest about the role they've played in helping people live the lives they choose. While they speak with genuine affection and pride about the achievements of those they've supported, and continue to support, the focus is never on their own contributions. Instead, their stories reflect a deep respect for the individuals they work alongside and a quiet dedication that underpins every success.

Staff are also quick to acknowledge the importance of colleagues and relying on one another's support as a way of dealing with the pressures of a role which can sometimes be challenging and isolating. This was especially the case in those early days of getting people into their homes:

"Everyone rolled their sleeves up and pulled together to make it happen." Jean

Of course, things have changed. We've seen changes to registration and regulation, been guided by new national policies and strategies, and developed our approach in line with these developments. What hasn't changed, though, is the warmth of

the relationships between our staff and supported people and our focus on inclusion. And community opportunities have improved too, especially through TAG's community development work in Glasgow.

"TAG has been great, I'm so proud of how people are getting involved with their community." Gillian

A common thread running through the experiences of staff – past and present – is the personal values, resilience, and unwavering determination they bring to their roles to ensure people live good lives. These qualities have consistently shaped the way support is delivered, reflecting a deep commitment to dignity, inclusion, and the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive:

- "We felt we were helping people make up for lost time." Noleen
- "I've really enjoyed seeing people get their own homes." Paul

An unwavering commitment

Key's Helensburgh team is proudly celebrating 40 years of supporting people in the local community.

Over these four decades, they've built lasting relationships and made a meaningful impact, and some of the individuals they support have been with them for nearly the entire journey. It's a testament to the team's dedication, continuity, and the strength of personalised, community-based support.

This inevitably means that some folks are now ageing and facing some of the life transitions that this can bring. The team has shown exceptional dedication in supporting people through these changes, always with a focus on dignity, choice, and maintaining connections.

Recently, Catherine's health and mobility have declined and unfortunately this meant that her home no longer met her needs. Because of concerns for her safety, it was agreed that she would move to a nursing home.

While this wasn't what anyone wanted, her team were determined to make the move as stress-free for Catherine as they possibly could.

So, they worked closely with Catherine and other agencies to find the best possible nursing home option. They ensured Catherine was involved at every step and supported her to adjust to her new setting. She's now been there for several months but is still very much part of the Helensburgh community, staying connected with her friends and former support staff.

Alastair has also been supported in Helensburgh for many years, and last year received a lifechanging diagnosis. As he has no close family, his team, particularly the local manager, Scott, became his main support throughout his diagnosis and treatment. This included supporting him during hospital stays; ensuring his medical team had the information they needed to provide Alastair with the best possible care and understood his communication and other needs.

While Alastair was in hospital, his team prepared for his return home by getting specialist input to build their skills and confidence in managing his condition while supporting him to do the same. As a special surprise, they even redecorated to welcome him home.



Paul and Pam were supported individually by Key in Helensburgh when they first met and fell in love. They have now been happily married for 20 years and throughout that time, the Helensburgh team has continued to support them both.

They know Paul and Pam very well and they quickly picked up on some concerns about Pam's health which was putting extra strain on Paul, as he took on more caring responsibilities for her. Acting upon these concerns, the team facilitated a review that led to additional support being put in place which relieved some of the pressure in the short-term.

However, Pam's condition further worsened, and the decision was taken, alongside Paul, that she should move into a care home in the town. This has been a huge adjustment for Paul and Pam, but it has meant Paul has regained his health and he says he feels like he's Pam's husband again rather than her carer. He visits her regularly on his own, and with friends and family.

Paul and Pam's team continue to play an important part in Pam's life.

The team also continue to play a part in Pam's life, visiting her and supporting the couple to continue to enjoy the shared activities they so love.

The experiences of Catherine, Alastair, Paul, and Pam highlight the profound impact of having staff who truly know you and place you at the heart of everything they do. Even in the face of difficult, lifechanging circumstances, this kind of person-centred support can lead to positive outcomes. Thanks to the Helensburgh team's unwavering commitment, each of them was heard, involved, and compassionately supported through major transitions in their lives.







New horizons: how young people are shaping their futures

In Glasgow, an excellent example of this is Game Changers Extra Time. With funding from The National Lottery, this is a partnership project led by The Advisory Group (TAG) which provides opportunities for personal development and peer mentorship for young disabled people.

Due to our close working relationship with TAG, we're fortunate that many of the young people enjoying Game Changers opportunities are supported by us.

Eleanor, Connor, and Jill are three of the young people who are part of the Game Changers Champions project and will be sharing their experiences to inspire other young people to achieve their potential.

They are working on presentations they will deliver to young disabled people in schools across Glasgow. Some of the schools are the ones they had attended when they were younger, and this provides a great chance to show today's pupils what's possible and that the transition to adulthood can lead to exciting things.



For example, both Eleanor and Jill were participants in TAG's hugely successful 'Strictly All Ability' competition in April 2025. They both performed choreographed dances alongside professional dancers to over 300 people in a night that was full of glitz, glamour and great routines.

Jill is also a well-known and highly successful disability rights activist. For over 10 years, she has been campaigning for community venues to install Changing Places toilets. These are vital for disabled people who need access to a hoist and changing bench to enable them to go to the toilet. Therefore, it's crucial that towns, cities and visitor attractions of all kinds provide access to these facilities and meet the basic human rights of disabled people. She is rightly proud of her achievements as part of the 'Changing Places' campaign.

Eleanor has been enjoying helping at some of TAG's community activities, like the weekly SoundLab sessions. From her own experience, she knows joining sessions like this can be daunting for people, so she's on hand with a friendly smile to chat to people, make them feel at ease and support them to take part.



At 21, Connor is one of the youngest Champions. Football is his passion: watching, playing and coaching.

He's already completed some of his coaching badges and attends college to take his coaching to the next level. He's also signed up to do this year's Great Sottish Run to raise funds for TAG.

They're all looking forward to doing the school visits and speaking directly to young people. They're also clear on what their messages are for the next generation.

"There is more to life than Fortnite and Netflix. Stick in at school and don't give in."

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2025: change is possible

Three years on from the publication of the 'Coming Home Implementation Report', it's widely acknowledged that Scotland hasn't made the progress it should have with moving people out of inappropriate institutional settings, often located far from their families and loved ones.

Despite the ambitions set out in the report, many individuals with complex needs continue to face delays in accessing the person-centred, community-based support they deserve.

Two reports published early in 2025 – the Scottish Human Rights Commission's 'Tick Tock' and Mental Welfare Commission's 'Everyone has a right to not make a hospital their home' – were stark in their assessment that there are still too many people living their lives in institutions.

The stories featured in this review, however, demonstrate that even when people's lives are considered complicated or complex, with the right support and home environment, they can live full and meaningful lives as part of their local community.

And despite tough financial times, the young people involved with TAG's Game Changers project show that there are different options available for young disabled people. More than that they are shaping their own futures and using their experiences to inspire the next generation.



Our Board

Across Key and Community Lifestyles, our board members are at the heart of everything we do. We are incredibly fortunate to be supported by people who are hugely talented and committed to the work we do.

Sheenagh Simpson (Chairperson - Key)

Karen Jamieson

David Meechan (Chairperson – Community Lifestyles)

David Le Sage

Gillian Anderson

Liz Matheson

James Cox

Ann McGuigan

Jack Crombie

Christine McKinlay

Dee Fraser

Rebecca O'Donnell (TAG)

Susan Hunter

Mary Parker

Paul Hush

John Paterson

Daniel McCafferty

Angus Turner

As you read in our Chair's introduction, we have made some changes to how we run the organisation by bringing Key and Community Lifestyles together. This will make it easier for us to offer great support.

As part of this we are delighted to welcome two of Community Lifestyles' Directors, Mary Parker and Liz Matheson, to Key's Board. Here, they will continue to contribute greatly to the oversight and governance of our work.

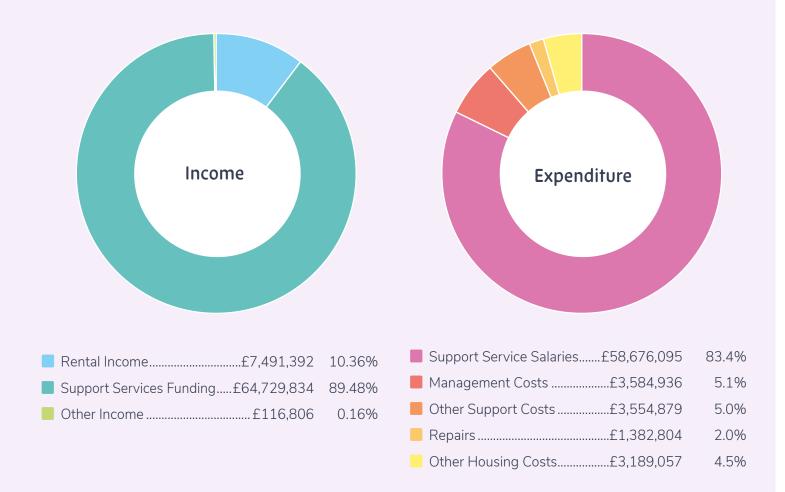
We are also looking forward to James Cox, joining Wendy Hall, in representing TAG on Key's Board from this autumn. James and fellow TAG member, Christine McKinlay, broke new ground for us by becoming the first people supported by Community Lifestyles on to sit on its Board.

And we're grateful to them both for their contributions. We know James will have much more to offer us at Board meetings going forward.





Financials 2024/25



Key is a society registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, company number 1938 R (S) and with the Scottish Housing Regulator, registration number 141.

Registered office: 70 Renton Street, Glasgow G4 0HT Key and Key Housing are names used by Key Housing Association Limited, a charity registered in Scotland, charity number SC006652.

Check out our website for more brilliant stories from across the areas we work.

You can also view our Annual Review on our website which offers a range of accessibility options.

www.key.org.uk



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