



ESCAPE

Family Support

Annual Report 2024/25



Investors
in People

Health &
Wellbeing
Award



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Platinum



ESCAPE in brief

ESCAPE Family Support was set up in Blyth in 1995 by founder and current Chief Executive Janet Murphy and is a county-wide, community led response to drug and alcohol misuse in Northumberland.

What we stand for

Empowering families, carers, adults, young people and children and the communities of Northumberland to improve their mental and physical health and well-being to reduce the impact of addictions, social and lifestyle pressures, and risky behaviours.

What we do

ESCAPE is the only specialist provision for families carers, adults, young people, and children of substance users throughout Northumberland. The charity was founded in 1995 in Blyth by Janet Murphy MBE after her daughter died from drug poisoning. With nowhere to go for support ESCAPE was set up by carers for carers. We provide evidence based trauma informed programmes and interventions tailored to individual need.

At **ESCAPE** our mission is:

- ◇ To provide a range of services for families and carers of drug and alcohol users in Northumberland.
- ◇ To use a holistic, enabling approach and tailor our open access services to the needs of the individual.
- ◇ To raise awareness of drug and alcohol issues within the communities of Northumberland and other areas.
- ◇ Education, Support, Counselling, Advice, Phone-line, Empathy - **ESCAPE**

Why we do it

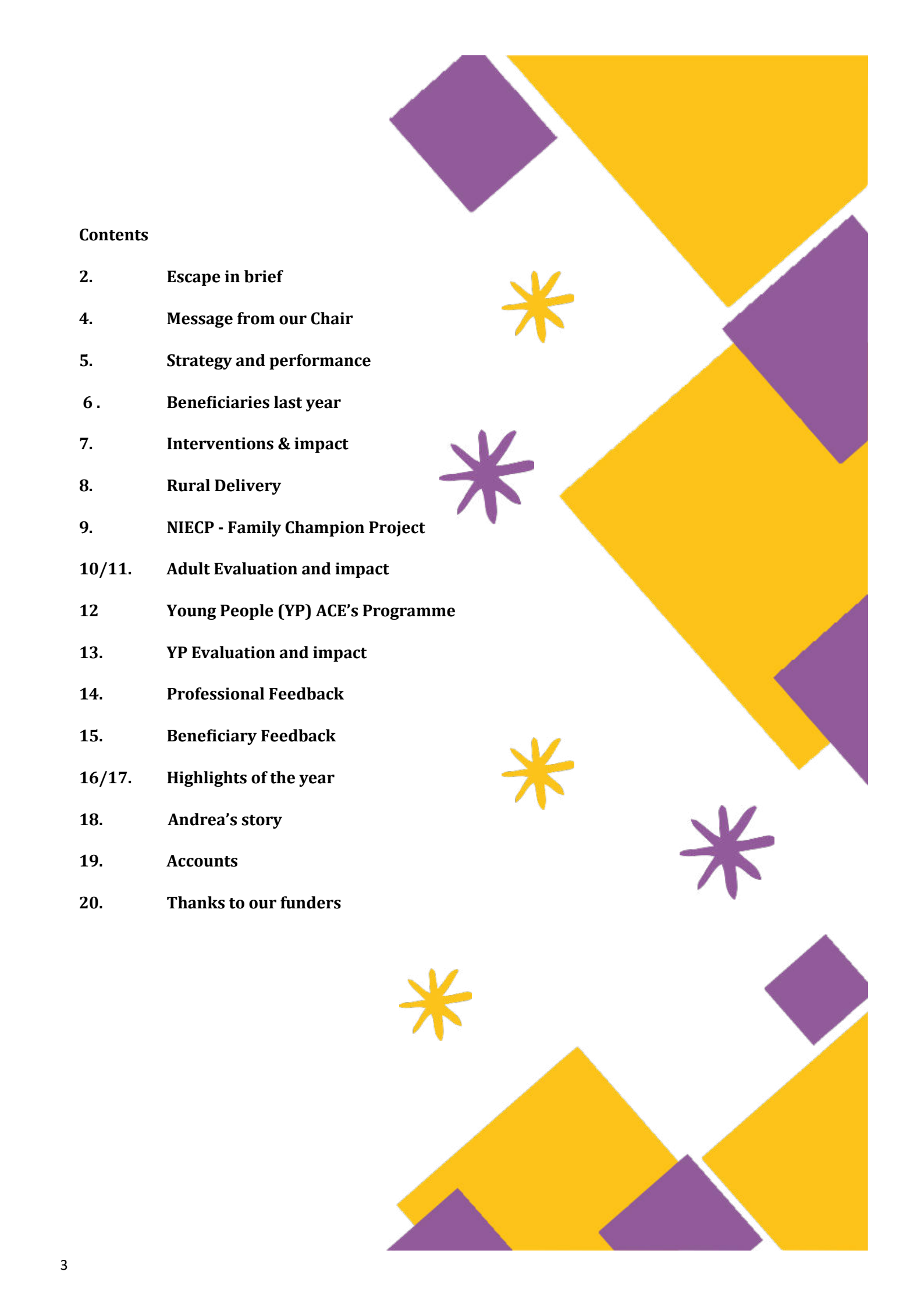
The lives of families we support are ravaged by drug or alcohol misuse. Parents, grandparents, partners, siblings, children and kinship carers suffer multiple factors of disadvantage and deprivation. Particularly health, social and economic inequality as well as damaged relationships/chaotic lifestyles, characterised by social determinants of inequalities including children taken into care, domestic violence, family breakdown, truancy, poor educational attainment, crime, antisocial behaviour, unemployment, trauma, mental health issues etc. Families suffer from negative attitudes, stigmatisation and prejudice within society that impacts on their daily lives, on community cohesion resulting in social isolation and financial hardship.

At **ESCAPE** we place the family at the heart of everything we do. We understand the value of family in our work and believe that addiction affects the whole family. As a result, our objective is to provide structured support across the whole of Northumberland to families, carers and partners of substance users.

Who we are

A team of committed trustees, staff, volunteers, family champions and supporters who believe everyone can make a difference.





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Message from the Chair



I had the pleasure of taking over from Jackie Axelby and becoming the Chair of ESCAPE Family Support in November 2024, following a period of being a Trustee, then Vice Chair and Treasurer.



What a year ESCAPE has had!

In November 2024, we celebrated our 30th anniversary which is a monumental achievement for the charity. It speaks volumes about the hard work and dedication our staff and volunteers have given to ESCAPE and our beneficiaries over the years, making our services irreplaceable.

In February 2025, ESCAPE was awarded, for the second time, the Investors in People platinum accreditation. This is the highest level of accreditation possible and only 2% of the country's organisations receive this accolade. It is truly an honour to receive this accreditation, especially being such a small charity. It demonstrated the hard work and tireless dedication of staff and volunteers to make a difference to our beneficiaries. The level of commitment at all levels, to support and invest in our workforce, is embedded within our culture to recognise the value of the service we provide.

Yet again, the demand on our services has increased and the charity has risen to the challenge. This Annual Report describes in detail the range of services we have offered, the numbers of people accessing services and the amazing results that have been achieved. It is truly remarkable the impact ESCAPE has made to the residents of Northumberland in 2024/2025.

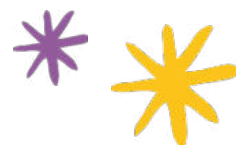
Feedback from our commissioners and funders gives testament to the quality of the services we have provided and the fantastic results we have achieved. This is only made possible with the continued support we receive from all of them, many of whom we have had relationships with over many years and some more recently. We are grateful for the confidence and continued support you have shown, we honestly could not do this without you, so thank you on behalf of ESCAPE.

We often receive feedback from our beneficiaries about how invaluable the continued support from ESCAPE has been to them, their families and friends. You will be able to find detailed feedback on the following pages. We continually strive to make our service unlike no other by listening to our beneficiaries and tailoring our services to meet their needs. We know how important and priceless everyone's experiences are therefore we encourage our beneficiaries to stay with ESCAPE to provide support to other beneficiaries once their journey has finished through ways such as befriending, becoming Family Champions, helping with events for carers and families, admin support, tending our garden, providing cooking lessons and general maintenance of the building. Volunteers are pivotal to the success of ESCAPE and we could not function without them so an enormous thank you for your time, dedication and support.

Our staff are truly one of a kind and are the heartbeat of ESCAPE. They work tirelessly to deliver and continually improve and expand the services that ESCAPE is famous for. A massive thank you to each and every staff member for their dedication and service.

We have faced many challenges during the year. I am proud of the whole team as they have been resilient, able to adapt and remain responsive to all of the challenges and changes faced. There will be further challenges on the road ahead, however we are dedicated to meet our values and vision by refreshing our strategic plans to ensure we stay relevant, responsive and present in the sector. We must note the volume of milestones and achievements we have hit throughout the year as well as amazing feedback received about services. This makes us strive to continue to work together as one and strive to make ESCAPE as sustainable as possible to deliver high quality services to our beneficiaries going forward as they are our priority.

Holly E Scarfe - Chair





Our charity is a community led response operating a mission-driven model focused on delivering intensive support to individuals and families affected by addiction. Our endeavours are aligned to secure a diverse mix of funding which enables delivery of high-quality accessible services. Our model is developed around sustainable partnerships, grant income and community led support ensuring resilience and responsiveness, rather than reliance on a trading or commercial entity.

We do not operate a trading subsidiary though we generate small amounts of income through community events/trading activities addressing poverty (Jumble Sales etc) which provided 3% of 2024/25 income. Rather our focus remains on increasing statutory income and securing charitable funding where we have built strong relationships and have a strong track record and reputation for impactful, person-centred services and excellence in delivery of community healthcare.

During the past year we successfully increased our income from £274,240 in 2023/24 to £396,518 in 2024/25, an increase of 44.58% (£122,278). We have successfully expanded statutory funding through new and extended contracts and grants with local authorities and Integrated Care Board up from £121,900 to £196,439 in 2024/25. These statutory contracts and grants indicate growing recognition of our specialist expertise in supporting families affected by addiction.

This increase in funding enabled us to expand and extend our reach in rural Northumberland and we expanded provision in Blyth which is an identified hotspot of need; increased the numbers of adults and young people we reach; and invested in improving outcomes and data monitoring.

We successfully tendered for a contract securing statutory funding to continue expanded work in Rural Northumberland and Blyth for the forthcoming year with a potential roll on of a further year.

Alongside statutory growth, we have progressed, growing and diversifying our income through charitable trusts and foundations having secured multi-year grants that support project delivery and core costs.

Community Fundraising has also been uplifted from £8,876 to £13,192 up 48.63%. Through delivering community events and activities we strengthened unrestricted income and gifts in-kind and have grown a stronger base of regular supporters and volunteers, addressed poverty, deepened local involvement and engagement.

Whilst remaining wary of over-dependence on any single funding source, this combination of increased statutory contracts, growth in charitable and statutory grants and reinvigorated community fundraising has strengthened our financial stability. Moving towards a more balanced, resilient funding model ensures we can continue to meet increasing demand and stay rooted in the needs of families and communities we serve.



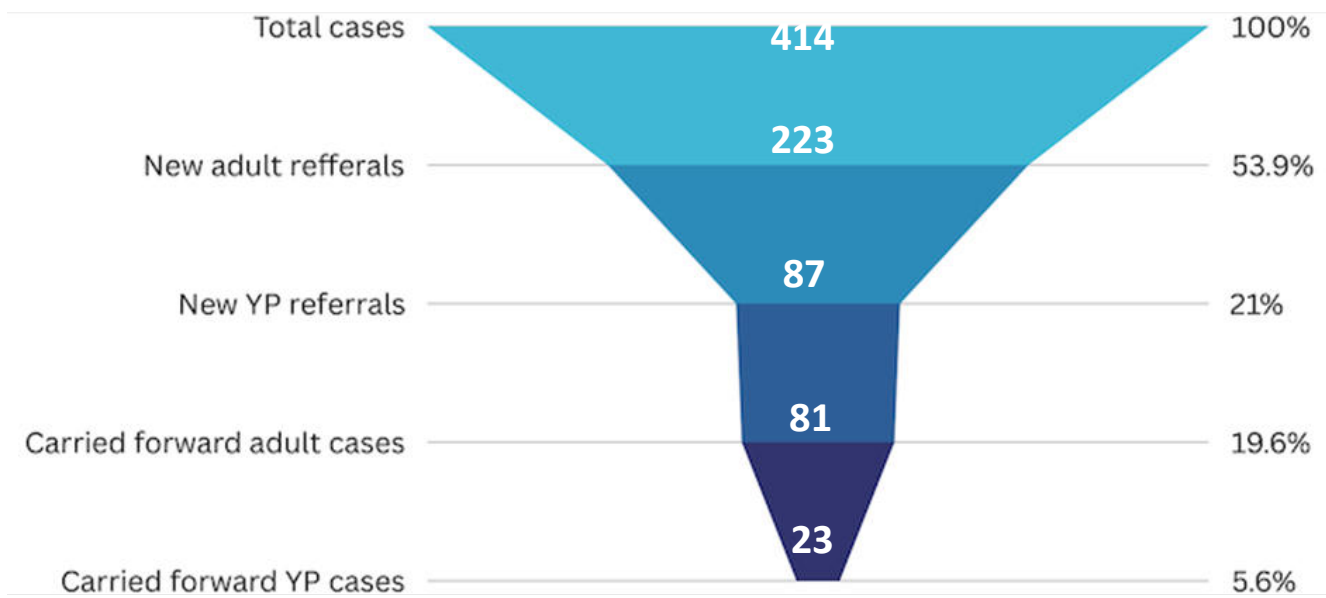
We run events across the year, these have included Bingo nights, Halloween and pumpkin carving events, cooking classes, Christmas and Easter events, trips away and arts, craft and gardening sessions.



Beneficiaries last year



We began the year with 104 carried forward cases and provided trauma informed therapeutic interventions for 414 adults, children and young people . An increase in demand for intensive therapeutic services of 10.4% compared to the previous year.



257 of these 414 cases were closed as follows: -



- 191 (74.31%) Support successfully completed and mutually agreed planned exit.
- 33 (12.08%) Further Support Declined following Advice/Information & Brief Intervention
- 4 (01.56%) Supported then Moved Away out of Northumberland
- 9 (03.05%) Assessed and Referred on to Appropriate Services
- 12 (04.66%) Dropped out of Service – Unplanned Exits
- 8 (03.11%) Inappropriate Referrals identified at assessment – 7 YP aged under 8 years and 1 person needing Northumberland Domestic Abuse Service

414 - 8 (Inappropriate Referrals identified at assessment) = 406

406 cases	+	92 people trained (accredited and non accredited programmes)	=	498 people directly worked with
498 cases	+	363 additional children, young people & adults attended events across the year.	=	861 people engaged last year, up on the previous year 592. 46.79% increase.

Interventions and Impact



We provide improved rapid response to carers in times of crisis via the Helpline

The 24/7 Helpline is used by many clients to self-refer into ESCAPE and is their sole source of advice, information and support out of hours. The calls we receive out of hours are often in relation to serious issues such as: overdose and harm reduction advice, self-harm, suicidal ideation, mental health crisis, family crisis, domestic violence, hidden harm, child protection concerns, bereavement, etc.

This year we averaged 25.83 calls per month to the helpline, receiving a total of 310 calls across the year. This exceeded our target of 24 calls per month, we do not include in these figures the calls made by professionals for referral/advice.



We provide access to specialist befriending provision for carers

ESCAPE volunteers our “experts by experience” often become Family Champions and have opportunities to become directly involved in delivery, providing support through developing powerful mutual relationship through befriending. General volunteers are involved in supporting other areas of the charity’s operations, general maintenance, administration, gardening, fundraising, planning events etc.

43 carers accessed the befriending service (38.70 % increase on previous year, 31 accessed)

35 of them accessing on short term to mid-term basis (84.21 % increase on previous year, 19 accessed)

19 accessing 3 month or longer. (26.66 % increase on previous year, 15 accessed)



We provide training that enables families affected by drug and alcohol use to better understand addiction and its impact, in order to develop coping strategies and more appropriate responses

Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT), is a behaviour modification programme for carers to help their resistant loved ones get into treatment. **Throughout the year we delivered 9 group CRAFT programmes (28.5%)** increase on previous year).

We delivered accredited training, **ten** beneficiaries achieved Level 3 in Family Dynamics, **five** completed Level 2 Support Skills and **one** completed CRAFT Facilitation training. Additionally **one** person completed Level one in Food Hygiene, **five** people have completed Level 2 Support Skills. We over performed on delivery of soft skills achieving 933% of the annual target to date. These sessions include sleep hygiene, assertiveness etc.



We delivered four sessions of Drug and Alcohol Awareness overachieving against our target of three for the year. We delivered one Teen Triple P parenting programme (face to face) and three SPACE Parenting Courses online, overachieving **200%** of our target to meet demand.

83% of parents/caregivers reported improved health, well-being and coping strategies

Project Work - New Rural Delivery

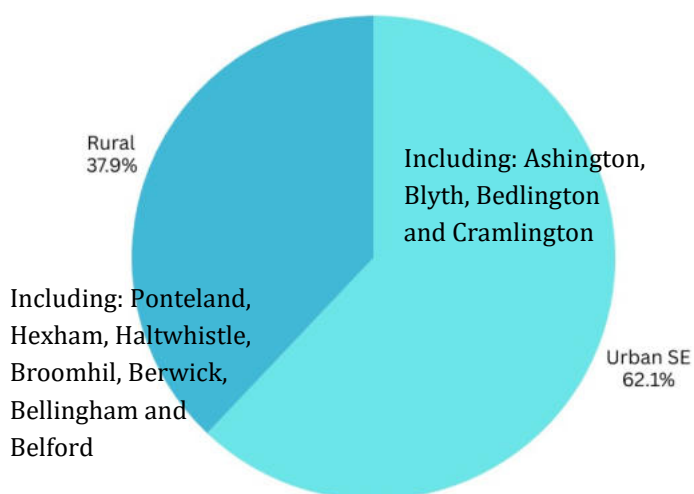


In April 2024 ESCAPE received NENC ICS Health Inequalities Funding, to employ a full-time Family Worker and a part-time Trainer to work with carers & families in rural areas. The NENC ICS is funding activity aimed at reducing health inequalities for people with complex and multiple needs. ESCAPE's Rural Project Delivery programme is being delivered at place, designed locally to support people with multiple and complex health needs associated with drug, alcohol and mental ill health to access healthcare and support services within their local communities. The project commenced on 1st June 2024.

This ICB funding enabled us to provide equity of service for residents in need to the West, North & Central areas of the county where geographical inequality is an additional challenge for many people. The project made links with health services and support to access wider services by engaging in conversations with partners that emphasise mutual benefits and shared values this project is meeting the needs of local communities. As a result of making connections, offering training and being more visible we saw increased demand for our services in rural areas.

We saw increased demand for our interventions from beneficiaries in rural areas :

The project carried forward 22 cases into Q1, referrals leapt up to 47 in Q2 which is a **113.63% increase in demand** from Q1. The Q3 referrals at 27 represent **an increase of 22%** from Q1. The Q4 referrals of 39 represented a **77.27 % increase on Q1. We worked with 157 people in total from Rural Northumberland to date in 2024/25, which is a 17.16 % increase on the previous year.**



Of the **157** cases we have worked with we successfully closed **85** cases during the period, with those individuals leaving service in a planned way with improvements to health and wellbeing and the skills to cope ongoing. We have an open caseload of **72** to carry forward into Quarter 1 of 2025/26. This demonstrates that the rural caseload work is building significantly.

Case study – P's Story. P was referred to ESCAPE by Blossoming Communities. He had to move home because of domestic violence from his partner and her drug use. When we met P, he was living in a house in Hadston he had just moved in, there was nothing in the house, he only had a kettle and a toaster. No carpets, furniture he had absolutely nothing. He had to leave another area of Northumberland because his ex-partner was harassing him after they had split up. She had set their house on fire, with their baby in it and he was fighting for custody of his son who was 18-months old at the time. ESCAPE provided practical support and assisted P with donated furniture and carpets, we gave P encouragement to make his house a home with the help and support of people from the community. ESCAPE provided a family support worker who gave emotional support, helped him to talk through his problems and concerns and develop positive coping strategies. Many of ESCAPE's carers, staff, volunteers and friends rallied around, making donations and supported P to make his house into a home as he only had 4 weeks to make his empty shell into a home to be able to gain full custody of his child. P now has full custody of his child and is coping well as a single father.

Family Champions Project Work (June - Dec 24)



ESCAPE successfully applied for project funding which was secured by Northumberland County Council (NCC) from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Northumberland Inclusive Economy Community Partnership, (NIECP) oversaw the programme. The funding was to support local organisations in the VCS to enable them to build capacity and offer impactful volunteering opportunities and social action projects to residents. Projects needed to be designed to include those who were economically inactive, to help address inequalities and deliver Inclusive Economy ambitions.

Project aims



This project aimed to inspire change through the development of Mutual Aid through introducing volunteer Family Champions (FC), our 'experts by experience' people who want to give something back and help others achieve positive change. We aspired to achieve 30 volunteer FC and we did, additionally we set a target of training 40 local residents, within the most deprived wards, in Ashington & Blyth. We achieved/over achieved on all required project outcomes by providing accessible soft skill and accredited training and family fun days/community events. 13% of participants moved into employment, 2 work at ESCAPE.

The funding enabled us to:

Run eight events, in Ashington & Blyth these included a **Well Being event** where people were able to get their blood pressure and quick health checks done, faces painted, there was advice on community banking, fire safety and crafts. We were joined by numerous local partners including Bedlington Ukulele Group, NCC Health Trainers, Northumberland Community Bank, Blossoming Communities, The Fire Service & Helen Lott from Tropiks. We ran an **International Day, Curry & Quiz night, Volunteers Celebration, ESCAPE 30 year Anniversary Event, Pumpkin Carving, Easter & Christmas Events.**

In total 363 adults & children attended these events and others we ran across the year.

We delivered accredited training, Supporting Families affected by addiction and Peer Mentoring at Level Two and Family Dynamics at Level Three. Additionally we delivered a suite of well being workshops: Self-Esteem, All about me, Sleep hygiene, Anxiety, Stress and Anger awareness, Communication, Listening & Assertiveness.

In total 52 individuals accessed training, and as a result we developed 30 Family Champions (FC), many are operating within ESCAPE and we trained a group of 11 FC from Forget Me Not's who support and advocate for us in Blyth. Two FC moved into paid sessional work with ESCAPE and we have benefited from the input and support of Laura and Matt.

"I have been on a big journey with ESCAPE, they have helped me build my confidence and helped build my sobriety. I have gained accredited Level 2 and 3 qualifications through their training programmes which gave me belief in myself again. The ESCAPE team are caring and understanding. ESCAPE has changed my life, helped me realise I have a lot to offer, I am working now and have become a constructive member of society and our community. ESCAPE is a massive part of my recovery, is a massive positive in a sometimes hard world. When I came to ESCAPE, I felt like I came home, which is a feeling I never had before. Thank you ESCAPE".





We capture improvement and transitional success for beneficiaries using a range of recognised and validated tools: **The Substance Misuse Carer Support Outcome Profile (CSOP)** is a tool developed by the Bridge Project in collaboration with the University of Bradford. It's designed to support carers of individuals with substance misuse issues. It is a nationally recognised survey used to measure the impact that caring has on carers, both physically and psychologically.

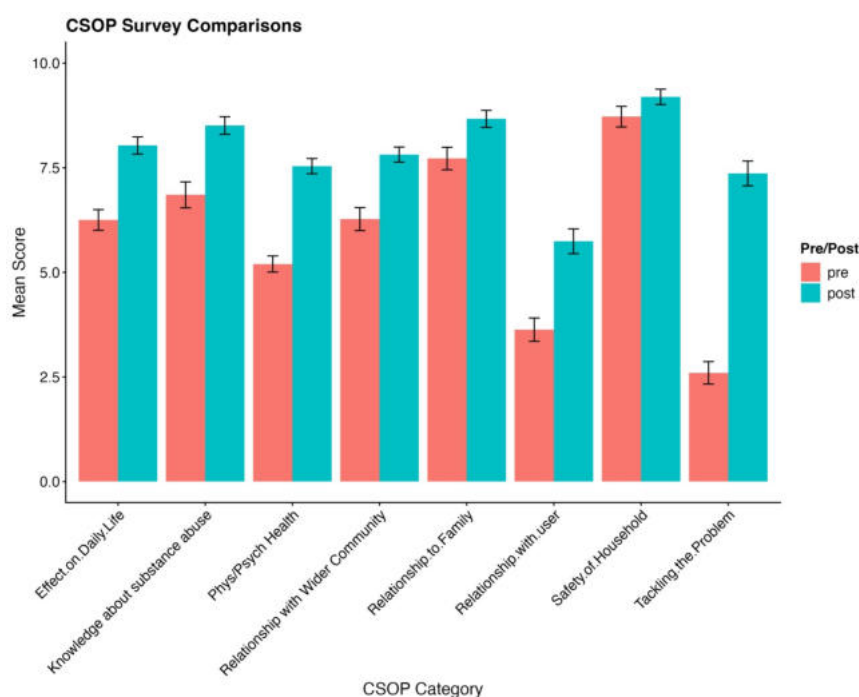
From all adult clients who finished evidenced based therapeutic programmes with ESCAPE's services this year, we randomly extracted 109 cases to be used in our data analysis to determine the effectiveness of our interventions. The workshops, training and interventions we use at ESCAPE all aim to help to improve clients' ability to cope with their caring role and therefore this should/would reflect through their scores on the CSOP. We used pre-intervention and post-intervention scores on this survey to determine whether there was an overall statistical improvement, and how big of an effect our interventions had.

The 8 sections of the CSOP cover these specific areas: Knowledge of substance misuse, Relationship with the User, Relationship with family, Safety of household, Relationship with Wider Community, Physical and Psychological Health, Aspects of daily life, Ability to tackle the problem.

We saw a significant ($p < .01$) increase in scores post intervention across 7 sections, the exception being "Safety of household" which had already displayed high scores pre-intervention.

Of these sections, the largest effects were seen in:

- * **Ability to Tackle the Problem**
- * **Relationship with User Physical**
- * **Psychological Health**



These results give us confidence that the trauma informed interventions we offer work. Furthermore carers have increased their ability to provide appropriate support, they feel more able to discuss and address their feelings. That ESCAPE's interventions have **significantly improved** carers mental and physical wellbeing. And

"You have shown me how to find me and how to deal with it all THANK YOU is so small a word for what you have given me." Female carer

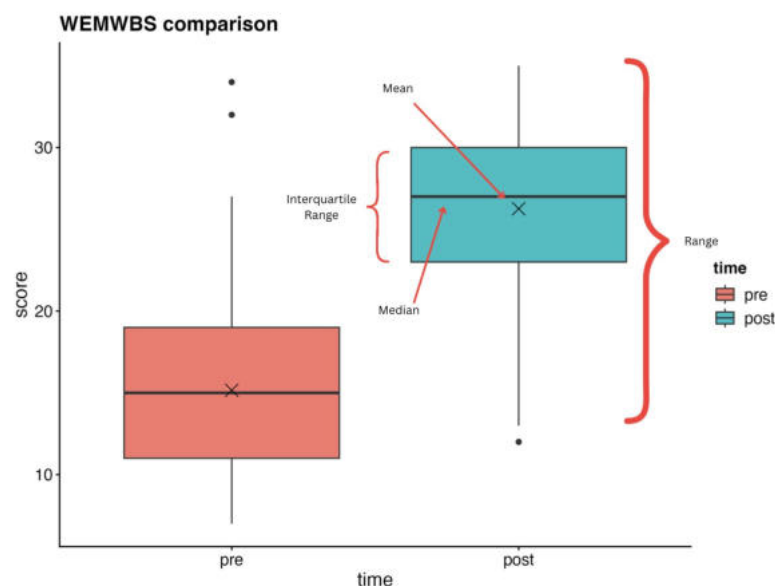
they are better equipped to understand their own health needs and make healthier lifestyle choices. They have improved their ability to tackle the problem and cope with aspects of daily life. Moreover carers have had the emotional and practical support that has enabled them to gain a level of knowledge that helps them understand and handle their circumstances better.

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)

The WEMWBS. Survey is an internationally recognised tool for evaluating the effectiveness of programmes and interventions and their impact on the mental well-being of clients. The 7-item version of the scale was used for our clients, where each item is a 5-point scale ranging from “None of the time” to “All of the time”, referring to the frequency of feelings felt by the clients such as “I’ve been dealing with problems well” and “I’ve been feeling close to other people”. Each response was summed, giving a possible range of scores from 7 to 35, with higher scores being more positive.

215 closed cases with WEMWBS data were extracted from the ESCAPE database for analysis, however, 2 pre-intervention responses had to be removed due to incomplete data. A statistical analysis method (Analysis of Variance or ANOVA) was used to investigate the differences between pre- and post-intervention scores and therefore establish any effect of the intervention (see Figure 2.)

Figure 2.



Mental wellbeing describes positive states of being, thinking, behaving and feeling, whilst 'mental health' is a term often used to incorporate a range of states from excellent mental health to severe mental health problems.

Our analysis showed that there was a statistically significant ($p < .01$) difference between pre-intervention, where the mean score was 15.2, and post-intervention, where the mean score was 26.3. Effect size was then calculated, and was found to be “extremely large” meaning the effect the ESCAPE had an extremely large part in the increase in scores from these surveys.

A large effect means that the intervention or change being measured has had a substantial impact on mental wellbeing, as measured by WEMWBS.



Supporting children in Northumberland



“Getting the right support early ensures better outcomes for children and young people.”



We deliver Adult Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and our pioneering **Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Programme with children & Young People (YP)** helps “break the cycle” of harms within the families we work with and increases protective factors through therapeutic intervention. Outcomes include empowerment, resilience, coping strategies, reduced isolation, improved mental health/ wellbeing and family relationships.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful events occurring in childhood including domestic violence, parental abandonment through separation, abuse (physical, sexual, neglect or emotional), a parent with a mental health condition,

being exposed to substance misuse, or being emotionally neglected.

The Young Person ACE's project began the year with 23 cases carried forward (C/F) from 31/03/2024 and received 87 new referrals to 31/03/2025. We supported 110 Young People in 2024/25 up **57.14%** (70) on 2023/24.



C/F Cases 23



Appropriate referrals 87



Total 110 young people

From 1st April 2024 to 31 March 2025 there were 42 closed cases of which 9 were either unplanned exits or moved out of area. **Of the 42 cases, 33 YP cases were closed with positive outcomes which equates to 78.57% of closed case load.**



Referral Source	Referrer	Volume
Children's Services	Social Workers/Social Work Assistants	38
Children's Services	Early Help Team	11
Children's Services	Family Hub	7
Sorted	YP Drug & Alcohol Worker	1
School Referrals	Pastoral & Safeguarding Leads	10
Health	0-19 Service	1
Mental Health Team	Primary Mental Health Worker	2
Crisis Team	Mental Health Worker	1
Health	General Practitioner	1
NCVA	NCVA voluntary worker	1
ESCAPE	Family Members	14
TOTAL		87

Of all referrals, the highest volume referrer was Children's Services at 65.52 % , Education 11.5%, Health 5.75%, VCS Referrals 1.14% and 16.09% referred directly to ESCAPE by a family member.

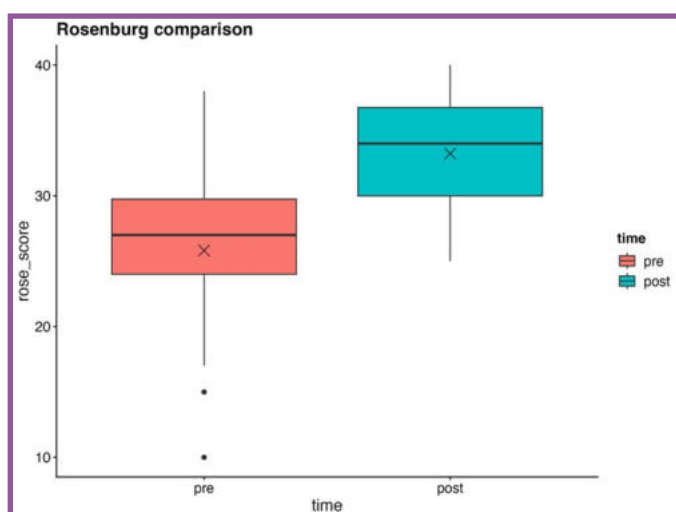
Evaluation & Impact Sample data analysis young people (YP) support

We utilised a number of measurement tools to assess the impact of our therapeutic interventions with children and young people (YP). The measurement tool is matched to the age of the child, for example we have utilised CSOP (detailed earlier in this report) this is because the YP are 17 plus years (in caring role). We randomly sampled 32 closed cases from the 42 total case closures across the year.

Category	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention	Point-increase
About Substance Abuse	32.5	38	5.5
Daily Life	26.25	38.25	12
Phys/Psych Health	24	33.5	9.5
Relationship with Family	34	37.25	3.25
Relationship with User	9.333333333	22	12.66666667
Safety of Household	33.5	38.5	5
Tackling the Problem	21	37.33333333	16.33333333
Wider Community	32	39	7

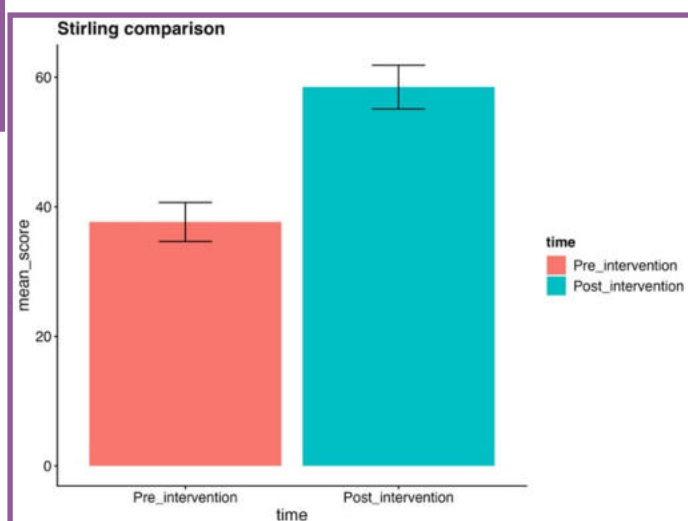
CSOP - Using 4 closed YP cases, average scores across all CSOP categories were calculated and compared. Across all indicators we saw improvement. Significant improvements in ability to tackle the problem, daily life & relationship with user.

The Rosenberg Self-esteem scale is a widely used tool for measuring self-esteem in Young people. It uses 10 items where respondents use a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" when referring to statements such as "I feel I have a number of good qualities".



A sample of 22 closed cases were used to analyse the impact of ESCAPE's interventions on the self-efficacy of YP's (Figure x). The analysis revealed a significant ($p < .001$), "large" effect. Meaning that there was a significant difference between pre-intervention ($M = 25.82$) and post-intervention ($M = 33.23$) Rosenberg scores, of which the interventions delivered by ESCAPE played a large part in.

Stirling Scale. At ESCAPE, we are transitioning from using the Rosenberg Scale towards the use of the Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale. This decision was made to allow a more holistic evaluation of our YP's mental wellbeing pre- and post-intervention. Rather than focussing only on self-esteem, the Stirling encompasses many aspects such as optimism, cheerfulness, and interpersonal relationships to assess mental wellbeing. Due to the recent change, only 6 closed cases were sampled.



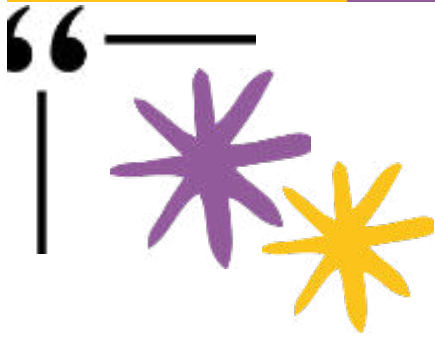
"....at the end I found out who I was..." (male YP)

"Look at me now ..I'm working full time" (female YP)

".. At the beginning it was horrendous I was getting bullied and in trouble all the time....now I'm more relaxed and chilled out" (female YP)

"off days are normal but I've had a lot less of them since coming here" (female YP)

Professional feedback



"I just wanted to acknowledge your fabulous and vital work that you do... Very proud of you guys and your service"

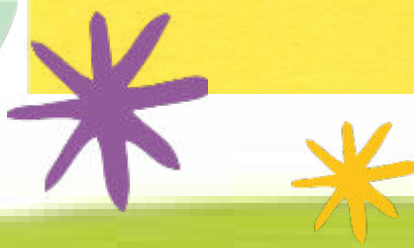
Lisa-Jane Bell-Nevin,
Substance and Alcohol (saAT) -
Social Worker , Intensive Social
Work Mental Health Team



"Escape Family Support provide assistance in a sector that is not only highly challenging and emotionally intense, but under-funded by Central Government, which makes their overall presence in that area even more invaluable."

The Northumberland Recovery College are honoured by Escape's decision to partner with us to deliver upcoming Wellbeing sessions in two rural, challenging areas of the County (Wooler and Haltwhistle) to help beneficiaries of both services to meet in-person, in a safe and inclusive environment and receive life-changing support. We hope that Escape decides to continue working side-by-side with us in the future, as I believe that they are saving people's lives and hope that we can contribute in some small way".

Pete Wolf, Northumberland Recovery College Coordinator



*"For three decades, Escape has been a lifeline in our **Northumberland** communities, delivering essential services that go beyond what public services alone can provide. From supporting individuals and families affected by addiction to promoting mental health and wellbeing, Escape's work fills a vital gap, offering the kind of personal, accessible support that can only be provided by people rooted in their own communities... organisations like Escape don't just tackle immediate needs; they build resilience, connection, and long-term wellbeing across our region".*

Martin Conway, Community Builder



"I'm really pleased with the support Escape has offered one of the families I am currently supporting. They have gone above and beyond offering support to children and mum which has been valuable in terms of progressing the plan. It is clear the children are really benefiting from the support - they also speak very positively about it which is great! ."

Danielle Hall, Social Worker, Northumberland Children's Social Care

Beneficiary feedback

"I just wanted to send you a message firstly to say thank you for the difference you have made to our family. This time two years ago I felt the bottom had fallen out my world and I couldn't see a way to make it better. It was the darkest of times. Then along came yourself and the ESCAPE team and with it hope and brighter days. I will never forget the support we received and will be forever grateful" (Female adult carer)

"I just wanted to say a proper thank you for the sessions I can't say it was easy to stop and look closely at the issues over the weeks, it's hard to judge progress and I know there is much work to do but despite still feeling emotional I was quite amazed when I compared my initial happiness scores to the ones in the last session. It was a lovely group to be with and although I know I'm quiet and not a great contributor it was probably the first time I have been able to share knowing I would be accepted and not judged." (Female adult carer)

"I did not realise that there was others like me , I am not going mad . In fact the opposite now as you have shown me how to find me and how to deal with it all" (Male adult carer)

"When I was all alone you were on the phone helping and listening.... I can really talk to my counsellor Rod. He is brilliant, I enjoy coming to see him"

(Male adult carer)

"ESCAPE made a massive difference to us, their advice was invaluable. Kindness - toys for Xmas – can't thank ESCAPE enough for their support"

(Female adult carer)

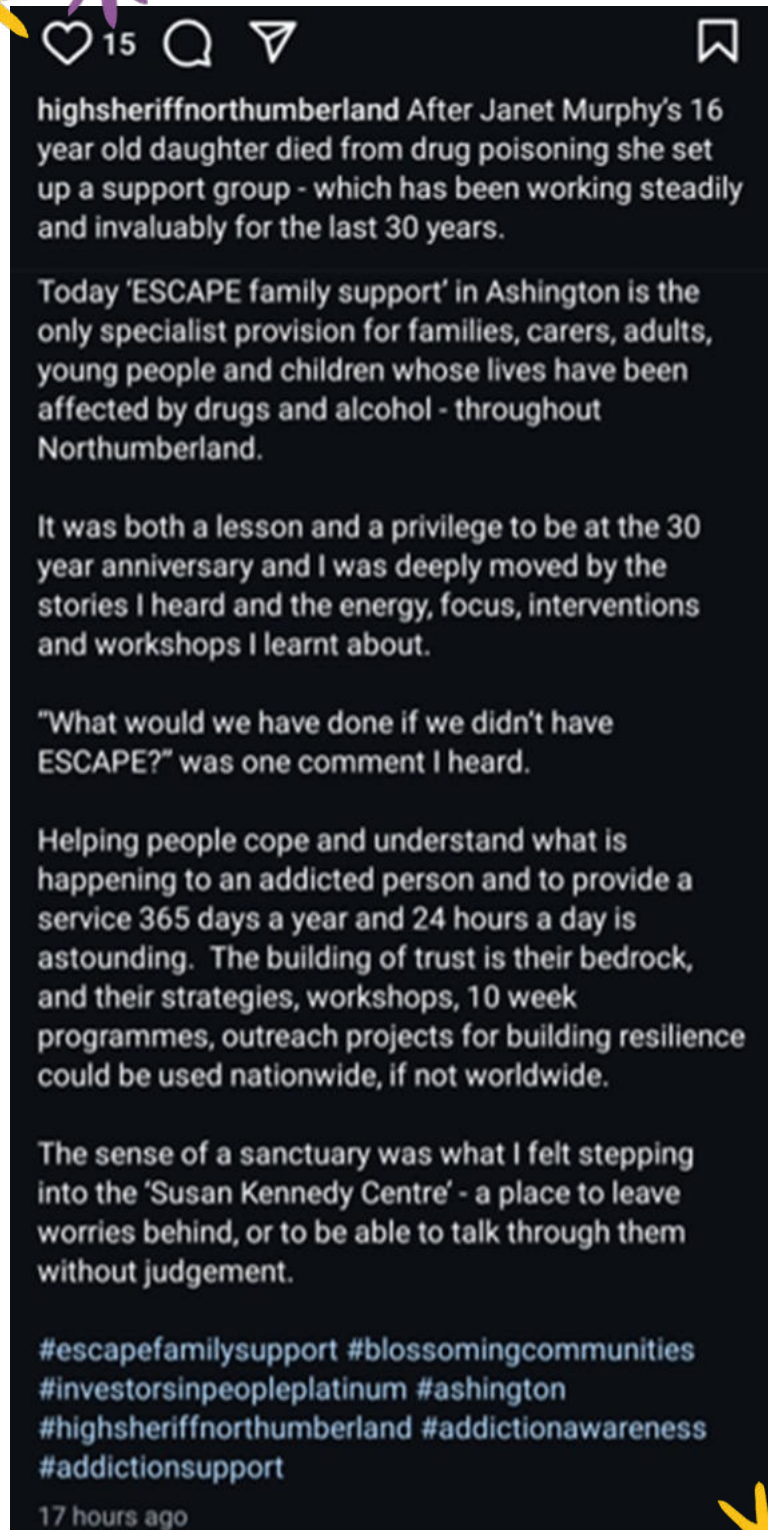
" Its like having a different daughter, its not a constant battle, thank you for working with our family. I've learned such a lot too and we are heading in the right direction...thankyou" (YP ACES parent/carers)

"How vital these services are, its bad that the all the government cuts to support is happening"

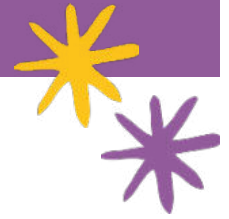
(Male adult carer)

Highlights of the year

ESCAPE celebrated its 30th anniversary in style, with an event at the Susan Kennedy Centre on 08/11/24. The day started with our AGM, presentations from staff, volunteers, carers and service users. We were joined by professionals, partner organisations, beneficiaries, councillors and dignitaries. The day was filled with fun, lively debate, heartfelt stories and fabulous food prepared by our wonderful volunteers.



Highlights of the year



We are delighted to announce that we have been re - awarded the platinum accreditation by Investors in People. This is the highest level of accreditation possible to achieve. Only 2% of Investors in People's 50,000 accredited organisations around the world have achieved Platinum. IIP is a recognised benchmark of a good employer and because accreditation is renewable every 3 years it means standards have to be maintained in terms of investment in staff. ESCAPE began its IIP journey in 2003 and we have continued to commit our time and energy into the process. ESCAPE's culture is at the heart of all we do and our success is down to our fantastic, passionate team.

Organisations are reviewed against 9 performance indicators:

Leading & inspiring people, Living the organisation's values & behaviours, Empowering and involving people, Managing Performance, Rewarding and recognising high performance, Structuring work, Building capability, Delivering continuous improvement, Creating sustainable success.

Survey highlights

You (ESCAPE) were above the IIP average for every Indicator within the survey. You also exceed this benchmark for every Theme and statement within the survey. The maximum score for any Indicator is 7.0 and for five of the Indicators you scored 6.9. There were two Indicators at 6.8, one at 6.7 and one at 6.6. These were exceptionally high results. **Your results by indicator** You achieved a high performing level in 8 of the 9 indicators and 26 of the 27 Themes.

Living the organisation's values & behaviours - Scores in this area are uniformly high, demonstrating a strong alignment between staff and the charity's core mission and values. This is a key strength, as charities rely on deeply engaged employees who believe in their work. Given that securing funding is a challenge, maintaining strong values and mission-driven engagement is crucial for staff resilience and long-term sustainability.

On-Site Assessment

Staff described the values as fundamental to Escape's purpose and operations. Many cited the values as their primary reason for working at Escape—*"it's not for the money!"*

Escape's leaders emphasised that values are embedded in every decision made. Several compelling examples were provided:

- Exceeding the requirements of a funded project because it was the *right thing to do* for clients.
- Staff volunteering to fundraise throughout the year to support Escape's projects.
- A PhD researcher connecting with Escape's values and later starting as a volunteer and trustee.
- Clients becoming volunteers because they believed in the sincerity and mission of Escape.



Andrea's story

Andrea came to ESCAPE to join a course in August 2024 at St Marys church in Blyth. She has completed her accredited training in Peer Mentoring, Supporting Families with addiction (level 2) and her Family dynamics (level 3). Andrea has also volunteered within Escape supporting and assisting others through difficult times. As her confidence grew she was able to be involved with promoting programmes at ESCAPE within the Northumberland Recovery Partnership and has supported new learners on to these programmes.

Andrea has now moved into employment supporting other people with addiction on a part time basis.

"She is a credit to herself, and others and I feel blessed to have supported through this journey to develop her skills and become more confident every day. In the time that Andrea has attended courses at ESCAPE she found the confidence to send one of her poems and this has been published in a magazine."

Jenny Earle – Trainer and Volunteer Coordinator, ESCAPE

The Bride

He asks for her hand in marriage.
She wishes for a big white carriage.
A big house and a double garage.
The girl hopes for everything so lavish.
All too soon she notices he has become quite savage.
His bride all he wants to do is ravage.
This man is not good for her all he does is do her damage.
He convinces her she needs him that she cannot manage.
He demeans her and acts to her with cruelty and disparage.
He gaslights her and tells her, 'No one will want you with all your baggage.'
He beats her black blue. She suffers a painful miscarriage.
But with help out there, her life she can salvage.

© Andrea Dawson, 2024



Accounts

ESCAPE FAMILY SUPPORT LIMITED

Charity Number 1063500

(A company limited by guarantee)

Company Number 03256554

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (SoFA)

(Including Summary Income and Expenditure Account)

Income from	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Donations and Legacies	6	9,556	-	9,556	8,799
Charitable Activities					
Grants & statutory income	7	60,004	318,259	378,263	249,130
Other Trading activities	8	390	-	390	15,335
Investments	9	2,120	-	2,120	976
Total Income		72,070	318,259	390,329	274,240
Expenditure on					
Raising Funds	10	(5,000)	-	(5,000)	3,013
Charitable Activities					
Operations of the charity	11	42,640	317,277	359,917	280,803
Total expenditure		37,640	317,277	354,917	283,816
Net income/(expenditure)		34,430	982	35,412	(9,575)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total Funds Brought forward		244,037	220,067	464,104	473,679
Total Funds Carried Forward		278,467	221,049	499,516	464,104

For the year ended 31 March 2025

(Notes are contained within the full set of audited accounts)

Thanks to our funders

ESCAPE are very grateful to commissioners, Town and Parish Councils, charitable and corporate funders, and our community fundraisers who support both front line services through revenue funding and the upgrades and maintenance of building through capital funding.



Northumberland
County Council



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Ponteland Town Council



Prudhoe
TOWN COUNCIL



**Community
Foundation**

NHS

**North East and
North Cumbria**



**The Shears
Foundation**

**forv/s
mazars**

**H A D R I A N
T R U S T**



**COMMUNITY
FUND**

**GREGGS
FOUNDATION**



**Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION**



SIR JAMES KNOTT TRUST



**The Percy Hedley
Foundation**

**T H E
Barbour
T R U S T**

**NE North East
Combined
Authority**

POWERED BY

**LEVELLING
UP**



HOSPITAL OF GOD
Here for Everyone

The Joicey Trust