



Impact Report

1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Welcome

I am delighted to present Step One Charity's Impact Report for 2023-2024. This year has been one of growth, challenge, and adaptation for our team. We've seen exciting developments such as the opening of our new head office at the X Centre in the heart of Exeter, and the transformation of Cypress Hospital into a dedicated intensive inpatient rehabilitation service. We've also expanded our supported living service, offering more people in our community the chance to lead independent lives with confidence.

At Step One, our mission is to support people in building a pathway to independence, leading fulfilling lives, and reaching their own potential through a range of specialist mental health and wellbeing services. This year, as always, our commitment to this mission has been unwavering. Our staff and volunteers have shown incredible dedication, and their compassion and hard work have allowed us to continue delivering essential services that make a real difference in people's lives.

I am incredibly proud of our achievements and the impact we have made, thanks to the generosity of our partners and donors, as well as the strength of our team. I invite you to read on to learn about the positive impact of our work and the progress we've made.

Ben Greaves
CEO

Thank you for your
continued support!



Devon's mental health landscape

Nationally, 1 in 4 adults experience a diagnosable mental health disorder annually, but in Devon, the situation is even more critical. The suicide rate here is significantly higher than the rate for England, and social isolation and loneliness are key risk factors. Additionally, the cost-of-living crisis has a heightened impact due to lower-than-average salaries and higher living costs in the region. This intensifies stress, anxiety, and other mental health conditions, particularly for those with pre-existing vulnerabilities.

Our strategic response: Step One's 5-Year Plan

In 2023, we launched a comprehensive 5-Year Plan designed to address these challenges by improving access to mental health services, integrating our services, and enhancing community support. Here are some of the ways we're making a difference:

- **Service delivery** – Transforming the X Centre in Exeter into a central hub that provides an inclusive service delivery space for our community and a dynamic workspace for our employees.
- **Cypress inpatient rehabilitation** – Cypress Hospital's recent transition to an intensive inpatient rehabilitation service is a key milestone. This new focus aims to fill a critical gap in regional recovery services for those with complex mental health needs.
- **BeWell@StepOne redesign** – We're restructuring our BeWell@StepOne programme to offer specialised, evidence-based group activities and workshops for people in our local community as well as partnering with local organisations to provide training and increased awareness of the mental health challenges people face.
- **Supported living** – We're growing our supported living service and refining our delivery model to better meet the growing demand for affordable, accessible housing.
- **Building our team** – We've recruited new roles, including a Psychologist, Alliance Locality Manager and Governance and Assurance Manager, to enhance trauma-informed care and ensure we deliver the very best services to meet Devon's evolving needs.

Our year in numbers

(2023 - 2024)

75

people

were supported to live independently and thrive in their communities

33

patients

with complex mental health needs were expertly cared for

3,301

sessions

were provided by Step One Recovery Practitioners

550

people

received group-based mental health support through BeWell@StepOne

10+

partnerships

were developed to expand our services and enhance our support



Our recent impact

- **We renovated** our first fully staffed, 24-hour supported living facility, creating a space that will provide more people in Devon the chance to live independently with confidence.
- **We expanded** our BeWell@StepOne reach, now delivering in-person, group-based support sessions in Exeter, leading to a thriving weekly craft group and popular wellbeing sessions.
- **We launched** our new branding which has led to a 100% increase in website users, and a 51% increase in social media followers compared to the previous year.
- **We moved** into our new head office and service delivery space at the X Centre in the heart of Exeter.
- **We filled** a critical gap in regional long-term recovery services for those living with complex mental health needs.

Our year in voices



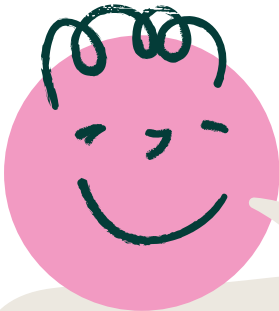
"I was cared for with great kindness. My quality of life improved and I will live a better life as a result."

- **Cypress Hospital service user**



"If I hadn't had the support that I have had I would not be sat here talking to you. Step One helped me get my diagnosis and medication, disability benefits, CBT, helped me get out of the YMCA and into my previous flat and now into my new flat. I would not have been able to do those without enabling support."

- **Community support service user**

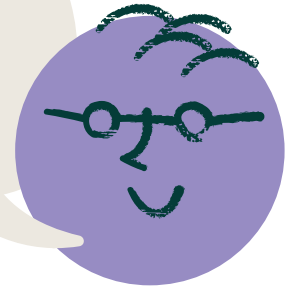


"The group gives me a reason to go out and something to look forward to."

- **BeWell@StepOne participant**

"CFO3 gave me hope for life beyond the gate. For the first time I have motivation and self-reliance for my future, which they have helped to develop through their humanity."

- **CFO3 service user**



"My experience has been life-changing. I will be forever thankful for the kind, knowledgeable, personal support I have received."

- **Recovery Practitioner service user**

Cypress Hospital

- ✓ 33 people effectively cared for by our specialist multi-disciplinary team.
- ✓ 13 people successfully discharged to their homes.
- ✓ Transitioned to a specialised intensive inpatient rehabilitation service in collaboration with Devon Partnership Trust.
- ✓ Expanded training resources for increased focus on improved patient outcomes.

This year has marked a pivotal shift for Cypress Hospital as the service officially began the transition from crisis intervention to a dedicated intensive inpatient rehabilitation service in September 2023. This change aligns with our integration into the DPT Rehabilitation and Recovery pathway, enhancing our ability to support individuals with complex mental health needs in southern and western Devon.

This strategic change positions Cypress Hospital as a leading example in mental health rehabilitation, focusing on delivering expert care and supporting long-term recovery.



“I definitely would not be where I am today if it wasn't for the team at Cypress. I was at rock bottom until I was admitted and the work I did with Connor and Lily was what really assisted me with my recovery. They inspired me to be better and someday when the time is right, I wouldn't mind working within the care/mental health industry.”

- Cypress Hospital service user

Sarah's story

“I was there [at Cypress] last year during summer months and was discharged in September.”



They were amazingly committed and gave not just consistent professional support but also love, kindness a truly sincere and compassionate ear to listen and always competent advice in a therapeutic and reassuring manner.

They were on the job literally all the time whilst on their shift, always there ready to help, never invasive, patient, always well-mannered and they treated me with dignity and respect.

They actually helped me in laying the foundation for the right aftercare and were experienced and skilled enough to support me in building trust and in regaining self-confidence by helping me to report to the police those events that caused me to be ill. This never happened before.

“

They saved my life because I was becoming desperate and I now have hope.

I can confidently say that staff at Cypress absolutely put effort and their hearts in the job to help me out. From the cook to the manager, the OT to the nurse, all staff treated me with respect and kindness.

They are amazing people and professionals and I am so grateful.

Thank you also to the charity for having such a good service.

Note: The name in this case study has been changed to protect the individual's identity.

Community Support

Our Community Support service continues to play a vital role in supporting people with mental health challenges, learning difficulties, autism spectrum conditions, or dual diagnoses, both in the community and within our supported living houses. The 2023-2024 year has seen continued success and growth in this area.



59 people supported in the community



16 people in supported living houses



5 people left the service as they felt they could live independently with confidence



Opened a new 6-bedroom supported living house in Exeter

Breakdown of need:

23

people

with mental health concerns

3

people

with learning disabilities

44

people

with neurodiversity, many of whom also have mental health concerns

“I enjoyed going to Exmouth, different scenery, it’s important for me to get out and support helps me with this”

- Hayley



Supported Living Housing

Step One's commitment to providing secure, affordable supported living environments for people with mental health conditions and neurodiversity has seen significant progress.

- **Expansion in Exeter** - We opened a new 6-bedroom supported living house in Exeter, offering enhanced support for people managing mental health challenges and neurodiversity to live more independently.
- **Granvue House renovation** - We began the renovation of Granvue, converting it into a 6-bedroom supported living house. This marks a significant milestone as it becomes our first fully staffed, 24-hour supported living facility.
- **Ongoing growth** - We are actively exploring opportunities to acquire additional supported living houses across Devon. Our goal is to increase the availability of affordable, accessible housing options for those in need, ensuring more people can access the support they require to thrive.



"They help you to get the most out of life."

- Justin

Improving wellbeing through social activities

Our residents at Keyberry recently enjoyed a lovely day out at Dawlish Warren taking in the sunshine and fresh air. These outings provide valuable opportunities for our residents to socialise with each other and experience new things.



CFO3 Programme

CFO3 is a social inclusion programme dedicated to supporting people transitioning from the justice system, helping them reintegrate into society. Since 2015, Step One has been at the forefront of this vital initiative in Devon, offering tailored interventions focused on mental health, housing, substance misuse, and employment.

Over the course of 8 impactful years, the CFO3 Programme provided essential support to participants, resulting in significant outcomes:

1,041

participants supported

238

educational and skills courses facilitated

731

bespoke support sessions delivered

54

individuals secured employment



As the CFO3 programme came to a close in December 2023, we are proud to report that we continued to meet and exceed our targets. The impact of this programme will continue to be felt by the people who benefited from our support.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the CFO3 team, our partners, and everyone involved in this project. Step One remains dedicated to supporting vulnerable populations and looks forward to future opportunities to build on the legacy of CFO3.

“

“I can say without a doubt that if it wasn't for your help, I wouldn't have the drive, confidence and belief in myself that I have today. Thanks to you, I am going to come full circle and use my life skills and mistakes to help others choose a different route in life. You never gave up on me. Thank you for giving me a future and not letting me fall through the cracks.”

- JY, CFO3 service user

BeWell@StepOne

Our BeWell@StepOne programme continued to provide free, accessible mental health support to people across Devon in 2023 - 2024. Through a variety of online and in-person courses, workshops, peer support groups and activities, we addressed a wide range of mental health needs.



9 new wellbeing sessions introduced



550 people supported including 158 individuals with disabilities



31 courses and workshops delivered



Collaboration with the NHS to deliver the H.O.P.E (Help Overcoming Problems Effectively) programme



10 new ongoing partnerships developed

This year, we notably increased our focus on physical activity, recognising its crucial role in promoting positive mental wellbeing. New offerings such as wellbeing walks and yoga sessions have proven particularly impactful by providing participants with both physical and mental health benefits. These activities not only encouraged exercise but also facilitated social connections, further improving overall wellbeing in the community. In addition to our in-person support, our online groups have been a lifeline for those unable to leave their homes due to anxiety or health conditions, connecting people all across Devon.

Ginny's story

“Going down to the hub was a lifeline for me.”

Ginny's journey with BeWell@StepOne really shows how powerful community support can be. After a tough period recovering from brain surgery, Ginny found a crucial support system at our Paignton hub. From being part of the group to becoming a peer support volunteer, Ginny has not only benefited but also given back by sharing her experiences and helping others. Her story is a wonderful reminder of how, with the right support, people can thrive in their communities while giving back to others.



Devon Mental Health Alliance

As a key member of the Devon Mental Health Alliance, Step One continues to play a crucial role in supporting people with severe mental illness in the Eastern and Southern localities of Devon. Over the past year, our Recovery Practitioner service has made significant strides in providing person-centred, psychologically-informed interventions.

333

referrals received

3,301

sessions provided

80%

increase in positive outcomes for people after interventions with a Recovery Practitioner, including mood, hope, and overall quality of life

This year, we saw a significant increase in the number of sessions provided, more than doubling our efforts compared to the previous year. This expansion allowed us to reach more individuals in need, leading to an impressive 80% improvement in ReQoL-10 scores after interventions with our Recovery Practitioners. ReQoL (Recovery Qualities of Life) is a measurement tool used to assess the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals, particularly those receiving mental health support. The ReQoL-10 specifically captures changes in a person's quality of life and recovery experience, reflecting the positive impact our work is having on those we support.

Due to the growing demand for our services, we aim to expand our Recovery Practitioner offer to more teams and diversify our services to further integrate with existing mental health providers. This will enable us to reach a wider population and provide comprehensive support to people in need.

“My experience has been life-changing. I will be forever thankful for the kind, knowledgeable, personal support I have received.”

- Service user



Our team

Over the past year, we've continued to focus on building a dedicated and resilient workforce, with a significant emphasis on retaining and developing our talented staff. We're proud to share that over a third of our team members have been with Step One for 5 years or more, reflecting a strong sense of loyalty for the charity.

- We successfully **promoted a number internal staff members**, including to the roles of Community Support Manager, Head of Operations and DMHA Locality Manager.
- We introduced the **Psychologist role** to our growing team.
- **6 staff members** reached their **10-year anniversary** at Step One.
- The **Devon Mental Health Alliance team expanded** to provide wider support across Devon.

By investing in our teams' growth and celebrating their achievements, our goal is to ensure that Step One remains a place where people are proud to work and make a lasting impact.

"I used to be described as shy and quiet, you'd never believe that if you know me now! Professionally I have gained so many new skills, qualifications as well as new friends. I have even started a Masters Degree! Old me from 10 years ago would not recognise me today!"

- **Andrew, IT Strategy & Projects Manager
(10 years at Step One)**



"My favourite thing about being a support worker is making a difference to people's lives. Giving people the help and support that I wish my mum and nan could have had."

- **Charlotte, Support Worker
(10 years at Step One)**

Financial

Thanks to the hard work of our teams, overall income remained stable compared to the previous year, excluding the one-time profit from our property sale in 2022-23. However, rising costs led to a £0.76m deficit. Despite this, we remained committed to delivering essential services and are actively working on strategies to address these financial challenges and sustain our mission.

New asset

In October 2023, we completed the purchase of a new head office in Exeter. The X Centre, located on Exeter Quayside, offers a shared workspace for our colleagues and provides a welcoming environment for service users, including delivery space for our BeWell@StepOne service.



Looking forward

We have successfully re-negotiated our NHS contract for mental health support at Cypress, effective October 2024, which will boost our income and help reduce the deficit.

The refurbishment of the Granvue property will be completed in 2024, adding a new service line for 24-hour supported living. We will also continue assessing other supported living models to ensure excellent service and the best return on investment.

Additionally, we are developing our commercial services within BeWell@StepOne, enhancing our reputation, brand and partnerships to generate income.

“I really like coming here because it helps me to get out, and it’s really nice to socialise because I don’t really get to do that. There’s a lot of like-minded people here and I love doing my art - it gives me the motivation to do it. It really elevates my mood.”

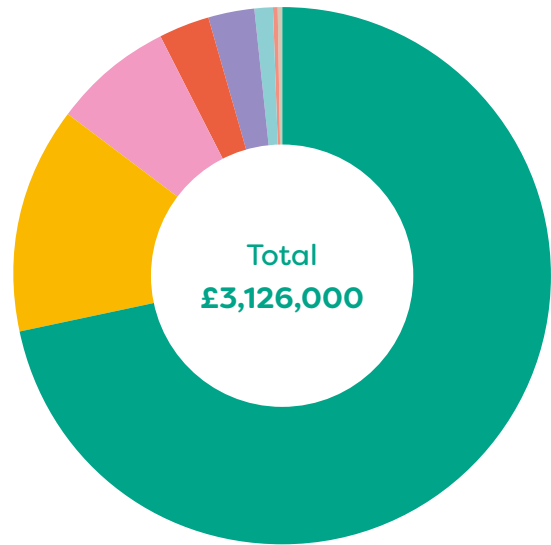
- BeWell@StepOne session user



Financial breakdown

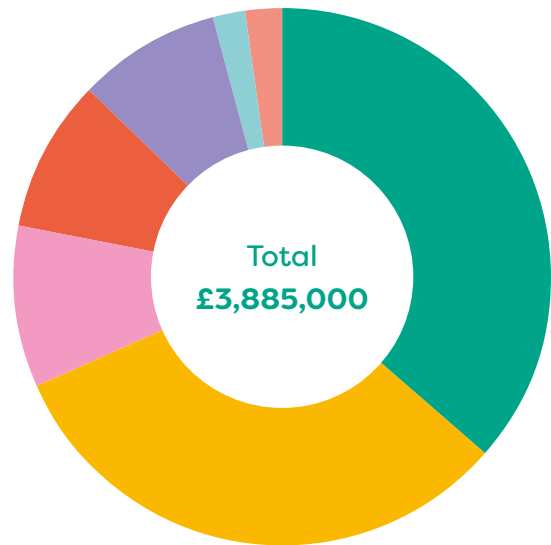
How we raised our money

● Statutory funding	£2,243,000
● Supported living	£423,000
● Investments	£229,000
● Legacies	£94,000
● Fundraising	£87,000
● CF03	£38,000
● BeWell@StepOne	£7,000
● Other	£5,000



How we spent our money

● Hospital	£1,417,000
● Support costs	£1,247,000
● Community support	£373,000
● Supported living	£354,000
● Alliance	£335,000
● BeWell@StepOne	£80,000
● CF03	£79,000



Fundraising and Communications

Fundraising and communicating with our audiences are vital components of Step One's mission. We have successfully focused on building community engagement and developing fundraising, including through our strategic rebrand and new fundraising strategy.

Fundraising success

Our new fundraising strategy focuses on relationship building whilst diversifying and strengthening our income sources:

Trusts and foundations

- We were pleased to have received substantial funding from generous trusts and foundations to support a range of capital projects, along with our BeWell@StepOne service which relies on voluntary funding.

Fundraising challenges

- We continued to build our partnership with the Great West Run, significantly growing the number of #TeamStepOne runners and overall funds raised. Brave fundraisers also took to the skies and jumped out of planes for Step One with incredible skydives!

Internship programme

- We welcomed a Fundraising Intern from the University of Exeter who made valuable contributions to our fundraising and marketing projects.

Corporate support

- Local businesses, including IKEA Exeter, made generous donations to support our new hub at the X Centre.
- Local solicitors kindly volunteered their time during 'Make a Will Week,' offering free will-writing services in exchange for donations to Step One.



"So many people were there to help me along the way and knowing I was running for a great cause just added to that. Thank you to all the volunteers and everyone involved at Step One, it is an experience I won't soon forget!"

- Isaac, #TeamStepOne runner



Communications success



New brand

In February 2024 we launched a rebrand to refresh our image, reinforce our mission and connect with a wider audience. This included updating and modernising our existing brand elements, such as our website, signage, printed literature and social media. Working with a local agency with extensive third-sector experience also provided a wealth of experience and expertise, complementing our in-house skills.



Community engagement

We actively participated in various community events, from mental health awareness themed days to county shows, giving us the opportunity to engage with attendees and promote mental health awareness.



Digital presence

We continued to strengthen our online presence through social media, website updates and email marketing, achieving a notable 51% increase in social media followers compared to the previous year.

“

“You did a fantastic job bringing the brand to life. I’ve been involved in marketing and providing brands for a long time and I’ve never seen it done so well. You did it how it should be done! And to see it done for such a great organisation in my community makes it all the better.”

- Nick, The Ambitions Agency

By continuing to prioritise these areas, we aim to further enhance our fundraising and communications efforts and ensure that Step One remains a visible and impactful charity in the community.

Thank you

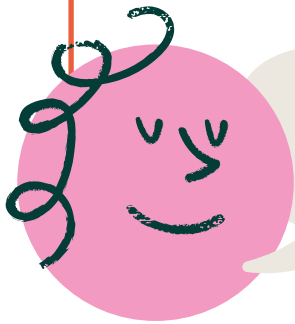
As we close another impactful year, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported Step One.

Your generosity has enabled us to provide essential mental health and wellbeing services to hundreds of people across Devon. From your donations and volunteer hours to your participation in fundraising events, your support has made a real difference.

A special thank you to our dedicated staff and trustees. Your passion and hard work are the foundation of our charity.



Thank you for being part of our journey.



Your support helps our essential services remain available to those who need them most.

You can find further details about our services on our website:
www.steponecharity.co.uk/what-we-do

Scan the QR code to visit our website





“

“Coming here has changed my life, for two years I didn't really leave the house, now I go out every day.”

- Men's Wellbeing Walk participant





Stay up to date with all the latest activities and opportunities at Step One. Sign up to our newsletter at www.steponecharity.co.uk

Get in touch

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Registered Charity Number: 235434

Registered Address: Step One Charity, X Centre, Commercial Road, Exeter, EX2 4AD

www.steponecharity.co.uk



Step One
A brighter path to wellbeing