



encompass

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

**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

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2016/2017

FIONA MCCALL – CHAIR

If I was to choose one word to describe the last year it would be 'rollercoaster'. We have been dealing with many difficult issues in this past year, both on the staffing front and in our continued dispute with HMRC over VAT.

There has been a fair bit of coming and going on the staff front, which could have been disruptive. There is no doubt it was unsettling and I have to say a huge thank you to the staff for their consistency and continued high level of service during this period.

The same is true of the Board. They are the back room group who deal with the internal and external issues which impact on the organisational running of the business. I think many do forget it is a business and the Board is where the buck stops in terms of this. We are all volunteers who are dedicated to a high level of commitment and ensure quality of service is maintained.

As a business we continue to grow and take on more clients and also develop our other services slowly but surely. The care sector is under even more stress than ever, yet Encompass still maintains excellent relations with social work and the challenges that arise.

This year has been a very different one for us. In the past, matters ran smoothly and quietly. We are always busy and continue to be so while being stretched on all fronts. Change is a difficult process but there is certainly a sense of coming through it and out on the other side. This means that I can stand down as Chairperson with a sense that Encompass can maintain the quality and high level of service we have always delivered and can weather any storm. I wish calm sailing from now on and leave it in safe hands. I will remain as a Director for the next year.

Best Wishes to all, Fiona McCall

The Board

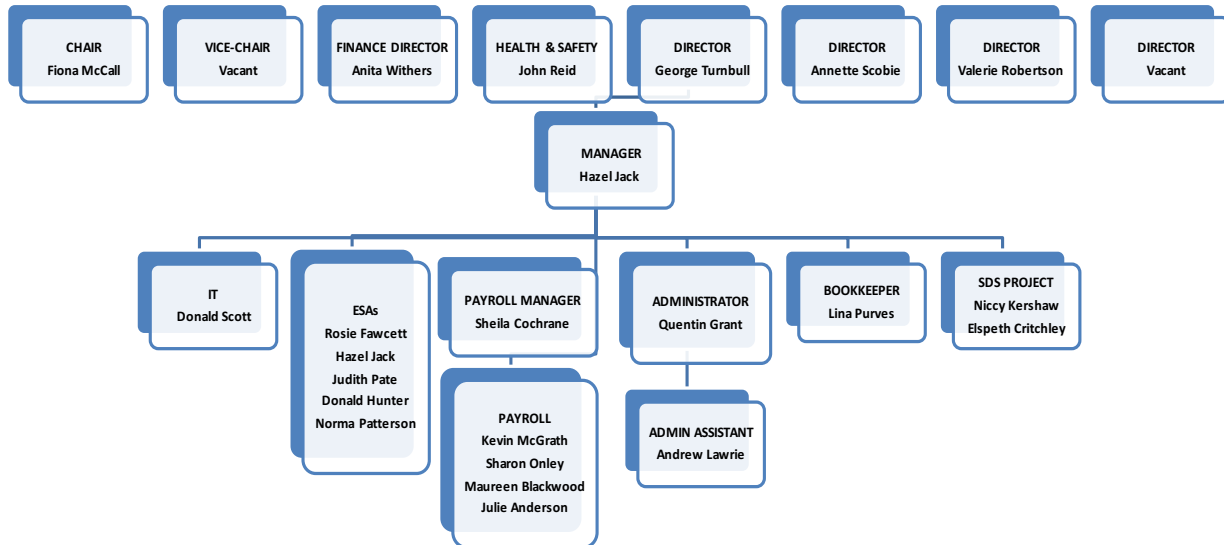
The Board had an Away Day in March 2017. This gave them an opportunity to review our Risk Assessment policy, among other things. The highlighted risks on the day were:

- lack of carers in general throughout the Borders and how that could impact on Direct Payments and what could be done about it.
- the VAT issue, we have to wait until December 2017 for the Cheshire case to be heard.

- a challenging staff issue which meant we required the services of HR professionals and
- the need for more Board members.

Fiona McCall announced on the day that she would be retiring from the position of Chair at the next AGM. Two other Board members indicated they would be willing to co-chair. The Board invited staff to meet them over lunch.

OUR ORGANISATION



As you have already read, the staff team has changed during the year. Scott Shields left us in April 2016 and Fiona Hughes was off work from June 2016 to leaving the organisation in February 2017. Rosie Fawcett joined us as an ESA in July to replace Catherine Knights who departed to pastures new near Southampton in June. Big thanks to all the staff team for working hard to cover the gaps.

The staff wish to thank the Board for all their support during this challenging year, in particular, Anita Withers (Treasurer) and Fiona McCall, who has been our Chair the last five years. We are happy Fiona has decided to continue as a Director.



*Saying it with flowers:
Anita Withers (left), Fiona McCall (right)*

What have we been doing over the last year?

- We worked in partnership with the Council to increase the hourly rate paid to clients who have a direct payment to cover the additional cost of being an employer with effect from April 2016. The main additional costs were VAT on our services, workplace pensions and paying the national living wage.
- Participate in the Scottish Borders Council SDS Working Group, usually held every 6 weeks. This is an opportunity to discuss any topic / issues around SDS from everyone's viewpoint.
- Participate in the Council Charging Forum to keep abreast of proposed changes and feedback effects on clients.
- Regularly meet with Susan Henderson, our SBC lead officer, and communicate with many other departments of the Council to feed back issues that arise for clients and ourselves.
- We arranged for a parent carer and ourselves to be part of the interviewing process for a new transitions project worker with SBC Learning Disability team. This is a one year project to support and simplify the transition pathway from children's services to adult services (see SDS Project on page 5).
- We attended a Provider Marketing meeting at Galashiels Interchange and this year we have attended the Provider Forum meetings held with SBC.
- We have highlighted employer issues with Independent Living Fund Scotland (ILFS) and continue to work with ILFS assessors and clients to help ensure correct funds are retained and allocated. We attended a number of ILF reviews, particularly where we hold ILF funds for clients (Third Party Banking).
- We sit on the steering group for the Borders Care Learning Network (BCLN) and ensure all the employers we support receive copies of the BCLN training booklets.
- Met with the Learning Disability team to discuss SDS and explain our services to support Direct Payments.
- In partnership with SBC we put on an afternoon event in Duns to promote care work in Berwickshire. People dropped in to find out more information and a parent carer spoke about how well a Direct Payment worked for her and her family.
- Attended Ability Borders events to promote and network regarding SDS options.
- Participated at the Carers Week event at Tweed Horizons.
- Attended some of the Health and Social Care meetings re integration and community input around the Borders, making sure people are aware of their SDS options.
- Met with the Care Inspectorate regarding our work and our relationship with SBC.



Self-directed Support (SDS) Project

This marks the end of the second year of funding from the Scottish Government for the above project. Here is a summary of our achievements:

- SDS – sharing information about the four SDS options, giving examples and telling people about the services we provide to support direct payments.
- Visited all the Carers meetings in the Borders, a number of WRIs, lunch clubs, rotary club, Womens Guilds etc.
- Contacted and met with 10 parents of children who had recently progressed through transition into Adult services to identify what would have made the transition less stressful. This information was shared with the Transitions Steering Group and the new SBC Transitions Worker. Future plans are to work in partnership with SBC to put together information for parent carers prior to their children progressing through transition. We participated in the professionals transitions workshop and spoke about the experiences of parent carers.



Carers event

- We took part in the Borders Autism Network afternoon at the Galashiels Interchange and have attended the Borders Autism Network meetings.
- We participated in the Aspiring Scotland Forum in Edinburgh. Aspiring Scotland oversee the SDS Project work on behalf of the Scottish Government.
- Attend care provider meetings and work with providers and SBC to encourage the use of Individual Service Funds (SDS option 2)

SDS Forum *supported by the SDS Project*

- The Scottish Borders Self Directed Support (SDS) Forum was established in June 2016 by a group of people interested in promoting the development of SDS in the Scottish Borders. We currently have 25 people on our database but anyone interested is very welcome to join the group.

- The Forum's aims are to work in partnership with the local authority and voluntary organisations to develop SDS and comment on policies and strategies that impact on people in receipt of SDS. It is also an opportunity for individuals to provide mutual support and

it is hoped that the Forum will become an independent voice reflecting the reality of the provision of SDS.

- Up until March 2017 the Forum has met on five occasions since the first meeting in June 2016.

- In June 2016 the Forum were asked by the Local Authority to comment on a pre assessment leaflet they were thinking of introducing for people having a Social Work assessment. During the discussion on this it became clear that people who had been assessed did not feel

they had received enough information on the assessment process, eligibility criteria, charging and the SDS options. The Forum then worked on producing an Information Pack (which would include all this information) to be sent out to people when they are referred to Social Work localities for assessment.



Niccy Kershaw (left) and Elspeth Critchley promoting the SDS Forum

- The Forum has also been working on producing a leaflet/flyer about the Forum to let the wider community know about it and encourage others to join.
- There are 2 representatives from the SDS Forum on the SDS Working Group who can represent the views of the Forum to the local authority.

What do people say?

"Palliative Care was provided for my mother. I'd like to thank Encompass for finding two wonderful carers as this made the last weeks of Mum's life so much better. The one to one care she received was superb, nothing was too much bother for them. My thanks to everyone involved."

"May I take this opportunity to thank Encompass for the support given to my Mum over the years."

"With enormous thanks for all your help today fixing up emergency extra care for my Mum. I am so grateful for your help."

"I think it's fair to say that without the help and flexibility which self-directed support has brought to our family, my beloved old Dad would not have had the amazing quality of life he enjoyed right to the end of his 91 years."

"When my Dad needed some care I initially went through the local authority who arranged for a provider to contact us. Unfortunately they couldn't provide the care we required at reasonable times so we decided to try a direct payment."

We live in a very rural area so we were concerned about finding staff but with the help of Encompass we managed to 'piggie back' onto another care package only a few miles away. My Dad and I are very impressed with the care he now receives and we negotiated the times of visits so they work in with the other care package and give us what we were looking for."

Encompass keeps us right with paperwork. Our package is only 7.25 hours per week and it is over 7 days so staff cover each other and split weekend working between them. For this reason we have 3 or 4 people on our payroll although they don't all work every week".

Encompass by Numbers – 2016/17

Encompass
clients

466

Payslips
processed
during the year

9214

UP 10%

Third Party
Banking
clients

110

UP 60%

Encompass
website
visitors

18945

UP 60%

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.

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More details of each service can be provided on request.