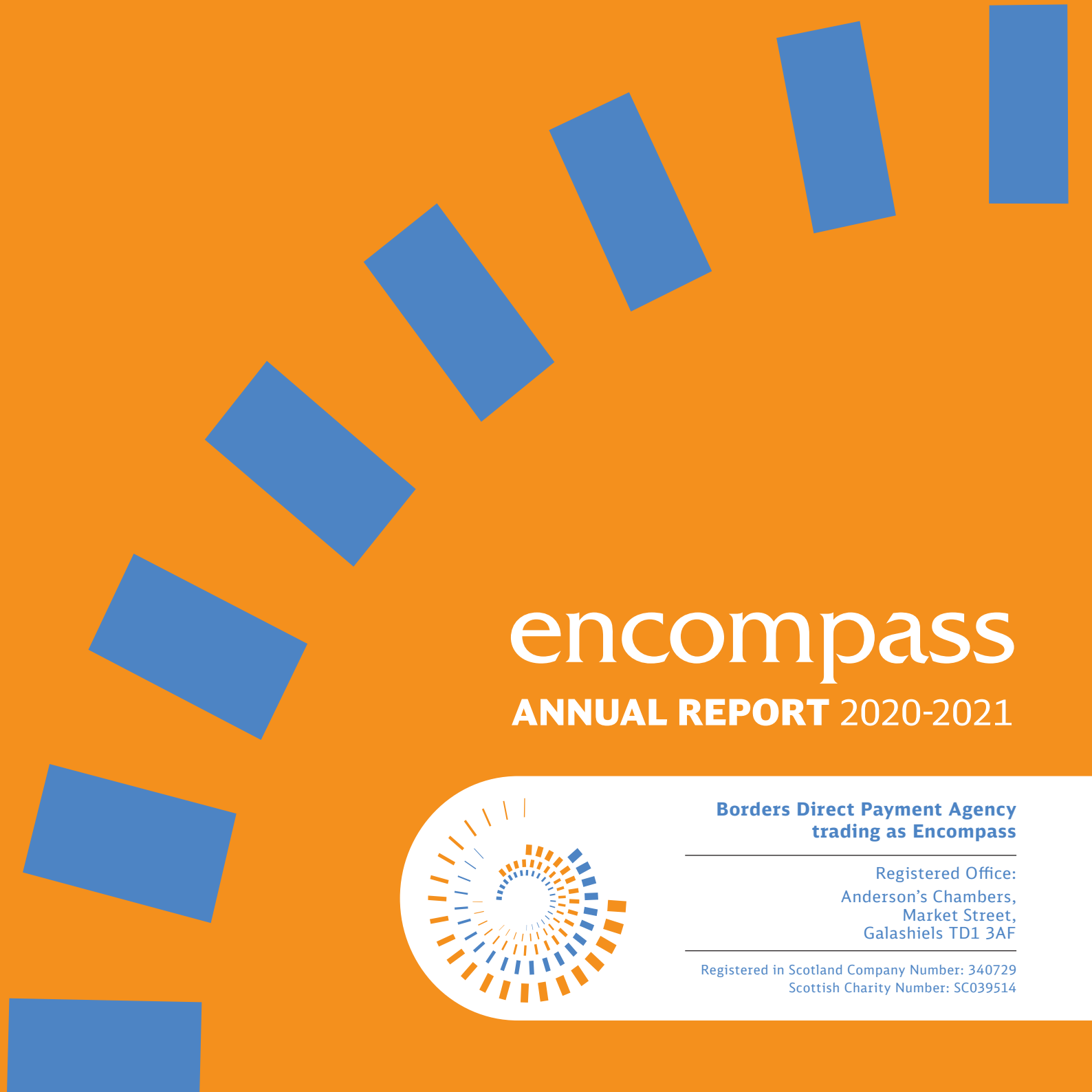




encompass

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



**Borders Direct Payment Agency
trading as Encompass**

Registered Office:
Anderson's Chambers,
Market Street,
Galashiels TD1 3AF

Registered in Scotland Company Number: 340729
Scottish Charity Number: SC039514

The background is white with several orange rectangles of various sizes and orientations scattered across it, creating a decorative, layered effect.

“
*We can safely say
this past year has
been like no other.*”

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2020/2021

Annette Scobie – CHAIR



We can safely say this past year has been like no other.

Last year, the threat of coronavirus was just starting to emerge and no-one could have foreseen the extent to which all our lives would be affected.

As the implications of the pandemic became clear and its impact on our clients and the organisation, we introduced special measures to ensure the safety of clients, carers and the staff team.

As a result, a great deal of additional work has been undertaken to implement all these protective measures as well as dealing with the many Scottish Government Guidelines for self-directed care.

At the same time, we have been streamlining our IT systems and looking at our audit processes. An impact assessment has been carried out in response to our contract review and SBC's proposed introduction of Pre-Payment Cards. We continue to work in close partnership with SBC Social Work headquarters and with the local area teams.

Board

The Board undertakes a continual review of policies and procedures and this year we immediately implemented a risk assessment process for coronavirus. Priority was given to ensure the safety of staff and carers working in the community. The Board began to hold its meetings by video link in order to comply with social distancing.

Over the past year, we are pleased to have increased our membership to 45 and are keen to recruit new members to the Board. We welcome Marion Wood who has a background in the NHS and at the same time say a thankful farewell to Therese Glendinning. We are still searching for a new treasurer and would be pleased to hear from anyone who may be interested. As part of a review of our financial procedures we are drawing up a new job description for the treasurer.



★ We are always looking for new Board members, so if anyone is interested in helping us to ensure that Encompass clients continue to receive an excellent service please get in touch with the office for more information.

Staff

Some changes to the staff team have been made in administration and finance. Quentin Grant (Admin Asst) and Niccy Kershaw (Finance Officer) have retired after many years of service although they both continue to work part-time for Encompass. Quentin worked full-time for Encompass for 17 years and now helps the payroll team working on monthly timesheets and Niccy remains involved with the SIRD project. Dianne, one of our ESAs retired at the end of January. We took on two new part-time administrators, Margot and Jemma, to replace Quentin and Sally in September 2020 as Sally stepped into the finance role.

We welcome the new staff and wish those moving on all the best and thank them for their service to the organisation. We really appreciate how the staff team has worked flexibly over the past year as we have had to implement various measures due to coronavirus. Hazel, our manager, has taken on a great deal of additional work to implement all the necessary measures within the office as well as the extra work load caused by the pandemic.

As an organisation working in the care sector, we face many challenges including the on-going recruitment of carers. Maintaining close personal contact with clients and carers and local knowledge helps us to withstand this very real pressure. We are grateful to the staff team for continuing to work through difficult circumstances to maintain the valuable service and support we provide to our clients and carers. I would also like to thank members of the Board for all their commitment and support to Encompass over the past year.

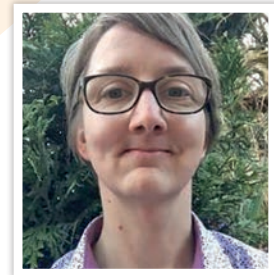
Congratulations to all those involved with the Support in the Right Direction (SIRD) project for being successful in obtaining funding for another year from the Scottish Government. We are grateful to the team for their hard work and the support they give to the Self-directed Support (SDS) Forum in representing the views of all those involved in self-directed care.



Niccy Kershaw



Quentin Grant



Sally Bell



Jemma Paterson

Our Organisation

This proved to be a difficult year due to the Coronavirus (Covid). There was pressure on staff as they were unable to visit people in their own homes and pressure on payroll with all the variations of social distancing, shielding and self-isolating, furlough and reclaiming funds for employers which had to be recorded in detail. The Manager negotiated PPE, how it could be sourced and where etc., Covid testing and arrangements were made to keep Personal Assistants (PAs) safe in their work environment.

- We developed internal risk plans due to Covid. Staff from the SIRD project and finance worked from home to reduce the number of staff coming into the Encompass offices and staggered working was brought in to enable social distancing. Board meetings were held through Zoom and meetings with SBC were held via Microsoft Teams.

- Regular updated information needed to go onto the Encompass website and supporting people with staffing issues was challenging. Updates were also sent out to clients on behalf of Scottish Borders Council (SBC). We highlighted the plight of Personal Assistants (PAs) as they weren't offered the vaccine at the same time as Care Agencies and Care Homes, the same happened with PPE and the £500 'bonus' payment for care staff.

- SBC asked Encompass to do a recoupment exercise to reduce Direct Payment (DP)

funds held by clients by four weeks. SBC also changed their four-weekly payments to clients to monthly. SBC developed a new system (STRATA) of sharing information with us and other third sector organisations. Another large piece of work was undertaken over the year to put all our hard copy records held on our clients onto PCs as storage of paperwork was becoming an issue.

- We were supporting 464 clients in April 2020 and 516 clients in April 2021. The amount of time clients had a direct payment has changed over the last 2 years. The average time someone used a DP in 2019-20 was for 41 weeks. This year 2020-2021 the average time someone used a DP was only 15 weeks. The result of this change means that Encompass spends more time setting up and closing down packages of care whilst the increase of 52 clients doesn't reflect the amount of work involved.

(contd. overleaf)



Our Organisation *(continued)*

- Encompass worked closely with Susan Henderson (SBC SDS Lead) and the Carers Centre to develop a new system for unpaid Carer's replacement care packages. Paying out redundancy was discussed and the process for paying PA redundancy was determined. Encompass and the SIRD project are involved in discussions about Pre-payment cards for clients.
- We are involved in the debate about PVG disclosure checks becoming mandatory.
- Donna Murray from Social Work Scotland met to discuss the new Social Work draft Standards.
- HMRC won their appeal to charge VAT on the services provided by Encompass and other support organisations who met the turnover requirements. This was expected by us and we had been charging VAT since HMRC instructed us to do this several years ago.
- We are members of Self-directed Support Scotland. This gives us an opportunity to express our views on anything SDS and learn about what is happening in other areas of Scotland.

Quotes

“ I wanted to share the wonderful experience of the care of my husband received from the NHS and the incredible kindness of staff at Encompass who are still checking on me even though my husband is in hospital. ”

“ A huge thank you for the support. The girls (PAs) are great and just sort things out amongst themselves to make sure we have someone in. Also once Occupational Therapy were contacted, they were here the next day and equipment in the same day”. ”

“ Can I also just add, Lisa is the kindest, nicest person I have ever had the pleasure to know and I wanted to express that to you in writing. What would I have done without you and your advice too. Many thanks Hazel. A hard year for all, including you, but your support and guidance has been much appreciated”. ”

“ Mum has moved into her new flat and is very happy. Thank you so much to Norma and all of the Encompass team”. ”

Encompass by Numbers – 2020/21

296

We have had a busy year with **296 new referrals.**

**NEW
REFERRALS**

987

The average number of Personal Assistants employed in any one month is **987.**

PA's

7,000

We answered over **7,000 telephone calls** and received over **24,000 separate emails.**

24,000

31

Employer Support Advisors made a total of **31 client visits** (restricted due to Covid) and also a total of **297** clients used our **third party banking service.**

297

319

There were **319 individual recruitments advertised** through our website.

**RECRUITMENT
ADVERTS**

28,780

There were **28,780 visitors** to the **Encompass website.**

**WEBSITE
VISITORS**

The Services Encompass Provide

- Comprehensive payroll service including workplace pensions
- Admin and employer service including support with safe recruitment
- Third party banking service

Our payroll and administration services continue to grow and are appreciated by people who have a direct payment and clients who are self-funders.

Our regularly up-dated leaflets outlining each of our chargeable services in detail.

Helpful information about all our services and more is also available on our website at

www.encompassborders.com



Support in the Right Direction

The SIRD Project is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Encompass. Currently the staff team consists of Niccy Kershaw, Janice McNeil and Elspeth Critchley. The good news is that the Scottish Government has agreed to continue funding the project for another year (to March 2022).



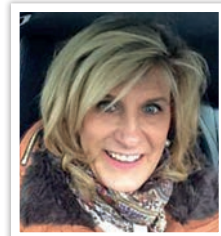
We did some research on how people are coping with lockdown due to Covid and the impact it has on their lives. This paper is available to view on the Encompass website (*see below*).



We have put together several power point presentations for training purposes covering the SDS options, pre-assessments and the support and services Encompass provides. The power points will be used by the local authority for their staff training.

Elspeth was invited to contribute to the Scottish Government SW Standards workstreams and is involved in wider work on Participation requests with the Scottish Community Development Centre due to the success of the Forum putting in a Participation request regarding Pre-payment Cards (PPCs).

Janice has been working on pre-assessments and has received referrals from the Borders Carers Centre as well as Social Work.



Janice McNeil

We have weekly team meetings, monthly Forum meetings along with 6 weekly SDS Working Group meetings. During Covid we have attended fortnightly Inspiring Scotland and the SDS Collective meetings, all on Zoom or Teams.

INSPIRING SCOTLAND



SDS Forum

The forum has been involved in a number of pieces of work during this period:

■ **Pre-payment cards** – this has been and remains on our agenda. It was put on hold due to Covid. After our Participation request and continued meetings with SBC to discuss the options it was finally agreed we would have Forum representatives on the PPC working group. The Forum is keen for PPCs to be an option, not mandatory.

■ We spent time on designing a new **SDS Forum leaflet** (see below).

The Forum has 25 members and 12-14 members attend our monthly meetings via Zoom.

■ **My Support My Choice** - this research was collected from six local authorities, SBC was one of the six so we hope to feed into this research in the future.

■ **Charging Policy** – Free Personal Care is now for anyone over 16 and the Forum has challenged the fairness of how it has been allocated by the local authority. The Forum has representatives on SBC Charging Group, this enables them to have valuable input and feed back to the Forum.

■ The Forum has representatives on the **SBC SDS Working Group**. Forum members add value to these meetings which includes people from various departments of SBC e.g. SDS lead, contracts, representatives from SW teams and providers.

We are in discussions with SBC about the flexibility of **how DP funds can be used**, particularly during Covid.

We have been unable to progress with film making due to Covid but we hope to resume in 2022 if not before.

So, overall the staff team and the Forum members have been hard at work and look forward to more co-production work with SBC, SDS Scotland, Inspiring Scotland and SW Scotland in the future.



Keep in Touch...

To ensure we continue to understand our clients' specific needs, we need to hear from you! Your feedback is important to us. It helps us develop our services.

Contact us by

email:

admin@encompassborders.com

or telephone:

01896 759700

For information and news visit our

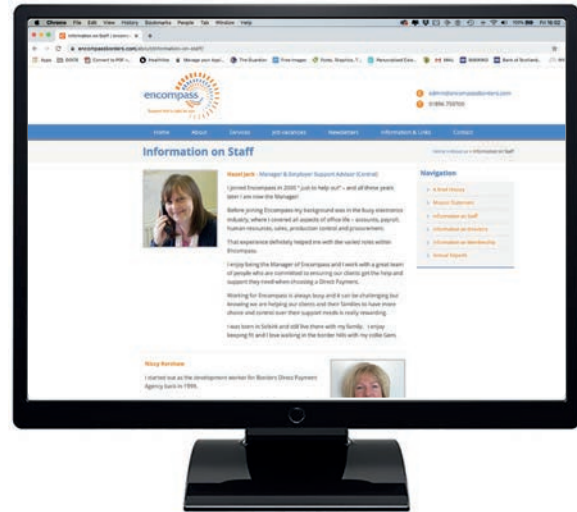
website:

www.encompassborders.com

or write and post to our

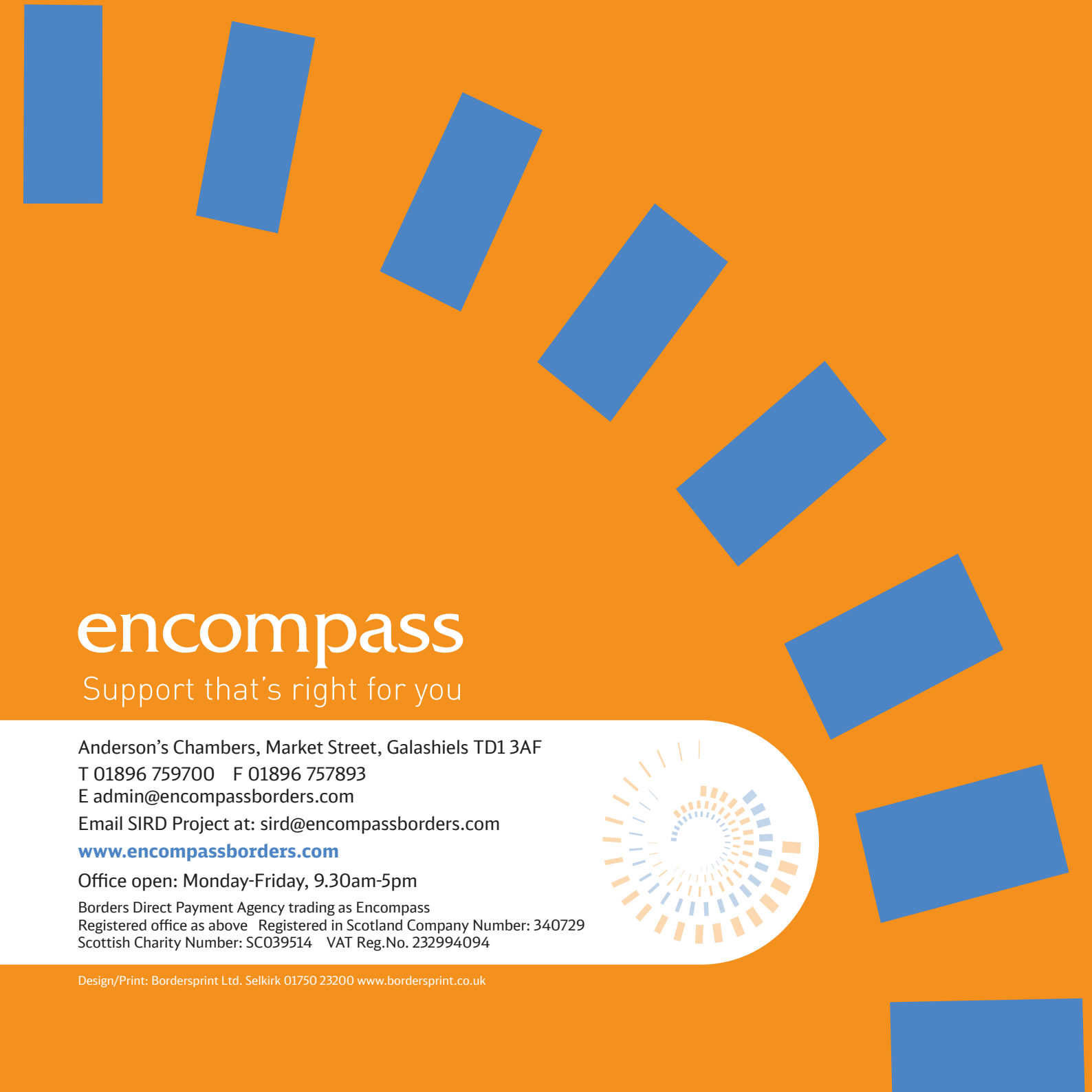
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Support that's right for you



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Borders Direct Payment Agency trading as Encompass

Registered office as above Registered in Scotland Company Number: 340729

Scottish Charity Number: SC039514 VAT Reg.No. 232994094

