



encompass

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

BORDERS DIRECT PAYMENT AGENCY trading as Encompass

Regd. in Scotland Company Number: 340729 Scottish Charity Number: SC039514

Registered Office: Unit 9 Ettrick Riverside, Dunsdale Road, Selkirk TD7 5EB

**“ ... the
highest
number of
clients on
record. ”**

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2023/2024

“It gives me great pleasure to present our Annual Report for the year 2023/2024, during which we have seen a number of significant changes for the organisation.

I must begin, however, by thanking all of our staff team, and our Board of Trustees, for their continued hard work and dedication to Encompass throughout the year. Our shared values and commitment have

helped us to maintain high quality services and to ensure the organisation remains on a sound footing as it looks forward.

Steve Adamson – Trustee / Treasurer



The Organisation

The past year was again an extremely busy one for the organisation with an increased number of referrals and the highest number of clients on record.

Encompass continues to meet the challenges facing any organisation working in the health and social care sector. Our local knowledge and experience, linked to the skills and commitment of our staff, gives us encouragement that we are readily placed to identify and address issues directly.

In addition our partnership working gives us a voice to speak up on behalf of clients of our services, and we continue to work closely with Scottish Borders Council's Social Work Dept, Finance Dept, and Contracts Section as well as the Lead Officer for Self-directed Support and the Locality SW Teams.

The Board of Trustees

We were very fortunate during 2023/2024 to be joined by three new members to our Board of Trustees. In September 2023 we were joined by Heather Melville-Hume and Carolyn Fahim, shortly followed by Lorraine Anderson in October 2023. George Turnbull continues in the role of Chair and Steve Adamson in the role of Treasurer with Marion Wood continuing as Vice-Chair.



In February 2024 Mark Wilson retired from our Board, and we want to acknowledge here the experience he brought to his role on the Board and to thank him for his hard work and dedication to Encompass. We wish Mark all the very best for the future.

Together the Board has continued to oversee the work of Encompass and remains committed to ensuring effective governance in all aspects of our work and, with the three new members bringing their substantial experience to the Board, we are confident Encompass is in safe hands. However we are always keen to recruit new members, particularly as one of our stated aims is to be a user-led organisation, and so we would welcome the opportunity to speak to any Encompass members or clients who might be interested in joining the Board of Trustees.

At the time of our last Annual Report in April 2023 we had begun the process of reviewing our services with SBC and negotiating for an increase to our Annual Grant for the undertaking of DP audits on the Council's behalf. We were very pleased when the Council awarded us a significant increase in this regard (the first since 2011/2012) with effect from 1st August 2023 for a further 3 years until 31st March 2026.

As we approached the end of the financial year 2023/2024 we had begun further discussions with SBC in relation to increasing our charges for our services to clients (which had also remained

unchanged for over 10 years). We have proposed an increase for our Payroll Service and for our Employment Support service. The charge for our Third Party Banking service will remain unchanged. The Board has been clear these increases would only go ahead if agreed with SBC who will include them in any Direct Payment, as we would not wish the extra costs to have to be met directly by clients.

Another significant event for the organisation during 2023/2024 was the securing of our new office premises at Ettrick Mill in Selkirk. We had operated from the Anderson's Chambers in Galashiels since 1999, but had long considered that these offices did not suit our needs. We moved into our new premises on 10th Sept 2023 and they are proving to be a far more pleasant and practical working environment for everyone, particularly with the extra space required for the increases to our staff numbers and their hours of employment.



The Board also took the opportunity at this time to purchase a new IT system via an external telecommunications company, which we hope will provide us with a better infrastructure in the daily operation of our services to clients, our financial services, and our support to staff.



Jill Earsman, ESA



Angie Keay, ESA



Kirsty Robson, ESA



Heather Smith, ESA



Kirsty
Bradshaw-McLeish, ESA

The Staff Team

During 2023/2024 we were pleased to welcome some new staff members to our team.

In June 2023 Kevin Poulton joined Encompass as our Finance Manager. This is a key position in the organisation which we had been seeking to fill for some time, and so we were delighted to secure Kevin's services given his experience and background in this sector. Kevin has been working closely with Hazel Jack our Manager and Steve Adamson our Treasurer to update and improve our financial and IT systems, giving us the ability to be more accurate with financial forecasting and budgets. For many years the organisation had contracted with an external Bookkeeper, Lina Purves, to assist with our financial records. However following the successful appointment to the Finance Manager position, the Board felt we no longer required a Bookkeeper service and ended this agreement in Sept 2023. We wish to thank Lina for her many years of work supporting the organisation in this regard.



regard. We have a strong team of Employment Support Advisers operating across the organisation providing bespoke support to our clients.

In July 2023 we were joined by Yvonne Curle who we employed as Payroll Officer. Yvonne works closely with Sheila and Sharon to process payroll and also helps with auditing all the DP accounts. Yvonne's appointment has made it possible to respond to the increase in the number of clients we support.



The above appointments, taken in conjunction with our other ESA's (Jill Earsman, Angie Keay, Heather Smith), Finance (Sally Bell), Payroll (Sheila Cochrane, Sharon Onley), and Admin staff (Jemma Paterson, Brandon Brown) gives us confidence that we have a strong, reliable, and knowledgeable team working on the organisation's behalf. The team continues to be ably led by our Manager, Hazel Jack, who works tirelessly at supporting the team, ensuring best practice in relation to the valuable services we provide, and promoting the organisation with partner agencies. Having Hazel, Kevin, and Kirsty in their roles also provides a more robust management tier for the organisation than was previously the case.



In May 2023 we were joined by Kirsty Bradshaw-McLeish who was employed as the ESA for Berwickshire. We had struggled to fill this post, and were delighted when Kirsty applied as she has a wealth of knowledge in the care sector. In January 2024 we revised the role of Senior ESA with Kirsty Robson taking on additional responsibilities in this

We should also acknowledge the ongoing work undertaken by the staff involved with the SIRD (Support in the Right Direction) project at both a local and national level in ensuring the views of those involved with Self-directed Support are fully represented, and we were delighted when the Scottish Govt extended their Grant to allow this work to continue for another 3 years to March 2027.

Conclusion

In conclusion I remain confident the organisation continues to be in a very healthy position as it moves into 2024/2025 and as we strive to further develop our services, as well as being prepared for any new challenges and opportunities which might come our way.

Steve Adamson – Trustee / Treasurer



Encompass by Numbers – 2023/24

303	We have had a busy year with 303 new referrals.	NEW REFERRALS
955	The average number of Personal Assistants employed in any one month is 955.	PAs
11,941	We answered 11,941 telephone calls and received 34,852 emails.	34,852
107	Employer Support Advisors made a total of 107 client visits and also a total of 520 clients used our third party banking service.	520
337	There were 337 individual recruitments advertised through our website.	RECRUITMENT ADVERTS
10,360	There were 10,360 visitors to the Encompass website.	WEBSITE VISITORS

Living Well with the support you choose

I am Heather, 48 and a stroke survivor of over 5 years now. I am originally from the Highlands but I have lived and worked in the Scottish Borders for over a decade now.

I am a proud disabled person and passionate about independent living not only for myself but also for others. I work full-time mainly from home, which helps me manage my disability, as a Senior HR Manager having developed and diversified in my professional career for nearly 25 years now.

The team at Encompass were hugely supportive and importantly remain so as I navigate Self Directed Support. I was delighted to be invited to be part of the Board at Encompass bringing my lived as well as my professional experience to champion and enable the team at Encompass to deliver for others

living and working in the Scottish Borders. I know I am only enabled to have the choice and control to

do all of this because of the amazing Personal Assistants that I have worked with during this time. Their professionalism, care, compassion and importantly humour are mirrored and supported by an engaged, loyal and motivated team of amazing people at Encompass. It is a huge privilege to make a contribution and hopefully have the opportunity to add real value in my role as a Board Member with Encompass.



Thank-you notes...

“ Just a quick email to thank everyone at Encompass (past and Present) for all the help while my brother and myself were under your assistance it was very much appreciated.

“ Thank you Hazel for all your help and support in finding emergency cover for me, we couldn't have done it without you.

“ Dear Jill just to say thank you for all your help finding PA (just wonderful) I could not have managed with her or without your willing ear. Never forget the difference you all make

“ Thank you to everyone at Encompass, you have always been so kind and helpful – wonderful service

“ I would like to thank you all for the help you have given me over the past 2 and a half years regarding timesheets, hours etc. you made it so much less stressful for me knowing you had the answer to all my queries. Special thanks to Heather for her time and patience explaining everything, and being a guiding hand through it all

Thank
You

Our team this last year consisted of Niccy Kershaw, Elspeth Critchley and Jackie Philip. We have had another busy year.

We decided to arrange for speakers at most of our monthly forum meetings. This gave us an opportunity to find out about other peoples jobs and for them to find out more about the Forum. We were involved in SBC looking at the option of family members being paid to provide care when it was a suitable situation. We were asked to be involved in updating the SDS information leaflets. Encompass and the Forum were involved in discussions about PA training in Medication and Moving and Assisting. We have regular meetings with the SDS Lead and his Manager. This is a very helpful process for all involved. We had a stand at the Borders Older Peoples Forum at St. Boswells to help us network and Jackie was at the Border Union Show with Social Work. We finally finished our film on the 4 options in February and it has been well received. Our thanks go to Encompass who paid for the film to be made. Our pre-assessment work stalled for a bit due to a Data Protection issue but once the issue was sorted out an improved rate of referrals came to Jackie, our pre-assessment worker. The home visits to explain SDS Options and help people prepare for a social work assessment have been well received and Social Work staff have been complimentary also.



▲ Staff member Niccy Kershaw (left) and Elspeth Critchley, Secretary of the SDS Forum

◀ Kristine Fisher, New SiRD Worker (from June 2024)

Some members of the Forum are representatives in other local and national meetings e.g. the SBC Charging Forum, the SDS Working group which is now named the SDS

Improvement Group.

The Forum has raised a number of issues with SBC including:

- Carer budgets being only for replacement care
- DP rate not high enough to attract PAs
- Bringing in an Appeals process
- Setting up pooled budgets
- Training for PAs in Medication and Moving and Assisting
- Training for SW staff re SDS, DPs and Outcomes
- Poor uptake of Individual Service Funds (ISF) Option 2

Together Everyone Achieves More (continued)



- The SDS Forum also provides peer support for members within the monthly meetings and outwith of these as appropriate. The Forum is regarded as a 'lived experience' group of people for consultation, particularly for the local authority.
- We have shared lived experience with SW Scotland from our and Encompass's learning over the years. We have contributed to number of national groups such as the PA Programme Board, DP Model Agreement group, National Collaboration Group.
- The National DP Forum is a useful group of which we are a member. They have done a lot of research on self-employed carers which is a concern for all.



- We are members of SDS Scotland. This is a good source of information and support to the Forum.

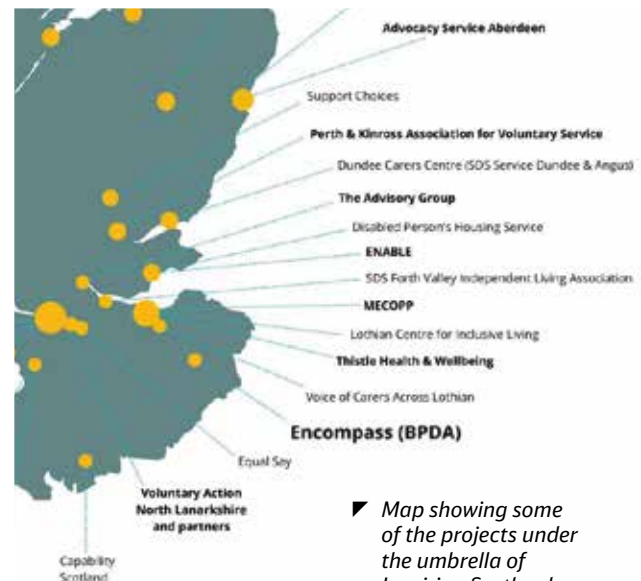
- In July we were asked if we were interested in applying for further Scottish Government funding for the next 3 years April 2024 to March 2027 so we put forward an expression of interest. At the end of March we were told we had been successful with our bid.



The Support in the Right Direction (SIRD) Project is funded by the Scottish Government and monitored by Inspiring Scotland. The project is funded until March 2024.

Did you know...?

- ★ We are always looking for new Encompass 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.
- ★ The Borders SDS Forum are always looking for people to join them, so if anyone is interested please contact Encompass



- ▶ Map showing some of the projects under the umbrella of Inspiring Scotland

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



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

address:

Encompass

Unit 9 Ettrick Riverside

Dunsdale Road

Selkirk TD7 5EB



★ PLEASE NOTE ★

**We have now moved premises!
Our new address is here on the left,
but our telephone number and email
address remain the same.**

**Our working hours have also changed,
they are now 9am - 4.30pm,
Monday - Friday.**





encompass

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Borders Direct Payment Agency trading as Encompass

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