

Annual Review Summary: Celebrating the partnership between Thomas Parsons Charity and CHS

January 2024 – March 2025

We are proud to reflect on a remarkable year of collaboration between **Thomas Parsons Charity** and **CHS Group**, which has brought meaningful change to the lives of some of the most disadvantaged young people in our community. This powerful partnership has directly enabled young residents at Wheatsheaf Close, Ely, to pursue employment opportunities without sacrificing the vital support they receive through supported housing.

A transformative partnership

The young people aged 16–25 living at Wheatsheaf Close often come from backgrounds marked by significant adversity, including experiences of abuse, loss, care placements, homelessness, and complex trauma. Many face daily barriers to independence—financial hardship, mental ill-health, social exclusion, and risks of criminal exploitation.

At CHS, we are committed to empowering these young people with the tools and confidence to thrive. However, the reality of supported housing rent—typically £356 per week—creates a critical disincentive to work because once employed, residents face a dramatic reduction in their housing benefit, often leaving them financially worse off than when unemployed. This leaves our young people having to choose between remaining living in supported housing receiving the invaluable support from our teams but not being able to afford to go to work or moving into cheaper accommodation so they can afford to go to work, but having to lose the support they rely on. CHS recognised the importance and value of work for our young people and so has introduced a rent cap of £119 a week. However, with no local authority funding available to cover the shortfall, this is not sustainable long-term.

In early 2024, Thomas Parsons Charity, an Ely based charity with a long history of supporting the local community, stepped in with both insight and generosity. Through the compassionate and visionary leadership of the Governors, the charity offered to cover the rent shortfall for employed residents, ensuring they could remain living in supported housing, continuing to receive essential support, whilst taking crucial steps toward independence through employment.

Impact in action

Between January 2024 and March 2025, Thomas Parsons Charity contributed **£9,762.64**, directly supporting **nine young residents** in sustaining employment whilst remaining living in supported housing. This amounts to a transformative cost of less than **£2.39 per young person per day**—an extraordinary return on investment that has changed lives.

The support extended beyond finances: the donation and installation of three high-quality Miele dishwashers also improved the living environment for all residents, further underlining the charity's thoughtful and practical commitment to wellbeing.

Measured outcomes and Social Value

To measure the impact of the support delivered by our teams to the young people living in our services, we use the **HACT Social Value Tool** and **WEMWBS (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale)** to capture the uplift in outcomes for residents. The HACT Social Value Tool assigns a defined financial metric to each positive outcome and includes a wellbeing value, a health top-up, and—where applicable—an Exchequer value illustrating the financial savings to the state. In contrast, WEMWBS measures mental wellbeing outcomes but does not apply a financial value.

While many factors contribute to the positive outcomes experienced by our residents, it is important to recognise the significant role that **Thomas Parsons Charity** has played. By providing targeted financial support, the charity has enabled our young people to remain living in supported housing, accessing the vital support needed, whilst empowering them to pursue and sustain employment—an essential step toward long-term independence. As such, Thomas Parsons should be acknowledged as a key contributor to the social value outcomes achieved by these individuals.

The positive outcomes are captured by a social value questionnaire which is completed every six months. For the 9 residents who received support from Thomas Parsons over past 15 months, the following outcomes were recorded:

HACT Social Value Outcomes

- **No longer losing confidence:** £31,914
- **No longer using drugs:** £25,616
- **Not worried about crime:** £18,813
- **Recorded excellent health:** £16,412
- **Increased confidence:** £14,152
- **Attended residents' group:** £12,986
- **No longer depressed or anxious:** £11,891

- **No longer smokes:** £4,414
- **Engaged in social groups:** £2,464
- **Regularly exercising:** £2,130
- **Undertaken vocational training:** £1,019

NB: Some residents recorded multiple outcomes

WEMWBS outcomes

Feeling optimistic

Feeling useful

Dealing with problems well

A catalyst for wider change

The outstanding impact Thomas Parsons Charity has had on the lives of our residents has inspired CHS to launch its **Social Impact Partnership Initiative**, which seeks to replicate this model across Cambridgeshire. Our launch event in March 2025 featured a powerful video testimony from Governors Suzanne Lindsay and Allyson Broadhurst, whose words of encouragement have already mobilised other organisations to offer their support.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69XGsfZg4jA>

This partnership has not only directly benefitted our young people, it has also ignited a wider movement for change.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Thomas Parsons Charity for their extraordinary commitment to the young residents of Wheatsheaf Close. Their support has not only provided practical solutions to a complex problem, it has offered our residents the opportunity for a brighter future. Their involvement has been pivotal in enabling our young people to take confident steps into employment and adulthood without losing access to the critical support systems they need. As we align future reporting to the CHS financial year (April–March), we look forward to building on this incredible foundation and continuing this impactful partnership in the years to come.