OUR PLAN
2017-2020
Index:

Charter, Vision & Mission page 3

Introduction page 3

Hubs page 4

What is important? page 5

Key Issues for people with learning disabilities page 6

Key Issues for families and carers page 6

Key Issues for commissioners page 6

Key Issues for supporters page 7

Key Issues for Grace Eyre page 7

Summary page 8

Monitoring Our Plan page 9

Appendix – Financial Plan page 10
Charter:
Grace Eyre believes that our values should align with the charter that has been developed by people with learning disabilities who use our services:

Our Charter is about living our lives in the way we want to, getting support from kind people:

1. We want to lead healthy lives
2. We want to have strong and supported relationships
3. We want to travel around where we live
4. We want to have good housing
5. We want to try new things
6. We want to be listened to
7. We want to be part of our communities

Vision:
Grace Eyre’s Vision is for a society where people with learning disabilities are respected as equal citizens, are part of and contribute to their communities and where people can fulfil their dreams and wishes.

Mission:
We will work towards Grace Eyre being led by people with learning disabilities and through that deliver high quality housing, support and activities in their local communities.

Introduction:
We know that there are a growing number of people with learning disabilities who are experiencing:

- cuts to their services,
- not getting any services at all
- not being able to access decent housing
- mental health issues, diminishing physical wellbeing and social isolation

We also know that people with learning disabilities want to work, have relationships, be healthy and have a meaningful life that is respected by all – expectations are rising.

Grace Eyre currently provides services in four main areas; 1. Housing, 2. Choices - supported living and community support, 3. Shared Lives – sharing your housing and lives with a paid carer and 4. Active Lives – day services and activity projects.

We want to develop these services:

1. **Housing** – will grow to **100 bed spaces** in order to meet the increasing demand for high quality supported housing across Sussex,

2. **Choices** – will grow across Sussex to meet the growing demand for high quality supported living where tenants have all the say in what happens in their homes with support from kind and friendly staff,

3. **Shared Lives** – we will continue to grow our schemes in Brighton & Hove, West Sussex, Lambeth, Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham and they will support at least **85 people in each scheme**,

4. **Active Lives** – we will make most changes here. We will move from day centres based in two buildings, to a number of Hubs that will have an increasing number of projects based in them. Projects such as job creation, travel buddy, sports for all, Grace Eyre Friendship, Purple Playhouse Theatre, holiday scheme, arts, performing arts, music, photography, learning independence skills such as cooking and leading healthy lives.
We will respond to the twin challenges of austerity and self-determination by people with learning disabilities and by 2020 we want to:

**Hubs:**

Some of the Hubs will have office space, meeting rooms, activity space as well as a café space and some of the Hubs may specialise in one or two of these key areas. They will be offering people with learning disabilities and their families opportunities to link up with friends; they will have drop-in advice and support groups. They will aim to reduce people’s dependency on professional and paid care and increase the use of peer to peer mutual support and volunteers.

The Hubs will also establish a shop window for recruitment and promotion of Grace Eyre to the local community. The Hubs will be open 7 days/week.

We will aim to share the Hubs with other likeminded organisations and partners as well as meeting the expectations of current and future commissioners, families, funders, supporters and people with learning disabilities.

In order to finance this transition, Grace Eyre will look to sell some of our current buildings that we own, look to fundraise and examine options around social financing to bridge the any gaps.

- The Hubs will be co-run by people with learning disabilities,
- People with learning disabilities will be paid to take charge in running activities,
- People with learning disabilities will help to look after the buildings,
- Paid staff without learning disabilities will take a supportive role.
What is important?

In preparing this strategic plan, we have asked many of our stakeholders what they think is important for them. We have been very successful in growing our services across Sussex and parts of London. We want to continue this growth and we want to ensure that we provide the types of services that are wanted and needed. These key issues will be our key objectives for the next three years.
Key issues people with learning disabilities told us about

1. **People want to feel valued and wants to contribute.** This means that Grace Eyre will continue to move towards being user-led, have trustees with learning disabilities, employ more people with learning disabilities within the organisation and support people to “run” services and projects themselves.

2. **People want jobs.** This means we will seek funding to expand our job creation, apprenticeships, job training and volunteering opportunities.

3. **People want friendships, relationships and activities during the day and evenings, seven days a week.** This means we will continue to invest in the Purple Playhouse, Grace Eyre Friendship and the Hubs.

4. **People want holidays.** This means we will set up a holiday project that can help people with learning disabilities organise and access holidays.

5. **People want good housing.** This means we will continue to grow Grace Eyre Housing.

6. **People with complex needs want good support.** This means we will train our staff to support people with complex needs and set up a positive behaviour support project.

Key issues families and carers told us about

1. **Being better informed.** This means we will market our services better so that information is easier to access and our communication offers the advice that is needed.

2. **Having a say in the charity.** This means we will try and recruit family carers to become trustees and work in partnership with families to develop the right services.

3. **Helping to manage Personal Budgets.** This means offering Individual Service Funds to individuals and families with personal budgets.

4. **Supporting children with learning disabilities.** This means we will set up activities and services for children.

Key issues for commissioners

1. **Costs of our services.** This means we will do everything we can to become more efficient, diversify our income, offer better value for money and negotiate with Commissioners. It also means we will not do work that would make us a loss financially.

2. **High quality services.** This means we will strive to be Outstanding in how regulators and commissioners see us but
most of all we want to achieve this rating from our Quality Checkers who are all people with learning disabilities.

3. **Innovation and development.**
   This means we will invest in developing innovative and pathfinder services that benefit everyone.

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**Key issues for supporters**

Grace Eyre supporters come from many places. We get support from charity trust funds, social investors and corporate sponsorships as well as from many individuals who believe what we do is great. Some of the key issues highlighted are:

1. **Make relationship fundraising our key approach;** with limited resources, only by developing excellent relationships and responding to existing and potential supporters’ needs can we win support.

2. **Focus our time and energy on the highest return on investment first;** followed by other priorities as we move through the strategy: Trust and Foundations >£10K; Corporates; Events; Community; Individual Giving.

3. **Develop Grace Eyre’s fundraising processes -** put our CRM database at heart of all our systems; make it easier for people to donate; upskill service users, staff, and volunteers an make it easy for them to fundraise.

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4. **Work with social investors to develop new and innovative services.**

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**Key issues identified by Grace Eyre**

1. **Staff recruitment and retention.**
   This is becoming more and more difficult and we need to be the best. We have Investor in People GOLD and we are registered with the Living Wage Foundation but we need to do more. We aim to remove barriers such as childcare, travel and low pay to ensure we can successfully recruit and retain skilled, committed, kind and friendly staff. We need to be flexible in types of contracts we offer, set up apprenticeships, ensure people with learning disabilities lead on a values driven recruitment process and ensure that our managers and leaders have all the training and the resources to lead a successful team.

2. **Quality Delivery of services.**
   Grace Eyre’s credibility – demonstrate our impact and our ambition; provide evidence to others that we are experienced, expert, and responsive; differentiate ourselves from others as a user lead organisation – do we make a difference? The measuring tool we will use is the voice of
people with learning disabilities and our Quality Checkers will be upskilled and expanded to ensure we can hear and learn from them.

3. **Working in partnership with others.** We know that by working in partnership with people with learning disabilities, their families, commissioners and funders we can deliver better services. We also want to work in partnership with other organisations who can enhance what we do to ensure our services offer people more opportunities.

4. **Improve our communication.** Develop Grace Eyre’s communication processes – make it easy to identify and share useful information, put the CRM, Salesforce at the heart of all our systems, upskill people with learning disabilities, staff and volunteers.

5. **Financial strength.** We will ensure we retain our financial strength through our growth and service developments and ensure that we can finance our ambitious plans by using our assets and by fundraising for key projects and use social finance and loans where appropriate.

6. **Sustainability.** Grace Eyre has made a commitment over the past three years to look at sustainability, and green approaches to aspects of our service delivery. We will increase recycling, reduced printing/photocopying and ensure we reduce energy consumption in our buildings.

**Summary:**

This is probably the most ambitious plan we have made in the last 15 years and to be successful we will need to be able to answer three key questions:

1. How do we make the transition from buildings to Hubs?
2. How do we make the transition from staff led to user led services?
3. How do we attract and keep really good staff?

We have started to tackle these questions by holding meetings with people who use our services, staff and Ambassadors but a lot more talking will be needed to try and find answers to these three key questions.

Grace Eyre’s USP is that we are determined that the organisation will be led by people with learning disabilities and we have started a process of ensuring that people have the power to make decisions at our decision making forums such as Board of Trustees and our Senior Management Team.

We are different because we do not have residential care services for people with learning disabilities as we believe that they take away rights of people with learning disabilities – all our services are aimed at increasing the choice and control people have over where and how they live.

We start up services when we are asked to by people with learning disabilities such as Grace Eyre Housing CIC (people could not get access to good and affordable housing), Purple Playhouse Theatre CIC (people asked for opportunities to work in front of house jobs
and to learn about performing arts and to perform), Choices (people asked to be supported where they live and out in the community) and numerous projects such as Travel Buddy scheme, Sports for All Project, Grace Eyre Friendship and Open Arts Project.

We are experts in supporting people with learning disabilities to take on responsible roles within the organisation and to contribute to the growth and quality of everything we do. We are also experts in developing new services and activities and making changes to existing services after feedback from people who use our services, their families and friends as well as commissioners and social workers. This expertise and our determination will be tested in the next three years.

Monitoring of Our Plan

We will monitor Our Plan 2017-2020 closely as this is our most ambitious plan in the last fifteen years. We will aim to do things differently.

We truly want to be a user led organisation and can’t just pay lip service to involvement and consultation. We need to trust that people with learning disabilities can develop the skills to lead Grace Eyre at all levels.

The tools we will use to review and learn from what happens are:

- Annual Service Reviews – that will summarise what we have learnt during the year in each of our services and projects and what we need to change and improve.
- Annual Budget setting with frequent re-forecasts and monthly management reports including cash flow forecasts
- Quarterly Business Reviews – information that we can produce by using Salesforce will be invaluable in ensuring we are on target
- Quality Checkers – people with learning disabilities checking our services themselves
- Annual Surveys – to people with learning disabilities, families, staff, paid shared lives carers, volunteers and external professionals.
- Management Audits – carried out by service managers, finance and quality manager.
- Robust complaints, comments, whistleblowing and safeguarding policies and processes

An annual review of Our Plan takes place at the Board of Trustees away day in April each year where reports and lessons are discussed and improvements made.

Eva Eriksson
April 2017
## APPENDIX 1. – FINANCIAL PLAN

### GRACE EYRE - 3 YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST TO SUPPORT OUR PLAN 2017-20

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